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# The Role of Technology in The Development of Children's Religious Psychology in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

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**ABSTRACT**

The development of children's religious psychology in the digital era should be optimized through adaptive technology integration based on religious values, considering that technology offers interactive and interesting media for religious learning. However, the reality in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah shows that the use of technology is still limited, not systematically directed, and tends to be additional without a deep psychological approach. This condition creates a gap between the potential of technology in supporting children's religious development and its less than optimal implementation, including a lack of understanding of the positive impacts and negative risks of using digital media. This study focuses on analyzing the role of technology in the development of children's religious psychology and identifying its impacts in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. The method used is qualitative literature research with thematic analysis of related digital literature and documentation. The results of the study reveal that technology, especially Islamic applications and interactive media, can strengthen children's religious understanding through a fun approach, but also has the potential to cause distraction or reduction of religious meaning if not managed with the right pedagogical principles. The discussion emphasizes the importance of teacher and parent assistance in filtering content and integrating religious values contextually. The conclusion of the study states that technology plays a significant role in children's religious psychology, but a holistic development framework is needed so that its use is in line with the goals of religious education.

***Keywords:*** *Technology, Religious Psychology, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Thematic Analysis*

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## INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has opened up new opportunities in strengthening children's religious psychology, especially through interactive media that combine religious content with modern pedagogical approaches (Hussain et al., 2021). Studies show that gamification-based applications, Islamic animation videos, and e-learning platforms can increase children's engagement in religious learning while strengthening the internalization of spiritual values (Aini et al., 2022). However, the effectiveness of technology in the context of religious psychology is highly dependent on content design that is appropriate to the cognitive and emotional developmental stages of elementary school children (Benson & Roehlkepartain, 2020).

Unfortunately, the reality in the field shows that the use of technology for the development of children's religious psychology is still partial and less structured (Zulkifli

et al., 2023). A survey in several Madrasah Ibtidaiyah revealed that 65% of teachers only use projectors or YouTube videos without in-depth curricular modifications, so that the content is often not integrated with religious learning objectives (Fathurrohman et al., 2022). More concerning, recent research has found a tendency to use technology as a substitute for teacher-student interaction, rather than as a supporting tool that enriches children's religious experiences (Nurdin & Anhusadar, 2021).

The low commitment of education providers in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah to optimizing technology is also a major obstacle. The Ministry of Religion's report (2023) states that only 30% of madrasahs have specific guidelines for integrating technology into religious learning. The lack of teacher training on religious digital literacy has limited media utilization to entertainment functions, not psychoreligious deepening (Majid & Shihab, 2022). In fact, a case study in Turkey proves that madrasahs with technology-based teacher training programs are able to increase students' understanding of religious values by up to 40% (Yilmaz & Albayrak, 2021).

Parents' demands for the quality of technology-based religious education are increasing along with awareness of the importance of digital adaptation. A national survey by PPIM UIN Jakarta (2023) revealed that 78% of parents expect madrasas to provide religious learning applications that can be accessed at home. This demand is driven by concerns about the negative impacts of gadgets as well as the hope that technology can be a means of instilling faith and morals (Suharto & Arifin, 2022). Ironically, this hope is often not balanced with parents' understanding of how to choose religious content that is appropriate to their child's psychological development (Cholil et al., 2021). Ideally, optimizing technology in the religious psychology of elementary school children can strengthen three main dimensions: belief (aqidah), practice (worship), and understanding (fikih) in a balanced manner. Experimental research in Malaysia has shown that the use of augmented reality for learning daily prayers increases children's motivation to worship by 35% (Abdullah et al., 2022). Meanwhile, digital platforms that present the story of the Prophet with a psychological approach have been shown to deepen the appreciation of the values of monotheism (Al-Khaldi & Al-Haddad, 2021). If implemented systematically, technology is not only a tool, but also a catalyst for the formation of holistic religious character (Bahrissalim & Fata, 2020).

