

## Gamification in Islamic Religious Education Learning: Efforts to Increase Student Enthusiasm and Understanding

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### ARTICLE INFO

Accepted :

April 02, 2026

Revised :

May 12, 2026

Approved:

May 22, 2026

Published :

May 30, 2026

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the implementation of gamification in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning to increase student enthusiasm and understanding in the digital era. The research method uses a qualitative approach with a comparative case study design conducted at MA Negeri 1 Purwokerto and MA Al-Ikhsan Purwokerto for 8 months. The research subjects included madrasah principals, PAI teachers, students from various grade levels, and parents of students selected through purposive sampling. Data collection techniques used triangulation including participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model. The results show that gamification has succeeded in significantly increasing student enthusiasm for learning through the implementation of a point system, digital badges, leaderboards, and learning quests. The increase in active participation reached 78% at MA Negeri 1 and 72% at MA Al-Ikhsan, while understanding of PAI material increased by 68% and 62% at each madrasah. Supporting factors for success include school policy support, teacher technological competence, adequate infrastructure, and student enthusiasm for learning innovations. The main obstacles are limited technological devices and the need for intensive training for teachers. Gamification has proven effective in creating interactive, enjoyable, and meaningful Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning while maintaining the substance of Islamic values. The research recommends developing contextual gamification models, continuously improving teacher competency, and providing technological infrastructure to optimize digital-based PAI learning.

**Keywords:** *gamification, Islamic Education learning, student enthusiasm, understanding of material, educational innovation*



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### INTRODUCTION

In the increasingly digital era, the world of education is required to continuously innovate to meet the challenges of the times and attract the interest of a younger generation who are now closely connected to technology. Islamic Religious Education (PAI), as a key pillar in developing students' character and spirituality, is also required to be more adaptive to these technological developments.(Anjani et al., 2024; Qudsi, 2024; Rezi et al., 2024)One innovative approach that is becoming increasingly popular and effective is the application of gamification in the learning process. Gamification is the process of integrating game elements such as points, badges, leaderboards, and challenges into non-game contexts, in this case, learning. In the context of Islamic

Religious Education (PAI), gamification not only aims to modernize teaching methods but also serves as a bridge to convey religious values in a more engaging way that aligns with the characteristics of the digital generation. This approach is a promising alternative to addressing student boredom and fatigue in religious instruction, which is often perceived as rigid and monotonous.(Azizah et al., 2024; Masroh, 2025; Miranda et al., 2024).

The application of gamification in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning has been proven to significantly increase student motivation and enthusiasm. Various studies have shown that providing rewards in the form of points, badges, and rankings encourages students to participate more actively in learning activities. This applies not only to lessons in public schools but also to Islamic boarding school-based learning, which tends to be more traditional.(Attarwiyah et al., 2025; Winaningsih et al., 2022)Student enthusiasm and engagement increase because they find the learning process more enjoyable, challenging, and less boring. The concept of healthy competition, for example, fosters students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to achieve better results. Strengthening this motivation is crucial in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, which emphasizes understanding values and developing noble character.(Almelhes, 2024; Lyons et al., 2023).

Beyond simply increasing motivation, gamification also impacts students' understanding of religious subjects. The visual and interactive elements offered by digital platforms like Kahoot, Baamboozle, Quizizz, and others make the learning process more concrete and memorable. Students are no longer passive recipients of material but are actively engaged in collaborative and competitive learning processes. The use of digital media encourages students to develop independent learning while strengthening collaboration in solving game-based challenges.(Agustin et al., 2024; Arafah et al., 2024). Thus, understanding religious concepts such as faith, worship, and morals can be more easily absorbed because they are delivered through media familiar to students' daily lives. Furthermore, the classroom atmosphere becomes more lively and interactive, minimizing boredom when dealing with abstract or conceptual material.(Seeletse et al., 2024).

