

## **Review The Utilization Of Video Games As A Learning Media For Islamic Religious Education**

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### **Abstrak**

<p><i>Article History</i> <i>Received :07-06-2023</i> <i>Revised : 10-07-2023</i> <i>Accepted:22-07-2023</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>Keywords:</b> <i>Video Game</i> <i>Utilization</i> <i>Media</i> <i>PAI</i></p>	<p><i>The use of video games in Islamic religious education is currently still not widely practiced. This is due to the idea that video games cannot be used as learning media because of their tertiary nature. This article then aims to present theoretical and practical studies on how to use and utilize video games as a medium in learning PAI. This article was compiled using a qualitative approach supported by data collection methods in the form of literature studies. From the results of the study, it was found that theoretically video games can be used in PAI learning seen from their role as a medium for transferring information and values, which can then be realized practically in several ways, including building the entire video game system, interpreting values in video games, and collaboration with various other media.</i></p>
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### **Introduction**

Along with the times, the development of science, especially information technology, accelerated rapidly in the current era of digital natives. Many things change, especially in the form of

physical/material culture created by humans. For example, in relation to games/games that were previously non-electronic/traditional but are currently changing a lot with the inclusion of modern/electronic computer elements/components supported by various software and hardware supported by glass screens that become display medium. This form is known as a modern video game which is now widely found on various platforms (Jeannie Novak & Luis Levy, 2008).

In the study of community culture, video games are often seen as cultural products that are exclusive and only a few people play them (Fiske, 1989). But this opinion is no longer relevant. Instead, video games have spread widely. Video games then become synonymous with games for the younger generation which are mediated by technology such as consoles or computers.

If previously video games were only used as a means of entertainment, now video games are becoming increasingly popular because of the high interest from various communities. Mobile games and online games are highly sought-after platforms by various communities as a way of channeling their joy and leisure. Such conditions lead to the notion that video games are identified with recreational activities carried out by certain people or groups in the midst of their busy lives. Gamers (gamers) are willing to spend money and time to sit in front of video game platforms for a long time and play games or even buy more game programs from various publishers. With its portable nature, one can play games whenever there is free time, for example while waiting in line. Video games have finally become the main medium of entertainment that is effective and easily available (Muktiwibowo & Prayogi, 2022). Video games (online) have even become a separate sport at the 2018 Asian Games as part of an achievement sports competition.

However, there is also an image (which is generally understood) by the general public that sees video games as something trivial and without important philosophical values. Video games are also considered as wasteful/consumptive activities or in the form of tertiary/expensive activities. In addition, video games are often accused of making children addicted/addictive (Fiske, 1989). Because of this, video games have been accused of being a bad product that can create moral panic, especially among parents. Video games have finally become the target of blame for a number of incidents where most school-age children then become unproductive due to the effects

of addiction, forgetting time, and so on. There are also many other cliché reasons that make video games a target for various wrong behaviors committed by children.

However, recent data and facts show that video games are not like that. Video games also have a positive and useful purpose. In the health sector, for example, there are data and facts where video games can be used as therapeutic exercises to improve eye performance and brain function. In addition, video games with the kinetic/exergame genre can be used as a form of therapy and rehabilitation for people with physical and cognitive disabilities. Another study also stated that video games with the virtual genre are also useful for developing psychic abilities for stroke patients. In the context of education, there is a survey released at the London Games Festival in England. In this case video games have the potential to increase student success in learning at school. Although at that time there were also many fears caused by the negative effects of video games, the survey found something else. The survey stated that respondents claimed to find many positive things to be gained from video games. Respondents also believed that their children could develop their motor skills through video games. Apart from that, video games were considered to be able to develop and maintain better thinking skills in accessing further information (Dirk Ifenthaler dkk., 2012).

