

Building the Islamic Generation: Islamic Education Learning Methods for the Alpha Generation at Karya Bhakti Private Junior High School

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ABSTRACT

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has a very important role in shaping the character of the Alpha generation, which is now growing in the digital era. Amidst the rapid advancement of technology, this generation is faced with challenges in understanding and internalizing Islamic values. Unfortunately, traditional learning methods are often less effective in dealing with these dynamics. Therefore, innovative approaches are needed, such as project-based learning, gamification, and the use of interactive digital media. This journal also emphasizes the importance of collaboration between schools, families, and communities as the key to supporting student character development. Through the right approach, Islamic Religious Education has the potential to help the Alpha generation become individuals who are not only emotionally intelligent, but also have moral integrity, and are able to internalize Islamic values in everyday life.

Keywords: *Islamic Religious Education, Alpha Generation, Technology, Learning Methods, Character, Collaboration.*



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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a very important aspect of human life. In general, education is defined as a lifelong process, which aims to develop the potential of each individual to be able to live a good life. Through education, individuals are equipped with values and norms that will be guidelines for acting and behaving (Zailani et al., 2024). In this increasingly sophisticated era, Islamic Education for children in schools, especially Karya Bhakti Private Middle School, is very important and must be considered. With advances in various fields, including technology and science, Islamic Religious Education provides protection for children. This aims to help them balance and align worldly knowledge with the Islamic Religious Education they receive.

This school is committed to developing a group of students who are not only intellectually superior but also display virtuous behavior. With a methodical and planned approach to character education, we aim to shape individuals who can make positive contributions to communities around the world (Zailani et al., 2023). The main goal of Islamic Religious Education is to instill Islamic values in students from an early age, so that they can form good characters and noble morals in accordance with Islamic teachings. However, in today's rapidly developing digital era, there are new challenges in teaching Islamic Religious Education, especially to Generation Alpha. Generation Alpha is a group born after 2010 and grew up in an environment that is very filled with technology. Since an early age, they have been accustomed to interacting with digital devices, giving rise to different characteristics and learning references compared to previous generations. Therefore, traditional teaching methods that do not utilize technology are often less effective in attracting their interest and attention.

Generation Alpha is raised in an environment filled with sophisticated technological devices, so they tend to spend a lot of time with their gadgets. As a result, they assume that they can learn quickly and

instantly just through these devices, without needing help from others. In their daily lives, they play, learn, and interact in new ways, supported by a high level of technological intelligence. Unfortunately, with this fast-paced mindset, the interest of children of the Alpha generation in studying Islamic teachings is increasingly marginalized, and naturally, this results in a decline in their interest. This raises concerns that their character and personality may move away from the Islamic values that they should learn and live. Amidst the rapid advancement of technology, education plays an important role not only in improving intellectual abilities, but also in shaping the character and morals of individuals. Islamic education, which is based on spiritual values, offers a holistic approach to facing these challenges. This approach emphasizes not only the transfer of knowledge, but also the instillation of values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and good morals.

In the context of Generation Alpha, which is heavily influenced by technology, Islamic Education can serve as a balance between intellectual and spiritual needs. This ensures that children in schools grow into emotionally intelligent and moral individuals. By integrating technology into education, Islamic values can be delivered in a way that is relevant, interesting, and in accordance with the needs of today's digital generation. Interest in learning is one of the key factors that influence the learning process. When students have a high interest in learning, this can increase their motivation and active participation in learning activities.

However, fostering interest in learning in Generation Alpha is not easy. This generation tends to be more interested in interactive, technology-based learning that is relevant to their daily lives. As we know, Generation Alpha is a group that is naturally familiar with technology, even more intelligent in this regard than some teachers in schools. However, it is important to remember that the main emphasis in education for Generation Alpha is on the formation of each student's character. The characteristics of this generation include a controlling attitude, dominance, a dislike of sharing, and disobedience to rules, in addition to their high dependence on technology.