However, the implementation of gamification in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning has not been without its challenges. Some of the main challenges include limited technological infrastructure, both in terms of devices and internet networks, especially in areas that are not yet fully digitized. Furthermore, many teachers still lack the competency to design and manage gamification-based learning systems. This requires specialized training so that teachers are not only able to operate the devices but also understand the pedagogical principles of effective gamification that align with Islamic values.(Safroni & Hidayah, 2024; Zainudin & Huda, 2024). Gamification designs also need to be adapted to the local context and culture of students, so that religious messages do not lose substance when packaged in the form of a visually attractive game.

The key factors supporting the success of gamification in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning depend heavily on collaboration between teachers, schools, and students. Teachers, as key actors, must possess a spirit of innovation, technical skills, and a strong understanding of gamification pedagogy. Schools also need to provide supportive infrastructure and policies, such as internet access, digital devices, and curriculum flexibility. Furthermore, students' familiarity with technology is a key driver in embracing and developing gamification-based learning. Students' positive responses to this learning method demonstrate that the gamification approach is capable of meeting

the needs of the younger generation for interactive, enjoyable, and meaningful learning models.(Hasibuan et al., 2025; Safroni & Hidayah, 2024).

Several gamification implementations in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) have shown promising results. For example, in the Aqidah Akhlak (Islamic Aqidah and Akhlak) lesson, teachers use a point-based system for students to collect points each time they answer a question correctly or complete an assignment on time. These points can then be exchanged for digital badges as a form of recognition for student achievement. In the Quran and Hadith lesson, students are given weekly memorization challenges presented in a game-like format. Students who successfully complete the challenges advance to the next level and are listed on the class leaderboard. This implementation is not only fun but also provides psychological encouragement for students to study harder and deepen their religious knowledge.

Psychologically, gamification can engage students' affective aspects by creating a sense of competence, autonomy, and social connectedness. In Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, which is steeped in moral and spiritual values, this approach is highly relevant because it can bridge students' cognitive and affective development. Competitive elements encourage students to be more confident and feel valued, while collaborative aspects, such as group games, foster mutual respect and cooperation. This all aligns with Islamic values such as brotherhood, cooperation, and the spirit of competition in good deeds.(Attarwiyah et al., 2025; Fawaid et al., 2024)Therefore, gamification is not merely a technical innovation, but also a potential pedagogical strategy for strengthening students' Islamic character amidst the dynamics of the times.

However, it is important to ensure that gamification in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) does not deviate from the substance of religious teachings. The use of game elements should remain grounded in educational and religious values. The material presented in game form must retain the essence of Islamic education, derived from the Quran and Sunnah. Therefore, developing gamification models in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) requires in-depth and ongoing study to produce designs that are contextual, moderate, and consistent with the objectives of religious learning. Adapting local values, Islamic boarding school culture, and utilizing advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and augmented reality (AR) can be a direction for further development.(Agustin et al., 2024; Hasibuan et al., 2025).

In the context of modern education, gamification is not only a teaching aid, but also a transformative tool capable of changing the way students understand, experience and practice religious teachings. Therefore, more research needs to be done regarding the impact of gamification on various aspects of religious education, such as strengthening morals, understanding fiqh, and internalizing spiritual values in everyday life.(Abdul et al., 2025; Agustin et al., 2024)This kind of research will make an important contribution to building an Islamic education system that is not only adaptive to technological developments but also remains firmly rooted in noble and transformative Islamic principles.(Dehghanzadeh et al., 2023; Yazid et al., 2024).

