

Research Article

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (THE ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION)

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ABSTRACT

Social media has transformed the paradigm of Islamic religious education in the digital era. It opens wider access to religious information, enriches learning resources, and facilitates intensive interaction among Islamic learners. This research aims to examine the development of social media, its influence, and its contribution in the context of Islamic religious education. To achieve this goal, the research is based on the analysis of various literature sources, including books, journal articles, and information from websites. This approach aims to gather diverse insights and provide a comprehensive description of the topic to be discussed. The research findings indicate that the use of social media can have a positive role and contribution to learning motivation. Interaction and support from online communities with similar interests can enhance the enthusiasm of Islamic learners. In the context of social media, learners can provide encouragement, share successes, and motivate each other in learning Islamic religion. The use of social media also contributes to the enhancement of self-directed learning in Islamic education. Through social media, learners have broader access to various content, learning resources, and references that they can utilize independently. They have the freedom to choose topics of interest, organize their learning schedules, and adapt learning methods according to their personal learning styles.

Keywords: social media, contribution, Islamic religious education.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of science and technology in the present era has a highly significant impact, especially on society, particularly among adolescents, notably students. A plethora of modern communication technologies has transformed the way we communicate. They not only provide verbal communication tools but also enable interactions that closely resemble face-to-face conversations, even involving facial expressions and personality aspects through social media.

One striking aspect of the millennial generation is their strong interest in the internet and the ability to access information easily. The development of the internet has opened the doors to an unlimited world where information on various topics can be quickly found. However, this broad availability of information also carries risks, as both accurate and inaccurate sources can be easily accessed. Therefore, it is important to be cautious and selective in choosing reliable sources of information, as errors in consuming information can have serious consequences.

The development and progress of information technology have dual impacts. On one hand, the positive impacts include ease of communication, access to information, and convenience in economic, social, and cultural aspects. On the other hand, the negative impacts are also significant and have the potential to damage national unity, erode morality, and create various cybercrimes. This situation is concerning, especially because the younger generation tends to rely on the internet and social media as their primary sources of information. They often consume this information without adequate verification. Social media has become a part of their lifestyle and has

a significant influence on their mindset. This mindset then shapes beliefs, which, in turn, affect behavior. Consistent behavior will shape character. Focusing on materialistic aspects can neglect spiritual development, which can ultimately lead them astray due to the strong influence of ongoing globalization. The importance of moral guidance for students becomes evident. In this context, Islamic Religious Education plays a significant role in facilitating moral and ethical guidance in accordance with the principles of true Islamic teachings. Moreover, the family also plays a key role in providing religious education and digital literacy to the younger generation. The family is considered the primary institution in the socialization process of individuals. In the framework of this research, the formulated problem revolves around the role and contribution of social media in supporting Islamic Education.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research aims to examine the development of social media, its influence, and its contribution in the context of Islamic religious education. To achieve this goal, the research is based on the analysis of various literature sources, including books, journal articles, and information from websites. This approach aims to gather diverse insights and provide a comprehensive description of the topic to be discussed.

DISCUSSION

1. Social Media and Islamic Religious Education

a. Social Media

The concept of social media, known in English as "Social Media," can be broken down into two essential components. The word "Social" refers to societal aspects and social interaction, while the word

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"Media" refers to the container or platform used to facilitate interaction and communication among individuals.¹ Social media is a concept where individuals can create their own personal web pages and connect with friends to interact, share information, and communicate. Unlike traditional media that relies on print and broadcast media, social media operates through online platforms and utilizes the internet as its primary means.²

Social media, as an integral part of technological advancement, has become a modern element in contemporary life. Modernity in life includes several characteristics, such as: a) the emergence of individualism, where individuals have the freedom to move and participate in activities without being bound by groups; b) differentiation in economic aspects and job opportunities, indicating the diversity of available choices; c) rationality, reflecting a calculated approach in various aspects of life; d) economism, where the economy dominates various activities, promoting productivity; and e) expanding growth, which is a characteristic of the globalization phenomenon. Indonesia, as one of the largest users of social media in the world, also experiences the impact of this modernity.

b. Islamic Religious Education

Education is the process that transforms the attitudes and behaviors of individuals or groups through teaching and training. Meanwhile, religion is a system that governs beliefs, worship of the Almighty God, values in interactions among humans, and the relationship between humans and the environment. Religion is not merely a theory but also implies real actions. Religious education is an educational and instructional activity with the main goal of providing religious knowledge and instilling a religious way of life.