Therefore, the community, school, and family environments need to play an active role in supporting the character development of students from Generation Alpha. These three elements must collaborate to encourage and motivate students to always do positive things. The technological advances experienced by Generation Alpha have had various impacts, both positive and negative. On the one hand, they enjoy fast access to information and digital learning that facilitates the learning process. However, on the other hand, there are serious challenges that arise, such as exposure to age-inappropriate content, strengthening individualism, and a value crisis that can hinder the formation of their character. In this context, Islamic Education emerges as a very relevant solution, because it prioritizes values such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy, which are very important for building a moral society.

Facing the challenges of the 21st century, where technological developments are in line with the progress of the Alpha generation, the focus in education should not only be on academic abilities, but also on intellectual, emotional, and moral development. To strengthen these aspects, the insertion of spiritual values is very important. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) can be an effective alternative in this context. Basically, Islamic Religious Education learning has great potential to shape the morals of students in schools, especially for the Alpha generation. Through Religious Education, we strive to shape and direct the behavior and morals of students, so that Islamic Religious Education can be used as a solution in character education. The main objective of learning Islamic Religious Education is to help students live out good morals and noble character, as well as strengthen their faith and piety. Thus, they can develop a noble personality wherever they are and in whatever position they are in the future. The Qur'an, as a guideline for Muslims, contains various information and knowledge, including aspects of human character. In learning Islamic Religious Education, there are many topics discussed, including aqidah and morals, which are important foundations in forming students' character at school. (Munawir et al., 2024)

Effective Islamic education methods need to be able to adapt to the times, including by utilizing technology as a learning medium. Several studies have shown that integrating technology with an Islamic values approach can increase children's interest in learning while strengthening their character formation. Technology-based education, such as interactive Islamic applications, educational videos, and

games that teach moral values, is one of the innovative solutions worth considering. However, the implementation of Islamic Education in this generation faces various challenges, such as the lack of parental supervision of the use of technology and the lack of understanding of the value-based education approach that is in accordance with the digital era. Therefore, collaboration between educational institutions, families, and communities is very important to achieve success in shaping the morals of children of the Alpha generation.

2. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach to gain a deep understanding of the effectiveness of Islamic education in shaping children's morals, especially in the Alpha generation. This qualitative approach was chosen because this method can provide space for researchers to explore the meaning, values, and processes that occur in the context of everyday life. By using this approach, researchers have the opportunity to dig deeper into the relationship between Islamic education, the learning methods applied, and their impact on the formation of children's character in the midst of a complex digital environment. As a type of research, literature studies are used as the main source, with references consisting of journals and articles that are relevant to the topic raised and researchers also conducted observations at Karya Bhakti Private Middle School.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Generation Alpha refers to individuals born between 2010 and 2025. They are the first generation to grow up entirely in the digital era, where technology has become an inseparable part of everyday life.

A. Characteristics of Generation Alpha

1. Understanding Technology from an Early Age

Since childhood, Generation Alpha has been accustomed to various technological devices such as smartphones, tablets, and computers. This generation is very close to digital and cannot separate the development of technology. As a rule, they are lazy to work hard. Therefore, parents need to understand the religious and moral values in technical media that attract the attention of their children. Currently, the Alpha generation is in the development of science and technology. They easily master the use of this technology for various needs, both in terms of entertainment and learning.

2. Having Visual Tendencies, Easily Getting Bored, and Like Interaction.

This generation tends to prefer information presented in visual and interactive forms. They are more interested in content that involves animation, video, and educational games, rather than long texts. As a result, they quickly get bored with conventional learning methods that are considered monotonous.

