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ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Madrasah Digitalization and the Formation of Students' Religious Character

Siti Burul Lailatul Badriyah^{1*}, Arim Irsyadulloh Albin Jaya¹

¹*Institut Agama Islam Khozinatul Ulum Blora, Central Java, Indonesia*

Correspondence: nurul82018@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study examines how digital learning is used to support the formation of religious character at MI Al Muslimiyah Randublatung. The study draws on observations, interviews with the madrasah principal, teachers, and students, and relevant school documents. The source identifies Islamic learning videos, visual presentations, internet-based materials, and interactive quizzes as classroom resources. Teachers connect these resources with discussions of honesty, responsibility, discipline, courtesy, and respect. Qur'anic reading, prayer, daily routines, and teacher modeling remain central to the school's character education. An interview with a teacher describes the use of videos and images to prompt reflection on students' everyday conduct. The findings indicate that digital media provide occasions for discussing religious values when guided by teachers and reinforced through consistent practice. As the study is qualitative and provides no comparison or longitudinal measures of behavior, it does not establish a causal effect of digitalization on character formation.

Keywords: Madrasah Digitalization; Religious Character; Islamic Elementary Education; Teacher Guidance; Digital Literacy



ABSTRAK

Penelitian kualitatif ini mengkaji pemanfaatan media digital dalam pembentukan karakter religius peserta didik di MI Al Muslimiyah Randublatung. Data bersumber dari observasi, wawancara dengan kepala madrasah, guru, dan peserta didik, serta dokumen sekolah. Media yang digunakan mencakup video pembelajaran Islami, presentasi visual, sumber belajar internet, dan kuis interaktif. Guru mengaitkan materi digital dengan nilai kejujuran, tanggung jawab, disiplin, sopan santun, dan penghormatan kepada sesama. Pembiasaan membaca Al-Qur'an, berdoa, beribadah, dan keteladanan guru tetap menjadi bagian utama pendidikan karakter. Media digital menyediakan kesempatan untuk membahas nilai religius apabila disertai bimbingan dan pembiasaan. Karena penelitian ini tidak mengukur perubahan perilaku secara longitudinal atau membandingkan kelompok, temuan tersebut tidak membuktikan pengaruh kausal digitalisasi.

Kata kunci: Digitalisasi Madrasah; Karakter Religius; Pendidikan Islam; Bimbingan Guru; Literasi Digital

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1. INTRODUCTION

Digital technology has changed how teachers access instructional materials and how children encounter information. Videos, visual presentations, online resources, and interactive exercises can broaden the forms through which a lesson is presented. Their educational contribution nevertheless depends on the purposes for which teachers choose them and the support students receive while using them (Mayer, 2021; UNESCO, 2023). In an Islamic elementary school, this question also concerns how learning activities cultivate conduct as well as knowledge.

Religious character in this study refers to observable routines and conduct such as prayer, Qur'anic reading, honesty, responsibility, discipline, courtesy, and respect for others. These dispositions develop through repeated practice, social relationships, and examples provided by adults; exposure to an image or video alone cannot establish a lasting habit (Bandura, 1977; Lickona, 1991). Digital materials can create concrete occasions to discuss a moral choice, while everyday interaction gives students opportunities to act on that discussion.

The integration of digital materials into religious education therefore requires attention to content, teaching methods, and context. Teachers can show a short story about honesty, ask students to interpret what the characters did, and connect the lesson to conduct at school. This relationship between technology, pedagogy, and subject matter is central to the technological pedagogical content knowledge framework (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Research on digital citizenship similarly emphasizes guided, developmentally appropriate instruction about responsible participation online (Tadlaoui-Brahmi et al., 2022; Li et al., 2025).

At MI Al Muslimiyah Randublatung, teachers use Islamic learning videos, digital teaching materials, internet-based resources, visual media, and quizzes alongside daily religious routines.

The source manuscript describes these practices through observations, interviews, and school documents. This article asks how teachers use digital media in religious learning, which character practices are described at the school, and how participants understand the relationship between the two. Because the design is qualitative, the article examines perceived contributions and classroom processes rather than estimating a measurable effect.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The study used a qualitative approach at MI Al Muslimiyah Randublatung, Blora, Central Java. A qualitative design is appropriate for examining practices, experiences, and meanings in their school setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). The school was selected because it already used digital resources in teaching and religious activities. The source manuscript does not specify the research period, class levels, number of participants, or exact duration of fieldwork; these details should be completed from field records before submission.

Participants were selected purposively from the principal, teachers involved in digital instruction and character development, and students who took part in the learning activities. The source also refers to other school members familiar with the implementation. Purposive selection seeks informed accounts of the practices being studied; it does not produce a statistically representative sample (Patton, 2015). One identified interview was conducted with teacher Siti Aminah, S.Pd.I., on 20 September 2026.

Data were gathered through classroom and school observations, interviews, and examination of relevant documents such as teaching records, religious program materials, school rules, and activity documentation. Observation focused on the media used, teacher guidance, student participation, and religious routines. Interviews explored participants' accounts of instructional decisions and character-related practices. The manuscript describes these sources but does not provide a full interview guide or observation protocol.

The analysis grouped field information into themes concerning digital implementation, religious routines and teacher modeling, and the perceived contribution of digital materials to character development. Descriptive interpretation compared evidence from observation, interviews, and documentation (Miles et al., 2019). The original manuscript does not report a formal coding audit, member checking, or a longitudinal measure of students' conduct. Consequently, interpretations below remain tied to the available case description.