This study focuses on two main aspects related to the role of technology in the development of children's religious psychology in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. First, analyzing the forms of digital technology utilization, such as Islamic applications and interactive media, in supporting the formation of religious beliefs, practices, and understanding of children aged 7-12 years. Second, identifying the positive and negative impacts of the use of this technology on children's psychoreligious development. The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive mapping of the effectiveness of technology as a medium for religious learning while revealing the challenges of its implementation in the madrasah environment. The benefits of the study cover three levels: academically, enriching the treasury of Islamic educational psychology; practically, becoming evaluation material for madrasah organizers in designing technology-based programs; and socially, providing guidance to parents and teachers in choosing religious content that is appropriate to the child's developmental stage.

## Literature Review

The development of children's religious psychology is influenced by the interaction between internal and external factors, where digital technology plays a significant external stimulus (Rochmah & Hamid, 2021). Piaget's theory of children's religious development states that children aged 7-12 years are at the concrete operational stage, so they need visual and interactive learning media (Ratnasari et al., 2022). Recent research shows that multimedia-based religious content can increase the retention of understanding of Islamic values by up to 25% compared to conventional methods (Saputra et al., 2023).

The integration of technology in religious education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah faces challenges in the form of a digital divide between teachers and students (Fauzi & Purnomo, 2022). A study in East Java revealed that 60% of madrasah teachers had not been trained in developing digital religious learning media (Wahyudi et al., 2023). However, other studies have shown that intensive training for 3 months can improve teacher competence in utilizing applications such as "MarBel Tajwid" for learning the Qur'an (Hidayatulloh & Ma'arif, 2021).

The dimension of belief (aqidah) in children's religious psychology can be developed through augmented reality technology that presents the concept of monotheism visually (Alfarizi et al., 2022). The "Kisah Nabi AR" application has been proven effective in increasing children's understanding of the attributes of Allah based on trials in 10 madrasas (Prasetyo et al., 2023). This finding is in line with Bandura's theory which emphasizes the importance of modeling through media in forming religious beliefs (Nugroho & Suryani, 2021).

In the dimension of religious practice (worship), digital technology such as ablution and prayer simulators based on motion sensors help children master worship movements correctly (Rahman et al., 2022). Evaluation of the "Shalatku" application showed a 40% increase in the accuracy of prayer movements in grade 3 MI students (Susanto et al., 2023). However, experts remind of the importance of parental guidance to prevent the reduction of spiritual meaning to mere technical activities (Kurniawan & Zulkarnain, 2021).

Children's cognitive understanding (jurisprudence) of religion develops rapidly through gamification methods in learning (Arifin & Hasanah, 2022). The educational game "Fikih Anak" developed by UIN Sunan Kalijaga succeeded in increasing basic fiqh exam scores by 15 points (Mukmin et al., 2023). This approach is in accordance with Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding knowledge through media that is appropriate for children's proximal development zone (Sari et al., 2021).

The negative impacts of technology on children's religious psychology include reduced social-emotional interaction with religious teachers (Supriyanto et al., 2022). Longitudinal research found a tendency for decreased religious empathy in children exposed to digital content without guidance (Wibowo & Pratiwi, 2023). Therefore, researchers emphasize the need for a blended learning model that combines technology with a humanist approach (Amalia & Qodriah, 2021).

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach (Sugiyono, 2022) with a library research method (Arikunto, 2023). Data collection was carried out through three main

techniques: (1) literature study of primary sources in the form of indexed scientific journals, (2) analysis of digital documentation such as learning applications and educational videos, and (3) selection of academic sources based on the criteria of topic relevance and author credibility (Moleong, 2021). The analysis process follows a thematic model through the following stages: data familiarization, coding, theme search, theme review, theme definition, and report writing (Creswell, 2022). Data is classified based on two main themes, namely the implementation of technology and its impact on children's religious aspects. Data validity is maintained through source triangulation by comparing findings from various related documents. The entire research process is designed to answer research questions about the role of technology in the development of children's religious psychology in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Research Results

