Journal of Communication and Social Interaction
Volume 1, Number 1, 2026. 33-41

Implementation of Multimedia-Based Learning to Enhance Students' Understanding and Learning Interest in Islamic Religious Education

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Article History:

Received
2026-06-23

Revised
2026-06-25

Accepted
2026-06-27

Published
2026-06-30

Abstract. This study examines the implementation of multimedia-based learning in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and its role in supporting seventh-grade students' understanding and learning interest at SMP Negeri 1 Mijen, Demak, in the 2025/2026 academic year. A descriptive qualitative field design was employed. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with the PAI teacher, the vice principal for curriculum, and 15 purposively selected students from classes VII A, VII B, and VII C, as well as school documentation. The topic of *ikhlas* was selected because it involves abstract moral concepts that are often challenging for students to comprehend through conventional instruction. Data were analyzed through reduction, display, and conclusion drawing, with credibility ensured through source, technique, and time triangulation. The findings indicate that multimedia-based learning, integrating video, text, images, and audio, helped students explain the concept of *ikhlas* in their own words, provide contextual examples, formulate conclusions, and demonstrate greater attention, participation, and enthusiasm during classroom activities. These findings suggest that multimedia can facilitate the learning of abstract religious concepts and provide practical support for developing more engaging and student-centered PAI instruction.
Keywords: *Islamic Religious Education; learning interest; multimedia-based learning; students' understanding; seventh-grade students*

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Introduction

Education in Indonesia aims to create a learning process that enables students to develop spiritual strength, self-control, intelligence, noble character, and useful skills. This aim requires teachers to design instruction that connects curriculum goals, learning materials, and learning media in a coherent classroom process (Republic of Indonesia, 2003; Harahap et al., 2022). In Islamic Religious Education, this demand becomes more specific because the subject does not only transmit religious knowledge. It also develops moral awareness, worship practice, and Islamic character in students (Khadafie, 2025; Tine, 2025).

The growth of digital learning resources has changed the way students receive and process information. Conventional lectures can still support explanation, but they often limit student attention and interaction when used as the only method. Multimedia learning offers a more varied learning experience because it combines text, image, sound, animation, and video in one learning event (Irwansyah, 2025; Rukmana et al., 2023; Sindu et al., 2024). Previous studies also report that multimedia in Islamic Religious Education can increase motivation, attention, participation, and learning achievement because students receive material through visual and auditory channels (Anita & Mansur, 2021; Ayunitha & Jasiah, 2025; Marwah et al., 2024; Sartika et al., 2024; Tanjung & Zahra, 2023).

The theoretical basis of this study is consistent with the cognitive theory of multimedia learning. This theory explains that students learn more effectively when verbal and visual information are integrated in a meaningful way, because the combination helps them select, organize, and connect information in memory (Hanifah et al., 2022; Sugilar, 2019). Multimedia can also reduce the abstract nature of some religious values by presenting concrete examples through images, video scenes, narration, and classroom discussion. In the context of Islamic Religious Education, this function is important because many concepts, such as sincerity or ikhlas, contain moral and affective meanings that need contextual illustration.

Students' understanding refers to the ability to grasp meaning, explain a concept, interpret information, summarize ideas, and apply knowledge in a relevant context. Understanding is not limited to memorization. It includes the ability to express ideas in one's own words, explain, describe, conclude, and provide examples (Sardiman, 2011; Wahidmurni et al., 2010; Yanti et al., 2018). Learning interest refers to students' tendency to feel pleased, attracted, attentive, and willing to participate in learning activities (Djamarah, 2011; Slameto, 2015; Trygu, 2021). Thus, a learning model can be considered meaningful when it strengthens both cognitive understanding and affective engagement.

Preliminary observation at SMP Negeri 1 Mijen showed that some seventh-grade students had low understanding and learning interest in Islamic Religious Education. Although multimedia tools were available, classroom learning still tended to be teacher-centered. Students often acted as listeners and viewers, while opportunities to ask questions, answer, discuss, and express opinions remained limited. This condition indicates that multimedia should not be used only as a display tool. It should become part of an instructional strategy that supports student-centered interaction and meaningful learning.

This study focuses on the implementation of multimedia-based learning in the topic of ikhlas for seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Mijen. The novelty of the study lies in three aspects. First, it examines multimedia-based learning in Islamic Religious Education by integrating video, text, images, audio, and classroom interaction. Second, it studies two outcomes together, namely students' understanding and learning interest. Third, it uses a specific school context in which teachers and students are adapting religious learning to digital-era classroom characteristics. Therefore, this study aims to describe how multimedia-based learning is implemented, how it supports students' understanding, and how it strengthens students' learning interest in Islamic Religious Education.

Methods

This study used a descriptive qualitative field research design. A qualitative approach was selected because the study aimed to understand classroom practices, student responses, and the meaning of multimedia-based learning in a natural school context. In qualitative research, the researcher acts as the key instrument, data are collected in natural conditions, and the analysis emphasizes meaning rather than statistical generalization (Sugiyono, 2009; Suprayitno et al., 2024). Field research was also appropriate because the researcher collected data directly from the school context through observation, interviews, and supporting documents (Fatkhurahman, 2025).