There have been many studies regarding the link between video games and PAI learning. As in a study conducted by Aini & Muhid, Fadhilah, Sinaga, (Aini & Muhid, 2022; Fadhilah dkk., t.t.; Sinaga, 2022). Many of these studies are in scope in the form of development and testing (in the form of impact on effectiveness, and so on). However, from all of these studies and similar studies, there has been no study that focuses on theoretical studies and analysis of practical forms in the use of video games for PAI learning. thus, this article can elaborate on ideas related to the use of video games in PAI learning

This fact illustrates that video games can be said to be the most advanced form of popular culture today. This is seen from the ability of video games to produce and reproduce mindsets, even ideologies in the minds of the audience. Unlike other forms of popular culture such as movies, music, and comics, where the audience is placed in a passive position, video games actually position the audience (gamers) as subjects by providing options for the choice of

story to be played which will have an impact on the ending of the video game. If in films and other forms of popular culture, users are limited to the interpretation aspect of enjoying them, video games actually provide a space for active participation in a holistic manner, for example by having multiple endings which can be realized literally, not only through interpretation/interpretation but also because of the choice of behavior. the players in carrying out their roles through the main characters in video games. It is this dimension of active participation that makes video games usable in various fields, including in education.

In the context of Islamic religious education, video games can be a medium for conveying intrinsic and extrinsic values if managed properly. The aim in implementing Islamic religious education is to guide and educate students to better understand Islam. With this aim, video games can be a medium in learning, especially with the participation dimension as previously stated. Moreover, the trend of using video games is currently increasing which is then associated with the large number of Muslims who also take advantage of video games as a medium of learning. Thus, this review aims to provide an overview of how the use and development of video games in Islamic religious education (PAI) subjects, both theoretically and practically.

### **Research Method**

Writing this article using qualitative research methods. The analysis is based on extracting library data/literature studies from several sources of literature (written). Writing is done through the process of extracting data from various reference sources which discuss various activities related to the use of video games in the learning process and their various impacts in previous research, which are published in the public media (Prayogi, 2021, 2023). After that, a descriptive-analytical analysis is carried out to find new meanings. Researchers do not make face-to-face observations, but the validity of the data that has been obtained can be guaranteed based on scientific research theory, because the reference sources obtained, based on the methods used are sources that can be guaranteed to exist. These sources can be accessed through various places (libraries) and internet media online openly. This article can be an extract from various related articles and writings. Thus, this article is rather a synthesis of writings that have existed, to then be seen in

relation to what can be done in the current context (Prayogi dkk., 2022).

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Utilization and Development of Multimedia Technology in PAI Learning**

Utilization and development of learning media is carried out as an effort to facilitate the delivery of material. Utilization of this media requires students to be able to independently access knowledge and not solely based on the teacher. Like other subjects, PAI subjects also utilize and develop learning media because the current era also requires teachers to continue to be creative, innovative, and responsive to science and technology advances. Thus, the use of learning media in the current era is something that is natural. Teachers - including PAI teachers need to continue to develop themselves in the form of the ability to be able to access and master various media in the teaching and learning process.

Broadly speaking, video games and true games are products based on computer/multimedia technology. Multimedia technology itself is a media that unites two or more elements in the form of text, images, audio, and others (Sari dkk., t.t.). Multimedia technology itself consists of two forms, namely linear multimedia such as television and films which are not equipped with tools to control systematically and interactive multimedia in the form of (video) games which are equipped with tools to control systematically so that the players can choose what action to take. will be carried out for the next process (Munir, 2012).

As an integral part of the learning process, computer/multimedia technology has a different function from other technologies where multimedia technology can contain learning messages to be accessed by students. In relation to PAI learning, the utilization and development of multimedia technology can make the PAI learning process have various positive things such as making learning more interesting, interactive, and effective. Learning can also be carried out without being limited to one particular space and time, and can stimulate the creativity and innovation of students in developing their potential. This is because multimedia technology has the ability to realize "imagination" such as how it can enlarge objects that are originally small, or reduce objects that are originally large. It

can also present good visualization so that it can be felt directly without the need to be present at the original place, for example how the description of historical Islamic buildings, visualization of various Islamic historical events and various other things that can create a pleasant attraction for students in the learning process (Suhirman, 2015). Thus, multimedia technology is part of an effort to help students learn, both individually and in groups. Multimedia technology can be used in the learning process, in conveying knowledge, skills and attitudes as well as stimulating thoughts, feelings, attention and willingness to learn so that the learning process becomes more meaningful, purposeful and controllable and fun.