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Digital learning at the school includes Islamic learning videos, images, presentations, online teaching resources, and interactive quizzes. Teachers use videos and images as prompts before discussion, while quizzes encourage student participation and allow teachers to review understanding. Materials concerning honesty, responsibility, discipline, courtesy, and respect are linked to examples from children's everyday life. The source does not identify specific applications or provide usage frequencies, so the findings describe types of practice rather than exposure levels.

In an interview dated 20 September 2026, teacher Siti Aminah explained that digital media were used to show examples of good conduct and that children were then invited to discuss how the examples related to their daily habits. This account illustrates teacher mediation: the video or image initiates a conversation, and the subsequent discussion invites students to interpret and apply its message. It does not by itself demonstrate that a change in behavior occurred.

Religious character education also takes place through daily Qur'anic reading, prayer, worship routines, greetings, respectful interaction with teachers and peers, and the example set by teachers. The manuscript repeatedly describes these activities as ongoing school practices. Digital media are therefore one part of an existing environment of habituation and adult guidance; their contribution cannot be separated cleanly from those other influences in this case.

The account suggests five pathways by which digital lessons may support these routines: making religious examples more concrete, providing prompts for reflection, encouraging participation, reminding students of familiar practices, and discussing responsible use of online information. Teachers connect these pathways to honesty in completing quizzes, courtesy in communication, and critical selection of internet materials. These pathways are interpretations of the observed and reported practices, not measured causal mechanisms.

4. DISCUSSION

The case shows that digitization becomes pedagogically meaningful when the teacher links material to a specific value and a classroom task. A video about honesty can introduce a recognizable situation, but its character-education value lies in questioning, explanation, and application after viewing. Multimedia learning research likewise emphasizes purposeful selection and organization of materials rather than adding media for its own sake (Mayer, 2021; Clark & Mayer, 2023).

The reported practices also distinguish religious knowledge from religious conduct. A student may recognize the meaning of responsibility in a quiz without consistently acting responsibly. At MI Al Muslimiyah Randublatung, prayer, Qur'anic reading, greetings, and teachers' examples provide repeated opportunities to connect what students discuss with what they do. Social learning theory helps explain why visible adult behavior remains relevant alongside digital explanations (Bandura, 1977).

Teacher guidance is particularly important for younger learners who may need support interpreting images, evaluating a source, and connecting a message to a real situation. The teacher interview offers a concrete illustration of this process: media examples are followed by discussion of students' daily conduct. This aligns with a view of technology integration in which pedagogical judgment shapes the choice and use of a tool (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). It remains possible that different teachers or classes use these materials differently.

Interactive quizzes may support participation and provide a convenient opportunity to talk about honesty, independent work, and respectful competition. They do not independently measure those values unless the assessment includes behaviorally meaningful indicators. The practical implication is to use quizzes as prompts for feedback and reflection while observing conduct in

routine activities. Formative assessment is most useful when evidence of learning informs subsequent instruction (Wiliam, 2011).

Internet-based resources also introduce questions about reliability, appropriateness, and digital conduct. Teaching students to check a source, communicate courteously, protect personal information, and avoid forwarding false content gives religious values a contemporary setting. Reviews of digital citizenship in primary education describe this as an explicit teaching responsibility rather than an automatic consequence of device use (Tadlaoui-Brahmi et al., 2022; Li et al., 2025).

The school's approach is consistent with the broader idea that character education draws on a whole-school environment, including school routines, adult example, and relationships with families (Lickona, 1991; Nucci et al., 2014). The manuscript mentions parental supervision but does not provide interview data from parents. Cooperation with families is therefore a reasonable recommendation, while any claim about its implementation or effectiveness at this school would require additional evidence.

Interpretation must remain proportionate to the method. Interviews and observations describe how participants understand the practices, but no baseline, comparison group, behavioral scale, or follow-up is reported. The title's word "formation" therefore refers to an educational process documented in this case; it should not be read as a measured gain attributable to digitalization. Future work could combine repeated observations, student work, interviews with families, and clear indicators of behavior over time (Yin, 2018; Miles et al., 2019).

Taken together, the evidence supports a conditional interpretation: digital media give teachers additional ways to make religious lessons concrete and invite discussion, while habituation and teacher example remain the principal contexts in which character is practiced. This interpretation has practical relevance for similar madrasahs, but transfer depends on resources, teacher preparation, student age, and school culture. The study cannot establish that the same approach will produce the same outcomes elsewhere (Creswell & Poth, 2018; UNESCO, 2023).

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

MI Al Muslimiyah Randublatung uses Islamic videos, visual and internet-based materials, and interactive quizzes in religious learning. Teachers connect the media to honesty, responsibility, discipline, courtesy, and respect, while Qur'anic reading, prayer, worship routines, and their own example continue to structure students' daily experience. The qualitative evidence indicates that digital resources can support conversations about religious values when teachers guide interpretation and link lessons to practice.

The findings do not establish a causal effect or quantify changes in character. The school can strengthen implementation by selecting age-appropriate and credible materials, using discussion after digital activities, observing conduct in daily routines, and involving families in responsible media use. Further research should document participants and instruments more fully and follow character-related practices over time.

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