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Mijen, Mijen District, Demak Regency, Central Java, during the first semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The site was selected because the school had begun to use technology-based learning facilities, including LCD projectors, computers, internet access, and classroom multimedia resources, while still facing problems related to students' understanding and learning interest in Islamic Religious Education.

The research object was the implementation of multimedia-based learning to improve students' understanding and learning interest in Islamic Religious Education. The research subjects consisted of one Islamic Religious Education teacher, the vice principal for curriculum,

and 15 selected seventh-grade students from classes VII A, VII B, and VII C. The student informants were selected because they were actively involved during the learning process and could provide relevant responses about understanding and learning interest.

Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observation focused on classroom activities, teacher preparation, media use, student attention, student participation, and evaluation activities. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teacher, students, and vice principal for curriculum to obtain deeper information about planning, implementation, school support, students' understanding, and students' learning interest. Documentation included the school profile, lesson module, attendance list, student scores, classroom photographs, and learning materials.

The credibility of the data was tested through triangulation of sources, techniques, and time. Source triangulation compared information from the Islamic Religious Education teacher, students, and vice principal for curriculum. Technique triangulation compared observation, interview, and documentation data. Time triangulation was used to check the consistency of findings across different data collection moments. Data were analyzed using reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction focused on selecting information related to the implementation of multimedia learning, students' understanding, and learning interest. Data display was carried out through narrative descriptions and tables. Conclusions were drawn after the data showed consistent patterns across sources and techniques (Sugiyono, 2009).

Table 1.
Data Sources and Purposes

Data source	**Participants or documents**	**Purpose**
Observation	PAI learning activities in grade VII	To record planning, media use, interaction, student attention, and evaluation.
Interview	PAI teacher, vice principal for curriculum, and 15 selected students from VII A, VII B, and VII C	To obtain explanations of implementation, student understanding, and learning interest.
Documentation	Lesson module, school profile, student scores, attendance, photographs, and learning materials	To support and compare observation and interview findings.

Results

The findings show that multimedia-based learning in Islamic Religious Education was implemented through three main stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation. These stages were operationalized in classroom syntax consisting of opening and apperception, material presentation with multimedia, interaction and exploration, elaboration, and evaluation-reflection. This sequence helped the teacher move from media preparation to active student engagement.

At the planning stage, the teacher prepared the lesson module, learning objectives, learning material, media, and assessment tools. The topic selected for the lesson was ikhlas, or sincerity, because it contains an abstract moral value that can be difficult for seventh-grade students to understand through verbal explanation alone. The teacher selected YouTube-based learning videos with simple language and relevant examples, then combined them with slides containing text, images, and instrumental audio. The classroom equipment included a laptop, LCD projector, speaker, whiteboard, student worksheet, and Islamic Religious Education textbook.

At the implementation stage, the teacher opened the lesson with greeting, prayer, class readiness checking, motivation, and explanation of learning objectives. The teacher then introduced the topic and instructed students to focus on the video and record important points. During the multimedia presentation, the teacher used the LCD projector to display the video and slides. The teacher did not treat the video as a passive display. The teacher paused the video at important moments, gave additional explanation, and connected the content to daily life. This strategy helped students understand the moral meaning of ikhlas through concrete examples.

Interaction occurred after and during the multimedia presentation. The teacher asked trigger questions about the meaning of ikhlas, signs of sincerity, and examples of sincere behavior at school and home. Students received opportunities to answer, ask questions, express opinions, and discuss. The teacher corrected inaccurate answers and gave feedback. This interaction showed that multimedia supported dialogue rather than replacing the teacher's instructional role.

The elaboration stage required students to restate the material in their own words, draw conclusions, and provide examples. Students were able to explain ikhlas as doing good deeds for Allah without expecting praise, reward, or recognition from humans. They also gave examples such as helping friends without asking for anything in return, cleaning the classroom without being told, and sharing food sincerely. These responses indicate that the students processed the concept beyond memorization.

Evaluation was conducted through oral questions, short written questions, practical explanation tasks, and reflection. The teacher asked students to explain what they had learned from the video and to provide examples of ikhlas in school life. The teacher also used student notebooks and semester assessment documentation as supporting evidence. Documentation of semester assessment scores showed that all 96 students from classes VII A, VII B, and VII C achieved scores above the minimum mastery criterion of 75. Class VII A obtained an average score of 83.16, class VII B obtained 83.81, and class VII C obtained 83.91. These scores cannot be interpreted as pre-test and post-test evidence, but they support the qualitative finding that students demonstrated satisfactory learning achievement in Islamic Religious Education.

Students' understanding improved in five observed indicators. First, most students could express their opinions about the video using their own language. Second, students could explain the meaning of ikhlas and distinguish it from riya. Third, students could describe signs of sincere behavior in ordered points. Fourth, students could conclude the main idea of the lesson. Fifth, students could apply the concept to daily-life examples. These indicators show that multimedia helped students transform an abstract moral concept into practical and understandable knowledge.