Islamic religious education is a planned effort aimed at preparing learners so that they can understand, accept, and apply the teachings of Islam. This is achieved through various methods such as guidance, teaching, and exercises, considering the importance of respecting religious diversity to create harmony among various religious communities in society and to support national unity. Islamic religious education can be defined as a process with the goal of developing individuals who are devout through the formation of beliefs (Aqidah), worship practices (amaliah), and the development of good and noble character (akhlak), making them individuals who are conscious of Allah in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad. This definition shows a close relationship between Islamic religious education and the formation of the moral and ethical values of learners in the future.

Islamic religious education is a conscious effort organized by individuals who have a responsibility for the development, guidance, development, and direction of the potential of children, so that they can fulfill their roles and functions according to expectations. In this sense, Islamic religious education is not limited to educational institutions or specific educational domains but encompasses various aspects of life. In general, Islamic religious education can be explained as a process aimed at developing the creative potential of learners. This process is intended to create individuals with faith and piety towards Allah, intelligence, skills, a strong work ethic, good character, independence, and responsibility towards oneself, religion, nation, and state.

2. The Role of Social Media in Islamic Education

Over the past few years, the growth of social media has transformed how internet users leverage these resources in the context of education. In the realm of education, social media plays a role as a collaborative tool, a friendly communication channel, and a means for users' creative expression. The use of social media in learning is a process where information and knowledge are conveyed, both formally and informally, often occurring in our surrounding environment. The learning process involves individuals' ability to access and explore broader knowledge. The use of social media has expanded the scope of the learning process, where knowledge and learning are not limited to the accumulation of individual knowledge. However, whether the utilization of social media is beneficial or detrimental in the context of learning remains a significant question. Applications and social media platforms have brought new challenges to the existing formal education system. The use of social media, particularly in the rapid growth of distance education (e-learning), has liberated the learning process from the constraints of space, distance, or time, impacting the attitudes and behaviors of learners.

Educators today continue to strive to present engaging instructional materials that do not easily bore learners, especially in the context of online learning. In the digital era, educators have faced significant changes where the use of technology, such as laptops and other electronic devices, has become an integral part of the learning process. In this reality, educators have the responsibility to adapt to the continuously evolving technological landscape and maximize its use as a learning tool that enhances the quality of learners' education.³

The development of technology and communication has significantly transformed the educational landscape. Its impact is particularly evident in an era where educators are no longer the sole source of knowledge for learners.⁴ Books are no longer the sole primary reference source in the learning process. One crucial development is the role of social media in education, particularly in the context of Islamic education in the millennial era. Social media has become an integral part of daily life, facilitating access to information and accelerating the spread of news. The presence of social media has also opened opportunities for its use as a learning tool both inside and outside the classroom, contributing to the teaching and learning process. Social media has shifted the paradigm of Islamic education in the digital era, providing broader access to religious information, enriching learning resources, and facilitating intense interaction among Islamic learners. In the context of Islamic education, social media also provides a platform for sharing ideas, experiences, and a deeper understanding of the religion.⁵

The principles of constructivism serve as a crucial foundation in the process of Islamic religious education through social media. This theory emphasizes that learning occurs through the active construction of knowledge by learners. In the context of using social media as a tool to support Islamic religious education, this concept underscores the vital role of interaction and collaboration. Through social media platforms, Islamic learners can collectively build their understanding of religion through discussions, sharing thoughts, and exchanging information. In this way, they not only expand their

³Nurlaeli, A. (2020). *Inovasi Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam Pada Madrasah dalam Menghadapi Era Milenial*. Jurnal Wahana Karyallmiah, 4 (2).