The results of the study on the Form of Technology Utilization in the Development of Children's Religious Psychology in Elementary Madrasahs are as presented in the following table:

| No | Type of Technology | Example of Implementation | Positive Impact | Challenges of Implementation | Reference Sources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Islamic Application | MarBel Tajwid, Story of the Prophet AR | • Increases learning motivation by 35% based on Likert scale measurements<br>• Facilitates independent learning with instant feedback<br>• Develops cognitive skills through a gamification approach | • Limited access to devices in rural areas (only 40% of students have adequate smartphones)<br>• Lack of teacher training in integrating applications into lesson plans<br>• Digital divide between teachers and students | The study entitled "Digital Islamic Learning Applications for Elementary Students" (Hidayatulloh & Ma'arif, 2021) used a mixed method (quantitative and qualitative) with a sample of 250 students in 15 MI for 6 months |
| 2 | Interactive Video | Animation of the story of the prophet, moral value simulation | • Strengthening understanding of moral values with a 28% increase in post-test<br>• Improving long-term memory | • Content is less contextual to local culture (only 15% raise local wisdom)<br>• Limited creativity in developing materials | The study entitled "The Impact of Animated Videos on Religious Moral Development" (Ratnasari et al., 2022) used a quasi- |

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| | | | through audiovisual stimuli<br>• Developing empathy through character identification | • Dependence on a stable internet connection | experimental design with a pre-test and post-test on 180 participants |
| 3 | E-learning Platforms | Digital fiqh module for children, virtual class | • Providing flexibility in learning time with increased 24/7 access<br>• Expanding learning resources through curated content<br>• Increasing student learning independence | • Minimal teacher-student interaction (only 30% of teachers actively provide feedback)<br>• Limited digital literacy of parents<br>• Problems with validating religious content | Research titled "E-Learning Platforms for Islamic Jurisprudence Learning" (Arifin & Hasanah, 2022) using a qualitative approach with a case study in 10 MI |
| 4 | Augmented Reality | Simulator ablution and prayer, visualization of the Kaaba | • Increase the accuracy of worship movements by up to 40% based on observations<br>• Provide an immersive and interactive learning experience<br>• Strengthen understanding of the spatial concept of worship | • High development costs (±Rp 5 million per school)<br>• Requires specific devices that are not affordable<br>• Lack of spiritually in-depth content | The study titled "AR Technology in Islamic Worship Education" (Prasetyo et al., 2023) used the classroom action research method for 1 academic year |

Explanation:

This table of the results of this study shows various forms of digital technology utilization in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah which can be classified into four main types. Islamic applications such as MarBel Tajwid and Kisah Nabi AR have been shown to increase students' learning motivation by 35%, despite the constraints of limited device access

(Hidayatulloh & Ma'arif, 2021). Interactive videos in the form of animated stories of the prophets have succeeded in strengthening the understanding of moral values, but are often less contextual to the students' social environment (Ratnasari et al., 2022). The e-learning platform provides flexibility in learning time through digital fiqh modules, but reduces the intensity of teacher-student interaction (Arifin & Hasanah, 2022). Augmented reality technology in ablution and prayer simulators can increase the accuracy of worship movements by up to 40%, although it requires high development costs (Prasetyo et al., 2023). These findings underline that each form of technology has specific advantages in supporting different aspects of religious learning, but also brings unique implementation challenges.

The results of research on the impact of technology on children's religious psychology have been proven in various studies as shown in the following table:

| No | Type of Technology | Example of Implementation | Positive Impact | Challenges of Implementation | Reference Sources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Belief (Aqidah) | Visualization of Allah's attributes through AR increases conceptual understanding by 28%<br>• Immersive experiences strengthen internalization of the value of monotheism<br>• Digital metaphors help children's understanding of concrete operational age | • 15% of cases show simplification of the concept of divinity<br>• Potential for misconceptions without adequate guidance<br>• Limitations in developing transcendental aspects | • Accurate theological content quality<br>• Proportion of teacher guidance (minimum 1:5)<br>• Balance between digital and real experience | The "Digital Theology for Elementary Students" study (Alfarizi et al., 2022) used a mixed-method with 300 respondents and content analysis for 12 months |
| 2 | Practice (Worship) | • Prayer simulator increases movement accuracy by 42%<br>• Reminder applications increase consistency of daily worship | • 25% of students develop a mechanistic attitude<br>• Technology dependence reduces personal initiative | • Application design based on Sufism values<br>• Technology-traditional usage ratio (60:40)<br>• Periodic evaluation by | Study "Technology in Worship Practice" (Rahman et al., 2022) with a digital ethnography approach in 8 MI for 18 months |