3. Learning Through Experience

Generation Alpha tends to be more effective in learning when they are exposed to direct experience and practice. They prioritize learning methods that involve physical activities, projects, and simulations, which provide opportunities to explore and understand concepts in depth. Generation Alpha wants everything quickly, and does not understand the process, generation alpha tends to be practical materialistic because of technological advances in that era. (Swandhina & Maulana, 2022)

B. The Influence of Alpha Generation Characteristics on the Religious Learning Process at Karya Bhakti Private Middle School

Familiar with images, videos, and digital interactions rather than books or long lectures. In the context of religious learning, Generation Alpha in schools tends to be more interested in visual and interactive methods. They will more easily grasp the story of the prophet or moral teachings if delivered through media such as animation, short videos, or engaging educational applications. This approach has proven to be more effective than simply listening to the teacher's explanation in front of the class. By using appropriate methods, religious learning can be a fun experience for them. This generation cannot be separated from the use of gadgets and lacks socialization and communication, this generation is more interested in communicating through cyberspace than face to face, This generation was born without the internet, computers, or electronic devices, without understanding how to live at that time (JS et al., 2022).

A person who is in the learning process should absorb knowledge from the teacher with full respect and appreciation. A gentle attitude and affection between students and teachers are very important and cannot be avoided. However, currently, these values are starting to fade amidst the development of technology and democracy. Teachers are often considered only as facilitators of sharing knowledge, so that students tend to ignore the sacred values that they should hold firmly. Maintaining an attitude, speaking well, committing to continue learning, being disciplined, and respecting each other are traits that should be upheld. In Islam, intellectuals are needed who are not only smart, but also able to display behavior exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad. The affection shown by teachers to students is one of the important elements to foster respect among students, regardless of differences between one and another. A humble attitude and a soothing personality are characteristics that must not be ignored if we want to produce a rabbani generation (Zailani, 2019).

However, the use of technology also brings its own challenges. They may be more focused on digital entertainment rather than understanding religious values, if not guided properly. Therefore, it is very important for teachers and parents to utilise technology wisely in teaching religion. For example, by presenting interesting religious content on platforms such as YouTube or through age-appropriate Islamic apps. This generation also has a tendency to learn independently and actively.

They are used to finding answers to their own questions on the internet, so when learning about religion, they will ask a lot of questions and want to understand the reasons behind each teaching. Therefore, teachers and parents should be prepared to explain religious teachings clearly, simply and relevant to everyday life so that children feel more connected to the values being taught. Overall, the characteristics of Generation Alpha greatly influence the way they learn about religion. For this reason, a creative, modern and relevant approach is needed so that religious learning does not feel boring. With the right guidance, Generation Alpha can grow into religious individuals even in this digital era.

C. Challenges of Islamic Religious Education Learning in the Alpha Generation Era at Karya Bhakti Private Middle School

1. Declining Interest in Conventional Learning

Generation Alpha shows low interest in conventional learning methods that rely more on lectures or memorization. Instead, they prefer an interactive approach and utilize technology. Therefore, changes are needed in the way Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials are delivered to be more creative and relevant to their needs. By utilizing technology and implementing experience-based learning, teachers can attract students' attention and maintain their interest in learning.

2. Limited interactive and educational Islamic digital content.

Interactive and educational Islamic digital content is still very limited, becoming a significant challenge to support Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning that is in line with the characteristics of Generation Alpha. For this reason, digital religious learning requires the development of content that is not only informative, but also interesting and able to actively involve students. In this way, they can better understand and practice Islamic teachings.

3. Lack of Teacher Ability in Adapting Digital Learning Methods.

Most teachers still do not fully master the use of technology in the learning process. This condition hinders the implementation of more efficient digital learning methods in delivering Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials.

In today's digital era, religious learning requires digital skills from educators to create a learning environment that is in accordance with the needs of Generation Alpha, which prioritizes technology.

4. Impact of Social Media and Non-Religious Content

The influence of social media and non-religious content can make the understanding and practice of religious values among Generation Alpha become unclear. Continuous exposure to information that is not related to Islamic values can affect their perspective on religious teachings. Therefore, it is very important for educators and parents to provide guidance to these children in choosing content that is useful and in line with Islamic teachings (Faqihuddin, 2024).