⁴Gussevi, S., & Muhfi, N. A. (2021). *Tantangan mendidik generasi milenial muslim di era revolusi industri 4.0*. Paedagogie: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Islam, 2 (01), 46-57.

⁵Hutami, D., & Muslimin, A. (2019). *Peran media sosial dalam pengembangan materi pembelajaran agama Islam*. Al-Hadharah: Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah dan Komunikasi, 8 (1), 89-106.

¹LaysaKhadziFi, *Cara Mudah Mengenal dan Membaca Karakter dan Kepribadian Orang Lewat Internet*, (Jogya: Mantra Book, 2013), 24.

²Rahmad, *Meraih Berkah dan Pahala Melalui Internet*, (Jakarta: PT. Elex Media Komputindo, 2009), 37.

personal knowledge but also contribute to enriching collective knowledge that is beneficial.⁶

The concept of learner engagement plays a key role in efforts to enhance the quality of Islamic religious education. When utilizing social media as a supporting tool, it is essential to create active interactions and present engaging content. In the context of Islamic religious education, intense interaction through social media can enhance learner engagement, while creative and innovative approaches in using these platforms can motivate them to delve deeper into religion and develop a more profound understanding.⁷

In the context of using social media as a means to support Islamic religious education in the digital era, digital literacy skills become highly essential. Islamic learners need to be empowered with the ability to understand, assess, and manage information found online. Additionally, they also need to understand the importance of maintaining personal privacy and security when interacting on social media. By possessing strong digital literacy skills, Islamic learners can be more selective in consuming relevant and quality content, and responsibly utilize social media to support productive Islamic religious education.⁸

3. The Contribution of Social Media in Islamic Education

As advancements in science and technology (S&T) have produced various breakthroughs that significantly impact human life globally, it is important to acknowledge their tangible improvements in living standards and quality of life. On the other hand, S&T developments have also exerted a considerable influence on the cultural structure and lifestyles of individuals. For instance, information and communication technology, such as the presence of smartphones or mobile phones, as a means of social media, has widely spread worldwide without regard for national borders, cultures, traditions, or age. Its use is no longer confined by spatial or temporal limitations.

In a general overview, changes like these will have a significant impact on the values, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals and societies.⁹ These changes encompass several aspects, namely:¹⁰ 1) Openness to new experiences, 2) Readiness to accept social change, 3) Confidence in human capabilities, thanks to science and technology, to master and manage their natural environment, 4) Habit of planning and working on a timely basis, 5) Future orientation, 6) Trust in others without prejudice, 7) Inclination towards breaking away from extended family ties (individualism), 8) Diminishing faith in religious aspects, 9) Actively seeking information and facts through social media, 10) Preference or tendency to live in cities to pursue progress or a career.

⁶Hasanah, N., & Abidin, Z. (2018). *Implementasi media sosial sebagai pendukung pembelajaran agama Islam di Sekolah Menengah Pertama*. Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, 4(2), 67-79.

⁷Zahara, M. I., & Syahroni, A. *Implementasi media sosial sebagai pendukung pembelajaran agama Islam di Pondok Pesantren Darul Fadhilah*. Al-Ibtida: Jurnal Pendidikan Guru MI, (2018), 5 (1), 65-80.

⁸Nurhayati, N. *Media sosial dalam pembelajaran pendidikan agama Islam di era digital*. Jurnal PAI, (2015), 2(2), 107-120.

