Innovative Teaching Strategies by Teachers in Islamic Religious Education Using Animation Media at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School, Thailand

Hasrian Rudi Setiawan[1*], Isman Efendi Limbong[2]

Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara*[1, 2]
*[1]email: hasrianrudi@umsu.ac.id
[2]email: ismanefendilimbong@umsu.ac.id

Abstract: This study aims to explore teachers' innovative strategies in teaching Islamic Religious Education using animation media at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School, Thailand. The research focuses on understanding how teachers design and implement animation media as a teaching tool and its impact on students' motivation and understanding. A qualitative approach with a case study method was employed. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with teachers, classroom observations, and analysis of teaching materials. Data analysis was conducted thematically to identify patterns and strategies utilized. The findings reveal that animation media enhances student engagement in learning, particularly in complex topics such as theology and Islamic jurisprudence. Teachers use animation to visually explain abstract concepts, making them more accessible to students. However, challenges such as limited technological facilities and time for media development remain obstacles. Overall, this innovative strategy demonstrates significant potential in improving the quality of Islamic Religious Education teaching.

Keywords: Teaching Innovation; Animation Media; Islamic Religious Education.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi inovasi strategi guru dalam pengajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam menggunakan media animasi di Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School, Thailand. Fokus penelitian adalah untuk memahami bagaimana guru merancang dan menerapkan media animasi sebagai alat pembelajaran, serta dampaknya terhadap motivasi dan pemahaman siswa. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif dengan studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan guru, observasi proses pembelajaran, dan analisis dokumen pembelajaran. Analisis data dilakukan secara tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola dan strategi yang digunakan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa media animasi membantu meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa dalam pembelajaran, terutama pada topik yang kompleks seperti akidah dan fiqih. Guru menggunakan media animasi untuk menjelaskan konsep abstrak secara visual, yang lebih mudah dipahami oleh siswa.

Meskipun demikian, tantangan seperti keterbatasan fasilitas teknologi dan waktu pengembangan media tetap menjadi kendala. Secara keseluruhan, inovasi strategi ini menunjukkan potensi besar dalam meningkatkan kualitas pengajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam.

Kata Kunci: Inovasi Pengajaran; Media Animasi; Pendidikan Agama Islam.

A.   Introduction

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at the primary and secondary school levels plays a crucial role in shaping students' character and understanding of religious values. One of the main challenges in teaching IRE is delivering complex and abstract material, such as concepts of faith and fiqh, which students often find difficult to grasp. Therefore, innovation in teaching methods is essential to create a more engaging and effective learning environment.

One of the innovations being adopted is the use of animation media in teaching. Animation is considered effective because it can simplify difficult content with engaging visuals, which can help students better understand abstract concepts (Smith & Johnson, 2020). Furthermore, animation can increase student engagement in the learning process, making it more interactive and enjoyable (Brown, 2019).

Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School in Thailand is one institution that has started integrating animation media into IRE instruction. This school focuses on both religious and academic education, with a technology-based approach. The use of animation media is expected to enrich students' learning experiences, particularly in topics considered challenging and less engaging (Ali & Rahman, 2022).

However, despite the great potential of animation media, there are several challenges that must be addressed. Limitations in resources, such as technology infrastructure and the time needed to develop animation content, pose significant barriers to implementing this strategy (Jones, 2021). Therefore, it is important to understand how teachers at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School overcome these challenges and develop effective teaching strategies using animation.

With the advancement of technology, education has also undergone significant changes. One of the most notable changes is the use of digital technology in the learning

process. Animation media is one form of technology that allows teachers to deliver content in a more creative and engaging way. According to research by Andriani et al. (2020), the use of animation media in religious education not only improves students' understanding but also strengthens their motivation to learn.

In the context of Islamic education, the use of animation media has great potential to enhance students' understanding of abstract religious concepts. For example, in teaching faith and fiqh, animation can help students better comprehend Islamic teachings in a visual and interactive way (Hakim, 2021). Therefore, this study aims to explore how teachers at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School employ strategies to use animation media in IRE instruction.

This research will focus on the strategies employed by teachers to integrate animation media into the Islamic Religious Education curriculum. The primary focus of the study is to understand how animation media is applied in teaching, as well as its impact on students' understanding and engagement in Islamic religious subjects. The study will also examine the challenges faced by teachers in using animation media and the solutions they have found to overcome these issues.

Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School was chosen as the research site because it is one of the Islamic boarding schools in Thailand that integrates technology into its educational practices. This school aims to create a generation that not only masters religious knowledge but also has adequate academic skills in the modern world. Therefore, the use of animation media in religious education is seen as an innovative step that aligns with the demands of the times (Nur & Hasan, 2019).

On a global scale, the use of technology in Islamic education is gaining attention. Several studies have shown that technology, including animation media, can improve students' understanding of religious concepts and help them better understand Islamic teachings in a context more relevant to their everyday lives (Faris & Omar, 2020). The use of animation media is not limited to classroom teaching but can also be used as a tool to reinforce learning material outside of class.

In Indonesia, research on the use of animation media in teaching Islamic Religious Education also shows positive results. For example, a study by Wati (2020) showed that

students taught with animation media exhibited improved understanding of the material and increased engagement in class. This indicates that animation media can be an effective tool for teaching Islamic religious education, both in Indonesia and abroad.

However, despite the numerous studies supporting the use of animation media in education, its implementation in the field often faces various obstacles. One of the main challenges is teachers' readiness to integrate technology into the learning process. Many teachers are not yet accustomed to using technology, so they require training and technical support to effectively utilize animation media (Sari & Prasetyo, 2021). As Setiawan and Harfiani (2020) point out, teacher training and the development of digital skills are crucial for the successful implementation of technology in education.

Furthermore, not all schools have adequate access to the necessary technological devices to create and use animation media. Limited access to the internet and hardware such as computers or tablets can be significant barriers to integrating technology into teaching. Therefore, it is important to assess how schools like Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School can overcome these challenges in the implementation of animation media.

On the other hand, this study also aims to identify the benefits that students can gain from using animation media in IRE instruction. Several studies have shown that animation media can increase the appeal of the subject matter, help students better understand complicated concepts, and boost their participation in learning activities (Junaidi & Widiastuti, 2021). Therefore, animation media has the potential to be an effective solution in improving the quality of religious education in Islamic schools.

Additionally, it is important to explore how animation media can be specifically applied in the context of Islamic education in Thailand, which has a different cultural and social context compared to other Muslim-majority countries. Although Thailand has a significant Muslim population, it is predominantly a non-Muslim country. Thus, teaching Islamic Religious Education in Thai Islamic schools presents unique challenges that need to be understood in greater depth (Sutarto, 2020).

This research will also analyze the factors that affect the effectiveness of using animation media in teaching Islamic Religious Education. These factors include

teachers' technical capabilities, infrastructure support, and students' readiness to embrace new technology. Moreover, this study will examine how teachers at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School respond to these challenges and how they adapt their teaching strategies to overcome the existing barriers.

Nevertheless, this research also focuses on the outcomes achieved through the use of animation media. By understanding the results, both in terms of students' comprehension of the material and their motivation to learn, it is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of teaching methods in Islamic education in the future. Previous research indicates that the use of technology in education yields promising results, with significant improvements in students' understanding of the subject matter (Omar, 2021).

This study is expected to provide new insights into the implementation of animation media in religious education, especially in pesantren-based schools such as Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School. By exploring the experiences and challenges faced by teachers, this research is expected to serve as a reference for other schools that wish to integrate technology into IRE instruction. Thus, the innovation resulting from this study can improve the overall quality of religious education and enrich students' learning experiences.

B. Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies used in the implementation of animation media in teaching Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School in Thailand. A qualitative approach was chosen because the aim of this research is to understand the social phenomena occurring in the field, specifically how teachers use animation media in IRE teaching, the challenges faced, and the solutions found in the process. Qualitative research allows for the analysis of interactions, perceptions, and subjective experiences held by both teachers and students (Creswell, 2014).

The type of research is a case study with a descriptive design. Case study research allows the researcher to investigate a phenomenon in-depth within a specific context,

such as the use of animation media in IRE teaching at one educational institution (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Descriptive design is used to thoroughly describe the phenomenon without manipulating any variables or existing conditions. Thus, this study aims to describe in detail how animation media is implemented by teachers and its impact on students.