Students' learning interest also increased in five indicators. First, students showed enjoyment during the lesson because learning felt less monotonous. Second, students were attracted to the video and colorful visual presentation. Third, students paid closer attention to the teacher's explanation and the displayed media. Fourth, students became more active in answering questions and expressing opinions. Fifth, students showed willingness to remember and revisit the material because the video made the lesson easier to understand. Overall, the classroom became more active, focused, and participatory after multimedia-based learning was implemented.

Table 2.
Student Achievement Scores in Islamic Religious Education

Class	Number of students	Mean PAS score	Lowest score	Highest score
VII A	32	83.16	77	95
VII B	32	83.81	78	94
VII C	32	83.91	77	98

Discussion

The findings indicate that multimedia-based learning supported both cognitive and affective aspects of Islamic Religious Education. The use of video, text, images, and audio helped students understand ikhlas through concrete examples. This result aligns with the cognitive theory of multimedia learning, which states that students can understand learning material more effectively when verbal and visual information are integrated in a structured way (Hanifah et al., 2022; Sugilar, 2019). In this study, multimedia did not merely make the lesson more attractive. It helped students organize meaning, connect the value of ikhlas with daily life, and express the concept in their own language.

The implementation also confirms that multimedia learning requires instructional design, not only technological equipment. The teacher prepared the lesson module, selected relevant video content, arranged classroom tools, and designed interaction after the media presentation. This finding supports the view that a learning model functions as a systematic framework for

organizing learning experiences toward learning objectives (Ahyar, 2021; Wahyuni et al., 2024). Without teacher guidance, multimedia can become entertainment only. With structured guidance, it becomes a learning stimulus that supports explanation, questioning, elaboration, and reflection.

The improvement in students' understanding can be explained by the nature of the topic. Ikhlas is an abstract religious and moral concept. When the teacher relied only on verbal explanation, some students could understand the definition but had difficulty applying it to real situations. Video and visual examples made the concept more concrete. This supports the argument that multimedia can clarify messages, sharpen attention, and assist students who find abstract material difficult (Darmilus et al., 2025; Lestari, 2013; Rukmana et al., 2023). The students' ability to define, explain, conclude, and provide examples also fits the indicators of understanding proposed in educational evaluation literature (Sardiman, 2011; Wahidmurni et al., 2010; Yanti et al., 2018).

The findings on learning interest are consistent with theories of interest that emphasize pleasure, attention, attraction, and participation (Djamarah, 2011; Slameto, 2015; Trygu, 2021). Students reported that the lesson became more enjoyable and easier to follow because they could see visual examples rather than only listen to explanation. Observation also showed that students focused on the screen, answered questions, and participated in discussion. This confirms previous studies showing that multimedia-based Islamic Religious Education can increase students' motivation and participation (Anita & Mansur, 2021; Ayunitha & Jasiah, 2025; Sartika et al., 2024; Tanjung & Zahra, 2023).

The teacher's role remained central. Multimedia did not replace pedagogical interaction. The teacher selected relevant material, paused the video, explained key points, asked questions, corrected misunderstanding, and connected the content to students' lives. This finding is important for Islamic Religious Education because the subject involves values, attitudes, and character formation. Multimedia can illustrate moral values, but teacher guidance is still needed to interpret the values and direct students toward meaningful reflection (Marwah et al., 2024; Tine, 2025).

This study also reveals several limitations. First, the observation period was relatively short, so the long-term effect of multimedia learning on understanding and learning interest could not be measured. Second, the multimedia used was mostly YouTube-based video combined with slides, so the study did not test interactive multimedia applications, simulations, or digital quizzes. Third, the study used qualitative data and supporting score documentation, but it did not use a pre-test and post-test design. Future studies can use mixed methods, experimental designs, or classroom action research to measure learning gains more precisely. Future research can also

develop teacher-made interactive multimedia for Islamic Religious Education and test its effect on different student characteristics.

Conclusion

This study concludes that multimedia-based learning in Islamic Religious Education at SMP Negeri 1 Mijen was implemented through systematic planning, classroom delivery, interaction, elaboration, and evaluation. The teacher used video, text, images, and audio through LCD projector-based presentation and guided the media use with explanation, questions, feedback, and reflection. The implementation supported students' understanding of the topic of ikhlas. Students were able to express opinions in their own language, explain the concept, describe its characteristics, draw conclusions, and provide examples from daily life. The implementation also strengthened students' learning interest. Students showed greater enjoyment, attraction, attention, active participation, and willingness to remember the material. These findings suggest that multimedia-based learning can be a relevant instructional strategy for Islamic Religious Education when teachers integrate media with interaction, contextual explanation, and reflective evaluation. The study recommends that Islamic Religious Education teachers use multimedia consistently but selectively. Teachers should choose videos that match student age, learning objectives, and religious values. Schools should support teachers through training in multimedia design and digital classroom management. Further research should examine long-term learning outcomes and compare teacher-made interactive media with open-source video-based multimedia.

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