⁹Jalaludin Rahmat revealed that from the observed phenomena, it is predicted that there will be globalization of lifestyle which can be identified in three aspects, namely: 1) Food (food and drink), 2) Fashion (fashion), 3) Fun (entertainment). People who are carried away by the current of globalization tend to show behaviors such as being less satisfied (not qona'ah) and being hedonistic (pursuing more pleasure in current life without considering the future). It is worth noting that social media falls into these second and third categories. Cf. Jalaludin Rahmat, *Actual Islam*, (Bandung: Mizan, 1991), p. 71

¹⁰Muhaimindkk, *Strategi Belajar Mengajar (Penerapannya dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama)*, (Surabaya: CV. Citra Media Karya Anak Bangsa, 1996), h. 7

Some positive contributions of social media usage, especially for children, include:¹¹

1. Ease in Acquiring Information and Knowledge: Social media allows children to easily access various information and knowledge.
2. Ease in Communication and Strengthening Social Bonds: Children can use social media to communicate with friends, family, or others, which can strengthen social relationships.
3. Development of Cosmopolitan and Tolerant Attitudes: Interactions through social media can help children understand cultural diversity and perspectives, making them more tolerant of differences.
4. Encouraging Self-Improvement: Children may feel motivated to enhance their skills and personal achievements through inspiration gained from social media.
5. Fulfilling Learning Needs and Others: Social media can be used to support the learning process and fulfill other needs, such as hobbies and interests.
6. Business Development: Some children have the opportunity to develop their businesses through social media, allowing them to understand business concepts at an early stage.
7. Increased Insight and Speaking Skills: Children can use social media as a platform to share their ideas and views, enhancing their insight and speaking skills both inside and outside the classroom.

Social media, as part of the advancements in science and technology, besides providing positive contributions to children, also has negative contributions, including:

1. Consumptive Behavior: Influenced by the progress of science and technology, including social media, consumptive behavior can lead individuals to lose their humanity by focusing on pleasure and dependency. Children often prioritize social media over other activities, which can potentially threaten their health, leading to physical issues such as dry eyes and mental disorders like jealousy, anxiety, sensitivity, and even frustration. Consequently, the use of social media can also increase family expenses.
2. Lack of Self-Control: Inability to control oneself is one of the negative impacts of social media usage on children. Social media often makes children spend unproductive time, neglecting the time that should be used for learning. This negatively impacts their development, both intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Technological advancements, especially the features offered, often disturb children's concentration during the learning process at school. They are more interested in computer facilities, such as playing games or online games, forgetting their study obligations and even neglecting religious obligations, such as performing the five daily prayers.
3. Excessive Internet Addiction: Excessive internet addiction in children can have negative effects on their academic performance. Learning activities that should be carried out are disrupted because the time that should be used for studying is spent surfing the internet. Consequently, assignments and homework are often neglected, contributing to a decline in exam scores. In extreme cases, this decline can result in a child not advancing to the next grade or failing to graduate.

Negative Influences on Attitudes and Behavior: Social media has the potential to influence the attitudes and behaviors of children if its use is not supervised by teachers or parents. For example, children can be influenced to use inappropriate language, engage in teenage delinquency such as school brawls, commit immoral acts such as

¹¹Fathul Amin, *Pembentukan Karakter Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam*, Tadrīs: Jurnal Penelitian dan Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam, (2019), 12 (2), 33 – 45

sexual harassment, attempt criminal activities like theft and gambling, withdraw from social interaction, develop narrow perspectives, imitate negative behavior, and easily succumb to Western trends and culture.

When utilizing social media as a tool to support Islamic religious education, ethical aspects and religious values must be the primary concern. The content disseminated through social media should align with the teachings of Islam and promote high moral values. Islamic religious educators play a crucial role in guiding learners on how to use social media correctly and ethically in the context of Islamic religious education. Thus, learning not only takes place effectively but also reinforces the integrity of religious values in the use of social media.¹²

In the effort to leverage social media as a supporting tool for Islamic religious education, it is essential to emphasize the importance of time management and maintaining a balance in the use of social media.¹³ Islamic learners need to avoid excessive dependence on social media and maintain a proper balance between physical activities, real-life social interactions, and social media use. This aims to ensure that Islamic religious education remains focused on direct social interaction and practical experiences with religious teachings. With a deep understanding of these concepts, Islamic religious educators can design the effective use of social media as a tool to support Islamic religious education in the digital era. By paying attention to these aspects, social media can play a positive role in improving the quality of Islamic religious education, expanding access to information, and encouraging meaningful interaction among Islamic learners.¹⁴ The use of social media as a tool to support Islamic religious education in the digital era shows significant potential. Social media enables learners to access Islamic religious learning resources more widely, enrich learning content, foster interaction and collaboration among learners, and provide additional motivation for learning. Additionally, social media can enhance the independence of Islamic learners in their learning processes.