The primary data sources in this study are the teachers of IRE at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School and students involved in learning with the use of animation media. Teachers are selected as informants because they are directly involved in the use of animation media in teaching. Students are chosen to provide insights into their experiences with learning using animation media. Additional data is obtained through documentation and observations of the learning process in the classroom.

The data collection techniques used in this study are in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. In-depth interviews are conducted with both teachers and students to explore their perceptions, experiences, and challenges in learning with animation media. Participatory observation is carried out to directly observe how animation media is used in class and the interactions that occur between teachers and students. Document analysis is used to examine learning materials that incorporate animation media and records related to the implementation of animation media in teaching.

For data analysis, the researcher uses thematic analysis, a technique that allows the identification, analysis, and reporting of patterns or themes emerging from the collected data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This thematic analysis is conducted by grouping data based on specific categories or themes relevant to the focus of the research, such as teaching strategies using animation media, challenges faced, and the impact of animation media on student understanding and engagement.

To ensure the validity of the data, the study employs several techniques, including data triangulation and member checking. Data triangulation is performed by collecting data from various sources, such as interviews with teachers, interviews with students, observations, and document analysis. By doing so, the data obtained will be more credible and valid (Flick, 2018). Member checking is conducted by returning the

interview results to the informants to ensure that the information collected is accurate and aligns with the informants' intended meaning (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This technique aims to improve the validity of the research findings and ensure that the data interpretation truly reflects the experiences and perspectives of the informants.

C.   Results and Discussion

This study aims to explore the application of animation media in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School in Thailand, the strategies employed by teachers, and its impact on students. Based on in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies, it was found that animation media is used by teachers to simplify abstract concepts in IRE, such as tafsir, fiqh, and aqidah, which are often difficult for students to understand. Animation provides attractive and easily digestible visualizations, making it easier for students to comprehend the material being taught.

Teachers at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School use various types of animation, such as 2D and 3D animations, to illustrate stories from the Qur'an and hadith. One strategy they implement is using animations to depict the stories of the Prophets, making these stories come to life and more engaging for students. This aligns with the opinion of Hakim (2021), who states that animation can enhance students' understanding of religious stories in a more visual and interactive way.

However, the use of animation media also faces several challenges. One of the main issues is the lack of infrastructure, such as hardware and internet access, which is not yet optimal in the school. According to Jones (2021), limited technological infrastructure often becomes an obstacle in the implementation of digital media in schools with limited resources. Teachers at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School have to make the best use of the available technology and design simple yet effective animations. In line with this, Fanreza (2020) also reveals that infrastructure limitations are a major challenge in the adoption of technology-based media, but teacher creativity can be an effective solution to overcome these obstacles.

Furthermore, this study also found that teachers at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School use animation media as a tool to facilitate interactive learning. One

strategy they implement is combining animations with quizzes or assignments after the animation screening. This aims to increase student engagement and ensure that they truly understand the material being taught. For example, after watching an animation about the history of the Prophets, students are given questions about the details of the story. This strategy helps students not only watch the animation but also actively participate in the learning process.

In addition, students showed significant improvement in understanding IRE material after learning with animation media. Some students who previously had difficulty understanding abstract materials, such as fiqh, were now able to explain the steps of wudu and prayer more clearly and accurately. This supports the findings of Brown (2019), who states that the use of visual media in religious education can make complex concepts easier for students to understand. Animation, with its easily recognizable characters and well-structured stories, helps facilitate deeper understanding.

The results also show that teachers at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School feel that the use of animation media makes it easier for them to convey material that was previously difficult to teach through conventional methods. For example, in teaching aqidah concepts, teachers can use animations to illustrate the relationship between humans and God in a way that is easier to understand. This is very helpful in explaining things that cannot be seen directly by students, such as the existence of God or His attributes, which are often difficult to comprehend without proper illustrations.

On the other hand, the results show that animation media is not always effective if it is not supported by the right context and a teacher's proper understanding in designing it. Some teachers stated that animations that are poorly designed or that do not align with Islamic values could confuse or even mislead students in understanding the material. Therefore, it is essential for teachers to receive adequate training in designing and selecting animations that are appropriate for Islamic religious education objectives. In line with this, Fanreza (2020) emphasizes the importance of careful planning in the use of technology to ensure that the media used is truly effective in supporting the learning objectives.