Based on the description above, this study aims to analyze in more depth how gamification in Islamic Religious Education (ISE) learning can be an effective strategy for increasing student enthusiasm and understanding. This research is novel in examining the integration of gamification in the specific context of Islamic religious education, taking into account the challenges, opportunities, and student responses in the digital era. Furthermore, this study seeks to explore gamification implementation strategies that align with Islamic values and highlight aspects that can be strengthened through a

technology-based approach. Therefore, the results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for teachers, policymakers, and curriculum developers in designing innovative, enjoyable, and meaningful Islamic Religious Education (ISE) learning.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a comparative case study design that aims to explore in depth the implementation of gamification in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning in two Islamic senior high schools in Purwokerto. According to Sugiyono (2019), qualitative research is a research method based on the philosophy of postpositivity, used to examine natural object conditions where the researcher is the key instrument. The research location was MA Negeri 1 Purwokerto and MA Al-Ikhsan Purwokerto which have implemented a gamification system in PAI learning for the past 8 months. The research subjects were all madrasah residents involved in the implementation of PAI gamification in both madrasahs, with the determination of informants using a purposive sampling technique based on suitability with the research objectives and the depth of information that can be provided. The criteria for selecting informants include: teachers who have used gamification for at least 4 months and have diverse teaching experience, students who actively participate in PAI learning with gamification systems from various grade levels, the principal of the madrasah as a policy maker, and parents of students who can provide perspectives on the impact of gamification outside of school. The number of informants was determined based on the principle of data saturation, where data collection is stopped when there is no new information relevant to the research focus. The focus of the research was to understand how gamification affects students' learning enthusiasm and understanding of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) material in two different madrasah contexts.

Data collection in this study used triangulation of sources and techniques including participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. (Sugiyono, 2019) Participatory observation was conducted during the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning process that used gamification elements such as a points system, badges, leaderboards, and learning quests at both madrasahs. In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants consisting of madrasah principals, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers with diverse teaching experiences, students from various grade levels who could provide comprehensive perspectives, and parents to obtain a holistic picture of the impact of gamification. The number and composition of informants were determined based on maximum variation sampling to obtain diverse and in-depth perspectives, and were stopped when data saturation was reached. Documentation included photos of learning activities, screenshots of the gamification applications used, and supporting documents such as gamification-based lesson plans from both madrasahs. The research instruments used were structured observation guidelines, semi-structured interview guidelines, and documentation sheets that had been validated by Islamic Religious Education and learning technology experts from IAIN Purwokerto.

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model adapted by Sugiyono (2019), namely through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions with a comparative approach between the two madrasahs. The data reduction process involved selecting, focusing attention, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw data emerging from written field notes from MA Negeri 1 Purwokerto and MA Al-Ikhsan Purwokerto. Data presentation was carried out in the form of narrative text, comparative tables, and diagrams that facilitate understanding of

the emerging patterns related to the implementation of gamification in Islamic Religious Education learning in both contexts. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation by comparing information from teachers, students, madrasah principals, and parents from both schools, as well as technical triangulation by combining the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. To ensure the credibility of the research, member checking was carried out by returning the analysis results to the informants to obtain confirmation and input, as well as peer debriefing involving researchers from the Islamic Religious Education Study Program at IAIN Purwokerto who have expertise in the field of Islamic Religious Education and learning technology.

**Table 1**  
**Details of Informants and Data Collection Techniques**

No.	Informant Category	Which school are you from	Selection Criteria	Data collection technique
1	Head Madrasah	State Islamic High School 1 Purwokerto, Al-Ikhsan Islamic High School Purwokerto	Policy makers implementing gamification, understanding the institutional context	In-depth interviews, Documentation
2	Senior Islamic Education Teacher	The Two Madrasas	PAI teaching experience >5 years, pioneer in implementing gamification	In-depth interviews, Participatory observation
3	Junior Islamic Education Teacher	The Two Madrasas	2-4 years of Islamic Education teaching experience, adaptive to learning technology	In-depth interviews, Participatory observation
4	Class Students	X The Two Madrasas	Early phase of adaptation to gamification, high enthusiasm for innovation	In-depth interviews, Participatory observation
5	Grade Students	XI The Two Madrasas	Sufficient experience with gamification, can compare effectiveness	In-depth interviews, Participatory observation
6	Grade Students	XII The Two Madrasas	A mature perspective, can assess the long-term impact of gamification	In-depth interviews, Participatory observation
7	Parents of Students	The Two Madrasas	Can provide a perspective on changing learning behavior at home	In-depth interviews, Documentation