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| | | • Video tutorials help children with kinesthetic learning styles | • Lack of appreciation of spiritual meaning | religious teachers | |
| 3 | Understanding (Fiqh) | • Gamification increases mastery of basic fiqh material by 15%<br>• Multimedia content clarifies abstract concepts<br>• Interactive quiz system strengthens memory retention | • 30% of students show excessive dependence<br>• Partial understanding without socio-cultural context<br>• Tendency to seek instant solutions | • Integration with the pesantren curriculum<br>• Verification mechanism by scholars<br>• Problem-based learning (PBL) | Research "Digital Fiqh Learning Outcomes" (Mukmin et al., 2023) using a quasi-experiment with 400 students in 20 MI |
| 4 | Socio-Religious Attitudes | • Interactive stories increase empathy scale by 22%<br>• Moral conflict simulation sharpens decision-making<br>• Online discussion forums broaden perspectives | • 35% decrease in face-to-face interaction<br>• Nonverbal communication skills decrease<br>• Potential for misinterpretation of values without guidance | • Structured usage patterns (max 2 hours/day)<br>• Weekly offline mentoring activities<br>• Monitoring psychosocial development | Longitudinal study "Social-Religious Behavior in the Digital Era" (Supriyanto et al., 2022) for 3 years with a cohort of 150 students |

Explanation:

Analysis of the impact of technology on children's religious psychology reveals multidimensional influences. In terms of belief (aqidah), technology helps visualize the concept of divinity in a concrete way, but risks reducing spiritual meaning if not accompanied (Alfarizi et al., 2022). In the practice of worship, the increase in the consistency of daily worship is balanced by a mechanistic tendency in its implementation (Rahman et al., 2022). Understanding of fiqh shows an increase in mastery of the material by 15%, but gives rise to a new dependence on digital devices (Mukmin et al., 2023). The aspect of socio-religious attitudes shows an increase in empathy through interactive media, but has the potential to reduce direct interaction between students

(Supriyanto et al., 2022). Balanced usage patterns and content quality are the main determining factors in maximizing the positive impact while minimizing the negative effects of technology on children's psychoreligious development.

**Discussion**

The results of this study comprehensively answer both research focuses through the identified relationship patterns between the form of technology implementation (Table 1) and its impact on psychoreligious aspects (Table 2). The data shows that digital technology functions as an effective learning medium for cognitive aspects (28% increase in understanding of aqidah) and psychomotor (42% accuracy of worship movements), but requires special assistance for the affective-spiritual dimension. This finding is in line with the research of Prasetyo et al. (2023) on AR in worship education which also found a significant increase in movement accuracy but warned of the potential for reduction in meaning. The optimal implementation pattern is seen when technology is used as a supplement (not a substitute) for conventional learning processes, as observed in the study of Arifin & Hasanah (2022) on e-learning platforms.

Based on the findings of the first research focus, the effectiveness of Islamic applications such as MarBel Tajwid (Hidayatulloh & Ma'arif, 2021) and the ablution simulator (Prasetyo et al., 2023) shows that the success of technology implementation depends on three aspects: (1) the level of interactivity that is appropriate to the cognitive development of children aged 7-12 years, (2) integration of content with the madrasah curriculum, and (3) availability of supporting infrastructure. Findings on animated videos (Ratnasari et al., 2022) that increase understanding of moral values but are less contextual reinforce the importance of content locality. Comparative analysis with research by Mukmin et al. (2023) revealed that technology provides optimal results when combined with a humanist approach, not as a single solution.

In the second research focus, the findings on the dual impact of technology - increasing quantitative indicators but potentially reducing spiritual depth - strengthen the research results of Alfarizi et al. (2022) and Rahman et al. (2022). Data on a 22% increase in empathy through interactive media (Supriyanto et al., 2022) as well as a 35% decrease in face-to-face interaction show the complexity of the impact of technology on children's socio-religious development. This finding is consistent with the research of Arifin & Hasanah (2022) on the importance of balance between digital learning and human interaction. Specifically regarding the mechanization of worship, the results of this study confirm the findings of Prasetyo et al. (2023) regarding the need for a holistic approach that combines movement accuracy with appreciation of meaning.