If it is associated with the teacher's position as a learning manager, the multimedia technology that will be used must be adapted to the teaching material that will be delivered so that learning objectives can be achieved effectively and efficiently. The use of multimedia technology in the teaching and learning process is not related to tertiary-technology aspects, but rather to the functional principles and benefits, advantages and disadvantages, and their role in supporting the learning process. Multimedia technology then has certain characteristics when viewed from the aspect of ability, how to make and use it. Thus, teachers must have the ability to choose and utilize appropriate multimedia technology in learning (Gulö, 2005).

Utilization and development of multimedia technology in PAI subjects must be carried out systematically and effectively by considering the needs of students so that the learning process can run smoothly. There are several things that need to be considered in the use of learning technology, including first, the need for accuracy in use with learning objectives. In this case, it means that the teaching media is selected based on various predetermined learning objectives. These various learning objectives contain various elements of understanding, application, analysis, synthesis that are more likely to be used. Second, the need for support for the content of learning materials. In this case, it means that PAI teaching materials are facts, as well as concepts that require information technology support so that they can be better explained. Thus, PAI teachers also need to have skills in its use so that the values and benefits of multimedia technology can impact not only students but also teachers (Suhirman, 2015).

### **Theoretical Concepts of Utilization and Use of Video Games in PAI Learning**

At present, the use of video games has been installed in various forms of electronic media, both in the form of hardware and software, which are even massively used, namely in the form of handheld-smartphones. This means that almost the majority of today's society cannot be separated from exposure to video games. Video games can provide content in a sociological and cultural context which can become a visualization and simulation of a reality (Bastian & Khamadi, 2018). In this case it means, video games can instill various values of a reality to a wide audience.

The completeness of the characteristics of video games necessitates that video games can be utilized for the benefit of Islamic education, especially through a more modern-popular approach. The use of video games is actually only in the form of adjustments to the development of the latest learning materials, methods and media, which differ from the situation and conditions of previous learning models. On this basis, conceptually video games can be included in modern-popular Islamic learning media, namely media that can display Islamic messages simultaneously when communicating the desired message. Theoretically, the role of video games in transmitting Islamic values in the field of education requires an emphasis on the different elements in them, especially the elements of games and play. In the understanding of popular culture, it is the game element that is used as an educational medium, while play is used as a leisure medium. Regarding the educational aspect, there are at least four main characteristics of a game, namely goals, rules, feedback systems, and voluntary participation (McGonigal, 2011).

Through a theoretical approach, there are at least three conceptual paradigms in making video games a medium for learning PAI. First, video games as a learning-intervention tool. This becomes a video game as a way of delivering (intervention) values aimed at changing the behavior patterns of players. In this case, the intervention process can have a positive value, such as providing motivation, increasing spatial understanding, and developing sensory-motor abilities properly. Although, it should also be underlined that this intervention can also be assessed negatively, especially the notion that it can lead to addiction and aggression. This first paradigm rests on the basic assumption that there are values that can be included in

video games when they are produced which in the end can be used as a tool to change the mindset and behavior of its users. The important thing about this first paradigm is that it is possible to use video games in PAI learning as a medium for transferring values as part of educational goals by directly involving students as game players – in this case as consumers, and even by being involved as producers. then it is not just for use, the development of video games as learning technology will be optimized for the use of video games in PAI learning itself.

Second, video games as an interactive medium. This makes video games a function of simulation/modeling in presenting meaningful experiences that make it possible for players to complete an achievement/task. That is, video games become a cognitive companion in producing changes in the behavior of the players when the players carry out the process of completing their tasks. Third, video games as part of the player's environment (immersion games). This means that video games provide a variety of activities (directly) that can be used and interpreted as activities that occur within a system. Players can learn from the system or from various other elements in video games. That is, the education/learning process can be included in a video game system, where students and teachers can learn from each other according to their role choices when entering the system. The PAI learning process then requires direct and comprehensive involvement of the learner in interacting with the existing system in video game design.