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### RESULT

## **1. Implementation of Gamification in PAI Learning**

The results of the study indicate that the implementation of gamification in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at both madrasas has significantly transformed the learning dynamics. At MA Negeri 1 Purwokerto, the gamification system was integrated through the digital platforms Kahoot, Quizizz, and Baamboozle, which are used in learning Akidah Akhlak, Al-Qur'an Hadith, and Fiqh. Teachers developed a comprehensive point system where students receive rewards in the form of points for correctly answering interactive quizzes, completing assignments on time, and actively participating in class discussions. A digital badge system was implemented with categories such as "Tajwid Master" for students who mastered the recitation of the Qur'an, "Akhlak Champion" for students with the best behavior, and "Knowledge Seeker" for students who are most active in asking questions and seeking knowledge.

At MA Al-Ikhsan Purwokerto, gamification implementation focuses more on the collaborative aspect by using a guild system or study groups that compete to complete learning quests. Each guild consists of 5-6 students with heterogeneous abilities who must work together to complete weekly challenges such as memorizing verses of the Quran, analyzing hadith, or case studies on the application of Islamic jurisprudence in everyday life. A leaderboard system is displayed in real-time on the classroom's digital board, displaying individual and group rankings based on accumulated points earned. Learning quests are designed in levels, starting from basic levels such as memorizing the names of angels, to advanced levels such as analyzing the wisdom behind Allah SWT's commands and prohibitions.

The technology platforms used by both madrasas show interesting variations. MA Negeri 1 utilizes Google Classroom integrated with the gamification app ClassDojo to track student behavior and achievement. Meanwhile, MA Al-Ikhsan developed a simple web-based learning management system (LMS) application customized with local gamification elements. Both approaches allow teachers to monitor student progress in real time and provide immediate feedback that fosters ongoing motivation.

## **2. Impact on Students' Enthusiasm for Learning**

Observations over eight months showed a significant increase in student enthusiasm for learning in both madrasas. At MA Negeri 1 Purwokerto, the level of active student participation in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning increased from 45% in conventional learning to 78% after the implementation of gamification. Students showed high levels of eagerness to participate in learning sessions, especially when teachers announced interactive quizzes or new challenges. The "FOMO" (Fear of Missing Out) phenomenon occurred, where students did not want to miss out on points or drop in rankings on the leaderboard, so they attended class more diligently and actively participated.

At MA Al-Ikhsan Purwokerto, enthusiasm increased by 72%, with slightly different characteristics. Students were more motivated by collaborative aspects and team achievement than individual competition. The guild system implemented created a sense of belonging and responsibility, where each member felt responsible for the team's success. This encouraged peer learning and mutual support among students in understanding Islamic Religious Education (PAI) material. Previously

passive students became more confident in asking questions and expressing their opinions thanks to the support of other guild members.

The most striking aspect is the change in students' attitudes toward Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. Before the implementation of gamification, many students considered PAI a "heavy" and theoretical subject. However, after gamification, this perception changed drastically. Students began to view PAI as a fun and applicable subject in everyday life. They began to connect the lessons learned in class with the implementation of Islamic values at home and in their social environments.

### 3. Improving Understanding of Islamic Religious Education Material

Evaluation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) material understanding is conducted through various assessment instruments integrated into a gamification system. At MA Negeri 1 Purwokerto, student understanding increased by 68%, measured through pre- and post-tests, as well as ongoing monitoring through daily mini-quizzes. Students demonstrated improved ability to explain concepts of faith, analyze the content of Quranic verses and hadith, and apply Islamic jurisprudence to concrete situations.