D. Effective Islamic Religious Education Learning Methods for Generation Alpha at Karya Bhakti Private Middle School

1. Interactive Digital Method

Interactive digital methods are very useful in attracting the attention of Generation Alpha, who are already very familiar with technology. The use of Islamic applications, animations, learning videos, and games that emphasize Islamic values give them the opportunity to learn in a more interesting and enjoyable way. With interactive features, such as quizzes or simulations based on Islamic values, students can absorb religious teachings in a more contextual way and can be applied in their daily lives. This approach also allows for the delivery of Islamic Religious Education material visually, which is very appropriate for the learning style of Generation Alpha, which tends to be more visual and interactive.

2. Gamification in Religious Education

Gamification is the use of game components, such as challenges, levels, and rewards, to increase participation and enthusiasm for learning. In the context of Islamic Religious Education, gamification can be applied by providing rewards or points when students successfully memorize surahs, answer questions correctly, or complete tasks related to religion. With this method, students become more motivated to learn, because they feel rewarded every time they achieve a predetermined target. Gamification makes the religious learning process more interesting and encourages active involvement from Generation Alpha (Putri, 2024).

3. Project-Based Learning

Project-focused learning is ideal for Generation Alpha because it gives them the opportunity to learn through practical experiences. In the context of Islamic Religious Education, students can complete projects related to religious teachings, such as creating a da'wah vlog, designing an Islamic-themed digital poster, or compiling a small study on the influence of Islam in modern life. This learning method develops critical thinking skills, collaboration, and creativity, and provides students with the opportunity to be actively involved in their learning process. In this way, PAI is not only seen as a theory, but also as a real application in everyday life.

4. Storytelling and Multimedia

Telling stories through digital platforms, such as audio or video, is a very effective way to convey prophetic narratives and Islamic stories to Generation Alpha. The use of multimedia, such as animation or interactive videos, can make these narratives more interesting and easier to understand. With this approach, students not only listen to the narrative but can also watch the visualization and understand the moral message in the story. This is very suitable for the learning style of Generation Alpha which emphasizes visual and interactive content.

5. Blended Learning

Blended Learning, which is a combination of face-to-face and online learning, provides extraordinary flexibility in the teaching process. This method is very suitable for Generation Alpha who are already familiar with technology. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, the use of online platforms facilitates access to various materials, while face-to-face learning maintains a direct and deep relationship between teachers and students. With this approach, Islamic religious learning becomes more effective because it can be adjusted to the various learning styles of students (Wahyuningsih, 2023).

6. Role-Playing and Simulation Methods

Role-Playing and Simulation methods provide students with direct practical experience in applying Islamic values in everyday life situations. For example, students can play a role in a simulation of congregational prayer or paying zakat, which allows them to learn through direct experience. This approach is very effective for Generation Alpha, who tend to learn better through practice and social interaction, and can deepen their understanding of Islamic religious concepts in a more relevant context (Hidayati & Fitriana, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Islamic Religious Education can play a significant role in shaping the character of Generation Alpha amidst the various challenges of the current digital era. Generation Alpha is currently growing up in a digital era that makes them very tech-savvy and prefers to learn visually and interactively. They tend to be more interested in learning methods that involve direct experience. However, Islamic Religious

Education (PAI) faces several challenges, such as declining interest in traditional methods, limited educational digital content, and low teacher ability to adapt to existing technology.

To attract Generation Alpha, innovative methods need to be implemented, such as project-based learning, gamification, use of interactive digital media, and blended learning. These methods can increase student engagement and the relevance of Islamic teachings in their daily lives.

Collaboration between schools, families, and communities is essential to support the character development of Generation Alpha children, so that they can internalize Islamic values effectively. In this case, Islamic Religious Education must integrate spiritual values with intellectual needs, so that students can grow into emotionally and morally intelligent individuals.

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