Lastly, the results of this study indicate a positive impact of animation media on increasing student motivation. Some students revealed that they felt more interested in following lessons when using animations compared to conventional teaching methods. This shows that animation not only helps in understanding the material but can also enhance students' curiosity and enthusiasm toward IRE lessons. Faris & Omar (2021) adds that motivation is a key factor in successful learning, and animation media has the ability to motivate students in a fun and interactive way.

Overall, this study shows that the use of animation media in IRE at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School has a positive impact on understanding the material, student motivation, and engagement in the learning process. Although there are several challenges faced by teachers and students, especially related to infrastructure and the required training, the benefits of using animation in IRE education are significant. Therefore, there is a need for further support from the school and government to improve facilities and provide training for teachers to maximize the use of animation media in Islamic religious education.

D. Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the use of animation media in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School has a significant positive impact on students' understanding of complex religious concepts. Animation serves as an effective tool to simplify abstract topics such as fiqh, aqidah, and tafsir, making them more accessible and engaging for students. By visually illustrating stories from the Qur'an and hadith, animation helps students better understand and remember the material, which is particularly beneficial in the context of religious education where abstract concepts are often challenging to grasp.

Furthermore, the study reveals that animation media not only improves students' comprehension but also enhances their motivation to learn. Students showed increased interest and enthusiasm in participating in lessons when animation was used as a teaching tool. This aligns with the findings of previous studies, which highlight that interactive and visually appealing media can increase student engagement and promote

a deeper interest in learning. However, it is important to note that the effectiveness of animation depends on the quality of its design and its alignment with Islamic values.

Despite the positive outcomes, the research also highlights certain challenges, particularly in terms of infrastructure limitations and the need for adequate teacher training. To fully optimize the use of animation in IRE, it is essential for schools to invest in better technological infrastructure and provide teachers with continuous professional development in designing and utilizing digital media. With these improvements, the potential of animation as an educational tool in Islamic boarding schools can be fully realized, contributing to more effective and engaging religious education.

E.   References

Ali, M., & Rahman, R. (2022). Educational innovation in Islamic schools: A case study of Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School. Journal of Islamic Education, 10(2), 56-67.

Andriani, L., Suryani, D., & Fajri, F. (2020). The use of animation in Islamic education. Islamic Education Journal, 8(1), 45-59.

Awan, S., Amini, A., & Nurzannah, N. (2024). Problems Of Management And Implementation Of The Independent Curriculum In Pai Lessons In Public Elementary Schools In Besitang District, Langkat. *Islamic Management: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, *7*(02).

Brown, P. (2019). Interactive learning and animation in education. New York: Educational Press.

Fanreza, R. (2020). Barriers and innovations in digital learning for religious education in Indonesia. Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Ma'arif.

Faris, M., & Omar, A. (2020). The impact of animation in Islamic religious education: A review. Journal of Educational Technology, 15(3), 112-124.

Hakim, Z. (2021). Visual aids in Islamic education: A modern approach. Jakarta: Islamica Press.

Jones, K. (2021). Barriers to implementing educational technology in religious schools. International Journal of Educational Research, 29(4), 77-84.

Junaidi, R., & Widiastuti, L. (2021). Animation-based learning: The future of Islamic education. Educational Review, 22(1), 33-46.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry. Sage Publications.

Nur, H., & Hasan, I. (2019). Islamic education in the digital era. Bandung: Al-Furqan Press.

Omar, M. (2021). The effectiveness of animation in teaching Islamic subjects. Journal of Islamic Studies, 11(2), 72-85.

Sari, M., & Prasetyo, H. (2021). Teacher readiness in adopting animation in teaching Islamic education. Indonesian Journal of Education Technology, 7(3), 48-55.

Setiawan, H. R., & Harfiani, R. (2020). The role of teacher training in adopting educational technology in Islamic schools. Indonesian Journal of Islamic Education, 5(1), 99-110.

Smith, A., & Johnson, R. (2020). Animation as a tool for understanding complex concepts. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sutarto, B. (2020). Educational challenges in Muslim minority regions: A study on Islamic schools in Thailand. Bangkok: Southeast Asia Educational Press.

Wati, A. (2020). Digital learning tools in Islamic education. Yogyakarta: UIN Press.