As a learning medium, conceptually video games have the same position as other learning media such as films, novels, and so on which can be used as part of the learning system. However, when referring to its "more" function, video games can be a container for filling Islamic religious values. There has been a shift in the meaning of the use of video games, which initially had a secular value to become a religious one. This also indicates that video games can achieve a function known as the compromise balance function. In addition, theoretically, the use of video games in PAI learning can also be done because in the video game system there is a concept of "hero". The hero figure in video games becomes a symbol that carries a certain mission. The concept of heroes is an important representation of the video game system as a whole, and as gamers, they have the privilege to carry out their actions. On this basis, the



concept of heroes and video games are like two sides of a coin and become the epicenter of the vision and mission carried by the video game itself. Thus, the concept of a hero becomes important in learning PAI because with it he can transmit heroic narratives -which are in accordance with Islamic values in the form of audio-text-visual which will later be embedded in the minds of the players. It is this capability that is expected – conceptually video games can be carried out to be able to incorporate the values of Islamic education to a wide audience. The power of video games in shaping narratives and their ability to be actively involved visually, is an important attraction in video games that other learning media do not have.

### **The Practical Concept of Utilizing and Using Video Games in PAI Learning**

As an option in learning media, video games actually have two sides of value, both positive and negative. The determination of whether a media contains positive or negative values will greatly depend on how the game content/content is programmed in the video game. Thus, educators must be able to make good use of the positive side of video games for the learning process, bearing in mind that the success of learning one of them will greatly depend on whether the media used includes media that is favored by students or not.

There are at least two learning models by utilizing video games as part of the learning media, namely individual and group learning models. In the individual learning model, the application can be done with only one student and their desire to use video games arises from their awareness of being able to learn independently – of course accompanied by several considerations. Whereas in the group learning model, its application requires a facilitator/teacher/teacher who understands how gameplay in video games works and at least has an understanding that in these video games there are Islamic (religious) educational values to be applied. These teachers can come from outsiders or from within (internal), well-known students so that the learning atmosphere becomes more dynamic and not rigid. With these conditions eating at a practical-concrete level, the first thing that needs to be done is to choose the right video game platform (genre, console, gameplay, model, etc.). For example, by making video games with the computer console genre as an option, or handheld-based video games that are currently being loved,

especially in the form of video games on smartphones. In addition, it is also necessary to provide a special atmosphere and conditions (time and place) so that the learning process becomes more efficient and not counterproductive to the original learning objectives.

If examined further, there are at least a number of practical concepts that make video games a medium for learning PAI. First, by building an entire video game platform with the aim of being a medium for Islamic education. This concept practically necessitates the presence of large capital in its activities. It takes support from many parties (Muslims) so that this concept can be realized. This is a challenge in itself, however efforts must be made so that various negative excesses that are often addressed in video games can be minimized. There are several examples of (video) games which were later built by incorporating gameplay content that can be used as learning media for Islamic religious education. Without putting aside various other video game titles, Children of Sholeh's Game (I think) should be an example of a video game that can be used as a medium for PAI learning. This game was developed by one of the game developers in the city of Bandung, which in the game targets children as its "market". If you look closely, in this game there are various choices, all of which are based on Islamic content wrapped in gameplay carrying out missions. In essence, as a whole this game can be used as a medium for PAI learning if it is applied properly by educators. There is also the Muslim Millionaire game which is a game developed by the LABKOMIF UIN Bandung team. This game is similar in content to popular quiz shows, although it is packed with various Islamic questions. Practically this game can be used as a medium for PAI learning, especially as a form of "evaluation" considering the gameplay is based on quizzes. There is also a more "serious" game, namely a game called Muslim 3D. This game was developed by a game developer from Germany whose content depicts the experience of the players being able to come and interact in Muslim religious locations such as Mecca. With the support of the internet, this game allows its players to interact with other players to carry out various challenges, or just carry out the pilgrimage rituals.