What's interesting is the improvement in students' higher-order thinking skills. Through learning quests designed at different levels, students are not only required to memorize material but also to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate. For example, in the Creed and Morals material, students not only memorize the 99 Beautiful Names of Allah but also analyze how these attributes of Allah can be implemented in human character building. Advanced level quests require students to create digital content such as educational videos or infographics that explain the application of Islamic values in a modern context.

At MA Al-Ikhsan Purwokerto, understanding increased by 62% with an approach that emphasized collaborative learning and peer teaching. The guild system encouraged students to explain material to team members who didn't understand, fostering a multi-directional learning process. Students who initially only understood the material at a surface level began developing a deeper learning approach because they needed to be able to explain it to others.

**Table 2**  
**Comparison of the Impact of Gamification on PAI Learning**

Measurement Indicators	State Islamic High School Purwokerto	MA Al-Ikhsan Purwokerto	Difference	Average
Increasing Enthusiasm for Learning	78%	72%	6%	75%
Improving Understanding of Material	68%	62%	6%	65%
Active Participation Level	82%	76%	6%	79%
Satisfaction	with 85%	80%	5%	82.5%

Measurement Indicators	State Islamic High School Purwokerto	MA Al-Ikhsan Purwokerto	Difference	Average
Learning Methods				
Continuous Motivation	70%	68%	2%	69%
Implementing Islamic Values Outside the Classroom	65%	72%	-7%	68.5%
Collaboration Skills	73%	81%	-8%	77%
Increased Creativity	77%	69%	8%	73%

#### 4. Implementation Challenges and Constraints

Despite showing positive results, the implementation of gamification in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is not without challenges and obstacles. The main obstacle faced is limited technological infrastructure, particularly at MA Al-Ikhsan Purwokerto, which has a limited budget. Not all students have personal smartphones or laptops, requiring them to share devices with classmates. Unstable internet connections also often disrupt interactive learning, especially when using online platforms that require real-time connections.

Teacher competency poses a particular challenge. Although Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at both madrasas demonstrated high enthusiasm for learning innovations, not all of them possessed adequate digital literacy. Some senior teachers struggled to operate the gamification platform and required ongoing assistance from junior teachers or the school's IT staff. This sometimes hampered the flow of learning and reduced the spontaneity of educational interactions.

From a pedagogical perspective, the main challenge is maintaining a balance between fun elements and learning content. Some teachers worry that students' focus is more on earning points and badges than on truly understanding Islamic Religious Education (PAI) material. Observations show that some students are more concerned with ranking on the leaderboard than internalizing Islamic values. This requires teachers to constantly remind students of the true purpose of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning.

## DISCUSSION

### 1. Analysis of the Integration of Gamification Theory and Practice of Islamic

## Education

The findings of this study consistently support the theoretical arguments presented in the introduction that gamification can be an effective bridge to convey religious values with a more adaptive approach to the characteristics of the digital generation. The increase in student enthusiasm, which reached an average of 75% in both madrasas, confirms Masroh's (2025) hypothesis that providing rewards in the form of points, badges, and achievement systems can overcome the problems of boredom and saturation that often arise in conventional Islamic Religious Education learning. This is in line with the findings of Azizah et al. (2024) who emphasized that the competitive element in gamification creates a balance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, where students are not only motivated by external rewards but also develop a genuine interest in the learning material.

The average increase in comprehension of the material, reaching 65%, proves the validity of Miranda et al.'s (2024) argument that visual and interactive elements in digital platforms make the learning process more concrete and memorable. Observations show that students retain information longer when the material is delivered through interactive quizzes, multimedia content, and gamified assessments compared to traditional lecture methods. This indicates that gamification not only increases engagement but also cognitive processing and long-term retention.

An interesting finding from this study is the variation in student responses to different gamification elements. Students at MA Negeri 1 Purwokerto were more responsive to individual competition and personal achievement, while students at MA Al-Ikhsan Purwokerto were more motivated by collaborative elements and team-based challenges. This confirms Winaningsih et al.'s (2022) theory on the importance of contextual adaptation in gamification implementation, where cultural background and institutional culture significantly influence the effectiveness of the implemented gamification strategy.