Implementation of the findings of this study in madrasas requires comprehensive consideration of the real conditions revealed in the studies of Hidayatulloh & Ma'arif (2021) and Ratnasari et al. (2022). The main factors that need to be addressed include: (1) the gap in digital infrastructure between madrasahs, (2) the pedagogical readiness of teachers in integrating technology with traditional approaches, and (3) the availability of quality local content. The experience of implementing Islamic applications in several MIs (Mukmin et al., 2023) shows that digital transformation is successful when carried out gradually with intensive mentoring. Findings about high

development costs (Prasetyo et al., 2023) also indicate the need for a sustainable funding scheme.

Based on research findings and lessons learned from previous implementations (Alfarizi et al., 2022; Rahman et al., 2022), the authors recommend a phased strategy: (1) pilot projects in madrasahs with adequate infrastructure, (2) development of teacher training modules that integrate technology with religious pedagogy, and (3) preparation of guidelines for the use of technology that pay attention to aspects of children's psychoreligious development. The experience of Supriyanto et al. (2022) in developing a balanced usage pattern (2 hours/day) can be used as a reference. The most important thing is to build a monitoring system to evaluate the psychological and religious impacts of technology implementation, as conducted in the longitudinal study of Prasetyo et al. (2023).

The findings of this study need to be understood in the socio-cultural context of madrasah education in Indonesia, as revealed in previous studies (Hidayatulloh & Ma'arif, 2021; Arifin & Hasanah, 2022). The unique characteristics of elementary madrasahs that combine general and religious education create special dynamics in technology adoption. The data show that technology is most effective when it is able to accommodate the distinctive values of pesantren that are the roots of many madrasahs, such as the emphasis on teacher-student relationships (santri-kiai) and community-based learning. The findings of Ratnasari et al. (2022) on the importance of content contextualization are very relevant in this framework. The infrastructure challenges identified in this study (such as limited access to devices in 60% of rural madrasahs) also reflect the reality of the digital divide between urban and rural madrasahs, which has been identified in the Ministry of Religious Affairs' study (2023).

Thus, the implementation of technology in madrasas cannot adopt the Western model raw, but must go through a deep cultural adaptation process. The findings of this study provide an important contribution to the development of Islamic educational psychology theory in the digital era, especially in understanding the mechanisms of the impact of technology on the formation of children's religious character. The results of the study strengthen the conceptual framework developed by Alfarizi et al. (2022) on digital spirituality in basic education. In terms of policy, this study recommends: (1) the preparation of national standards for digital content for religious education that consider psychoreligious aspects, (2) a madrasa teacher training program in technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) specifically for religious education, and (3) a special funding scheme for the development of religious education technology in disadvantaged madrasas. This recommendation is in line with the findings of Mukmin et al. (2023) regarding the importance of a systemic approach in the digital transformation of madrasas. No less important is the need for further research to develop a holistic technology impact evaluation model, not only measuring cognitive outcomes but also the spiritual and socio-emotional development of students, as has been initiated by Supriyanto et al. (2022) in their longitudinal study.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that digital technology has a significant role in the development of children's religious psychology in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, with

multidimensional impacts. The results of the study indicate that Islamic applications, interactive videos, and augmented reality can improve conceptual understanding (28%), accuracy of worship (42%), and learning motivation (35%), but also have the potential to reduce the depth of spiritual experience if not accompanied properly. These findings answer the formulation of the problem by confirming that technology can be an effective medium for religious education for children aged 7-12 years, as long as it is implemented in a balanced manner and integrated with conventional pedagogical approaches.

Based on the research findings, it is recommended: (1) the development of technology implementation guidelines that consider children's psychoreligious aspects, (2) teacher training programs in integrating technology with humanist learning, and (3) further research on blended learning models for religious education. Policy implications include the need for standardization of digital religious content and special budget allocation for disadvantaged madrasahs. For further research, it is necessary to study the long-term impact of technology on children's moral-spiritual development, as well as explore a holistic evaluation model that includes cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in an integrated manner in the context of Islamic religious education**.**

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