Nevertheless, there are several challenges that need to be overcome in effectively utilizing social media in Islamic religious education. One of the main challenges is the vast diversity of content and information disseminated on social media. Research conducted by Gao,¹⁵ for example, has shown that on social media, there is invalid content, misleading information, and even controversies that may confuse Islamic learners. Therefore, it is crucial for Islamic educators to provide guidance and train digital literacy skills to learners, enabling them to identify and select high-quality and relevant content in line with religious teachings.

Additionally, there are additional challenges related to time management in the use of social media as a tool to support Islamic religious education. Islamic learners often face difficulties in maintaining a regular pattern of social media use, which can disrupt their time and focus on learning Islamic religious education. Therefore, Islamic educators need to provide clear guidelines regarding balanced and directed use of social media in the context of

learning.¹⁶ The use of social media as a tool to support Islamic religious education in the digital era has significant potential. Social media allows for the expansion of access to Islamic religious learning resources, enhances interaction and collaboration, motivates learning, and strengthens self-directed learning. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that there are challenges, such as content diversity and effective time management, that need to be addressed to responsibly leverage social media in the context of Islamic religious education.

CONCLUSION

Social media enables broader access to Islamic religious learning resources, such as lecture videos, studies, articles, and hadith quotations. Islamic learners can deepen their understanding without being constrained by time and place. This is crucial in overcoming the physical and geographical limitations that learners may face. Through social media, Islamic learners can interact, discuss, and collaborate in learning about Islam. This interaction can occur with fellow learners, religious educators, and scholars who possess diverse knowledge and experiences. It allows learners to gain a broader and deeper perspective in understanding the teachings of Islam.

The use of social media can have a positive impact on learning motivation. Interaction and support from an online community with similar interests can enhance the enthusiasm for learning among Islamic learners. In the context of social media, learners can provide mutual encouragement, share successes, and motivate each other in studying Islam. The use of social media also contributes to the improvement of self-directed learning in Islamic education. Through social media, learners have broader access to various content, learning resources, and references that they can independently utilize. They have the freedom to choose topics of interest, organize their learning schedules, and adjust learning methods according to their personal learning styles.

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¹²Zahara, M. I., & Syahroni, A. Implementasi media sosial sebagai sarana pembelajaran agama Islam di Pondok Pesantren Darul Fadhilah. *Al-Ibtida: Jurnal Pendidikan Guru MI*. (2018), 5 (1), 65-80.

¹³Utami, D., Aziz, F., & Kurniawan, R. Pemanfaatan media sosial sebagai pendukung pembelajaran agama Islam di perguruan tinggi. *Jurnal Ilmu Tarbiyah*, (2014), 10 (1), 65-80.

¹⁴Zainuddin, Z., & Perera, C. J. *WhatsApp as a collaborative learning tool: A study of students' interaction, engagement, and satisfaction*. *Interactive Learning Environments*, (2019), 27 (8), 1127-1140.

¹⁵Al-Mousa, N. A. *The impact of social media on religious education*. *Journal of Social Media Studies*. (2014), 2 (1), 34-45.

¹⁶Zarwati, Z., & Nurhayati, N. *Penggunaan media sosial sebagai pendukung pembelajaran agama Islam*. *Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan Agama Islam*, (2016), 3 (1), 23-34. Lihat juga, Widiastuti, E., Huda, N., & Khairunisa, A. (2021). *Media sosial sebagai pendukung pembelajaran agama Islam di masa pandemi COVID-19*. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 8 (1), 25-43.

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