## 2. Psychological and Pedagogical Impacts of Gamification

An in-depth analysis of the psychological impact of gamification in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning shows a strong alignment with Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes three basic psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. The leaderboard and badge system elements successfully create a sense of competence, making students feel capable and successful in the learning process. Leveled learning quests give students autonomy to choose their learning pace and strategy, while the guild system and collaborative challenges facilitate relatedness through peer interaction and mutual support.

A particularly significant finding is the transformation in students' mindsets toward errors and failure. In conventional learning, students often experience anxiety when making mistakes due to fear of judgment. However, in a gamified environment, mistakes become part of the learning process, allowing students to retry, learn from them, and gradually improve. This creates a growth mindset that is highly beneficial for long-term learning and character development, aligning with Islamic educational philosophy, which emphasizes continuous self-improvement and repentance as a learning process from mistakes.

From a pedagogical perspective, gamification successfully transforms a

teacher-centered approach into student-centered learning, which is more in line with modern andragogical principles. Teachers act as facilitators and mentors who guide students on their learning journey, rather than as the sole source of knowledge. This encourages students to develop critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and independent learning capacity, which are essential for lifelong learning in the context of Islamic education.

### **3. Integration of Islamic Values in Gamification**

One crucial aspect that distinguishes Islamic Religious Education (PAI) gamification from gamification in other subjects is the integration of Islamic value systems in its design and implementation. Research shows that successful gamification in an Islamic Religious Education (PAI) context requires a careful balance between engaging game elements and authentic Islamic values. The badge system developed, for example, focuses not only on academic achievement but also on character development, such as "Amanah Keeper" for students who are always honest, "Helping Hand" for students who like to help, and "Peace Maker" for students who are able to resolve conflicts well.

The designed learning quests also emphasize the real-world application of Islamic principles. Instead of simply memorizing rules and concepts, students are challenged to implement Islamic values in their daily lives and reflect on their experiences. This creates an authentic learning experience that not only enhances cognitive understanding but also fosters an affective commitment to the Islamic way of life. The points system is awarded not only for correct answers on quizzes but also for demonstrating good character, helping peers, and contributing positively to the classroom community.

A particularly valuable aspect is the integration of the Islamic concept of competition (*fastabiqul khairat*—competing in goodness) into the competitive elements of gamification. The leaderboard displays not only academic rankings but also spiritual achievements and contributions to the common good. This aligns with Islamic principles that encourage healthy competition in the pursuit of excellence while maintaining humility and concern for others' welfare.

### **4. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors**

Analysis of success factors indicates that institutional support is the most important determinant of successful Islamic Education (PAI) gamification implementation. Both madrasahs used in the study demonstrated strong leadership commitment from the principal and management team in providing resources, training, and policy support for the gamification initiative. This aligns with the findings of Hasibuan et al. (2025), who emphasized the importance of top-down support in educational innovation.

Teacher competency and enthusiasm are also critical success factors. Teachers who embrace technology and have a growth mindset demonstrate better performance in implementing gamified learning compared to teachers who are resistant to change. An interesting finding is that age does not necessarily correlate with technology adoption capability. Some senior teachers even demonstrate remarkable adaptability

and creativity in designing age-appropriate and culturally relevant gamification elements.

The most significant student factor is their prior exposure and familiarity with digital games and technology. Generation Z students who are familiar with gamified experiences in an entertainment context demonstrate faster adaptation and higher engagement with gamified learning. However, research also shows that students from more limited economic backgrounds are not necessarily less engaged, as long as they are provided with adequate access and support.

Conversely, the main obstacle to implementation is infrastructure limitations, particularly in areas with internet connectivity issues. Technical glitches and system downtime often interrupt learning flow and create frustration for both teachers and students. Budget constraints also limit the choice of platforms and tools available, forcing schools to rely on free or low-cost solutions that are sometimes suboptimal for educational purposes.

## **5. Implications for Islamic Education Curriculum Development**

The findings of this study have significant implications for curriculum development in Islamic education in the digital age. Traditional approaches that heavily emphasize memorization and passive learning are clearly insufficient to engage modern learners accustomed to interactive and multimedia-rich experiences. Gamification offers a promising avenue for revitalizing the Islamic Religious Education curriculum while maintaining its core spiritual and moral objectives.

Curriculum designers need to consider the integration of digital literacy and 21st-century skills into Islamic Education (PAI) learning objectives. Students need not only to understand Islamic concepts theoretically, but also to be able to communicate, collaborate, think critically, and create within the context of Islamic values. Gamification provides a natural platform to develop these skills through interactive projects, collaborative challenges, and creative expressions.

The assessment paradigm also requires a fundamental shift from the traditional testing approach to continuous and authentic assessment embedded in the learning process. Gamified assessment allows for real-time feedback, multiple attempts, and varied demonstrations of competency that are more aligned with individual learning styles and paces. This is particularly important in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) context, where character development and spiritual growth require ongoing observation and guidance rather than one-time testing.

## **6. Sustainability and Scalability Considerations**

The long-term sustainability of gamification in Islamic education (PAI) learning requires careful consideration of various factors. Rapid technological evolution means that platforms and tools that are effective today might become obsolete within a few years. Educational institutions need to develop adaptive capacity and a continuous learning culture that allows for ongoing innovation and improvement.

Financial sustainability is also a crucial concern, especially for madrasas or Islamic schools with limited budgets. Research findings suggest that effective gamification doesn't necessarily require expensive technology or sophisticated platforms.

Creative teachers can develop engaging gamified experiences using simple tools and resources, provided they are supported by adequate training and institutional commitment.

Scalability is another important consideration. Successful gamification models developed in specific contexts require careful adaptation to different settings, student populations, and cultural contexts. What works in urban madrasas with good technology infrastructure might not be directly applicable in rural areas with limited resources. This requires flexible framework and localized adaptation strategies.

Teacher preparation and professional development emerge as critical factors for scalable implementation. Pre-service teacher education programs need to integrate gamification competencies in their curriculum, while in-service teachers need ongoing professional development opportunities to update their skills and knowledge in educational technology and innovative pedagogies.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of comprehensive research and analysis conducted, it can be concluded that gamification in Islamic Religious Education learning has proven to be a highly effective innovative strategy for increasing student enthusiasm and understanding in the digital era. The implementation of gamification elements such as a points system, digital badges, leaderboards, and learning quests has successfully transformed Islamic Religious Education learning from a conventional, monotonous approach into an interactive, enjoyable, and meaningful learning experience. Empirical data shows an average increase in student enthusiasm for learning of 75% and an increase in material understanding of 65%, indicating that this approach is able to meet the challenges of digital generation learning that requires high engagement and multimedia-rich experiences. The success of gamification in the context of Islamic Religious Education learning lies not only in its technological aspects and entertainment value, but also in its ability to authentically integrate Islamic values into the learning process. Research shows that students not only experience improvements in cognitive aspects but also develop a stronger Islamic character through competitive elements designed based on the concept of *fastabiqul khairat* and collaborative learning that emphasizes Islamic brotherhood. This proves that gamification, when implemented properly, can be a powerful medium for character building and spiritual development, core objectives of Islamic education. Despite showing very positive results, the implementation of gamification in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning still faces various challenges that require serious attention from educational stakeholders. Limited technological infrastructure, gaps in teacher digital literacy, and the need for continuous investment in technology updates are factors that can hinder the sustainability and scalability of gamification programs. Therefore, successful implementation requires a comprehensive approach that includes policy support from the institutional to governmental levels, continuous professional development for educators, and strategic investment in educational technology infrastructure that can ensure the long-term viability of gamification in the Islamic education system in Indonesia.

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