The second praxis concept is to insert various elements of Islamic education, so that in the process of "playing" video games, Islamic interpretation efforts can be made of these elements. This concept was developed as an answer to the difficulty of implementing

the first concept massively. The shortcoming of the first approach itself is the unpopularity of the process of building up to fully developing the entire systematics of video games which are intended as media for Islamic education, lies in the amount of capital and challenges in the process. However, this does not mean that there is no use of video games as a medium for learning PAI at all. The huge potential of Muslims can ultimately be a motivating factor for game developers to be able to develop video games that focus on being used as a medium for learning PAI or if that is not yet possible, at least to be able to incorporate Islamic elements into it. Most importantly, the selection of video game gameplay must be done selectively. This is because until now there is still no (big and serious) game developer who fully makes and develops games that are intended (seriously) as a medium for PAI learning.

At the moment there isn't any – or not many video game developers have developed games with a background in the nuances of the Islamic world. However, there have been several trends where game studios have been inspired by culture, art, and architecture with a strong Islamic background (Delwiche, 2006). Although at the theoretical level there are still pros and cons, this has not prevented several video game developers from incorporating Islamic symbols into their gameplay and storylines. The phenomenon where game developers incorporate elements of the Islamic religion is the basic foundation for the use and development of video games as learning media in general and PAI learning in particular. What needs to be focused on then is how gamers can know –and then understand the information in the form of various Islamic elements for later interpretation. Furthermore, the players involved can hold discussions regarding these interpretation efforts so that they can then understand the values of Islamic religious education in them.

At least there are several video game titles which contain various Islamic elements which can then be used (as interpretative material) for the benefit of Islamic religious education. Such as the game *Age of Empires*. This game was built by the Microsoft company at a time when computer technology was still using Intel Pentium processors. This game is a real time strategy game that is quite detailed. Players will also find many factions and nations in it. In terms of storyline, this game takes the setting of a crusade that brings conflict between religions and nations. In the context of PAI

learning, this game can be part (interpretative) of learning Islamic history, considering that this game is based on real historical events, namely the Crusades. The next game that also has a crusading background is Assassin's Creed which was built by Studio Ubisoft. In this game, the main character is described as having an Arab bloodline with a father and mother who have different beliefs. This game can also be part of interpretive PAI learning considering that apart from the setting, the gameplay also inserts various religious narrations, such as the matter of the Apple of Eden which has become popular among adherents of the Semitic religion. Other games that are made in the country, which practically can be used as part of PAI learning media, such as a game with the title Unseen. This game was developed by domestic developers where in the game, this game explicitly inserts Islamic elements. This can be seen when players are faced with ghosts, which can only be defeated by the power of faith. In this game, players must use a microphone to recite verses from the Koran (correctly) so that they are free from ghosts/spirits. This is of course very close to the values of Islamic education directly.

The practice of using and developing video games as Islamic learning media can also be carried out through community-based creative efforts by video game developers/developers. This creative community is also known as the Modder community (Scacchi, 2011). This community is capable of re-engineering a video game into something different from the original. In this case, various popular video game titles, which initially did not (or were hostile to) Islamic values – such as the Grand Theft Auto (GTA) game, could be redesigned by incorporating Islamic elements in them. This necessitates that video games can ultimately be used as learning media if they can be created by various parties who do have the ability to do so.

The third practical concept is to collaborate between platforms outside of the video game system, including by providing internet network support and the involvement of various application platforms outside of video games, such as Tik Tok, Instagram, Youtube, as well as various other applications that allow for the transfer of information from one user to another (in this case known as Streaming). This praxis then introduces its users not as gamers, but as game streamers. The implementation of this praxis is carried out with the assumption that the development of video games (online) has become very

massive with its various derivatives. The important thing that distinguishes this praxis from the other two praxis is the absolute demand to collaborate with other platforms, and is aimed at players (gamers) who play popular video games – and especially those based on mobile games, which are built purely for the benefit of the industry. entertainment such as Mobile Legend games, PUBG, DOTA, Free Fire, and so on. Even though it was purely built for the benefit of the entertainment industry, these various video game titles can still be utilized or developed as PAI learning media.

In this case, at least two important things are needed so that the various video games can be used as learning media. These two things are taste-ability and personality. This is important because it will be able to attract players and viewers (game viewers) to attend and learn in it. Practically, this can be seen from the presence of streamers who display Islamic identities when playing video games. Just mention the name Adam Tubs, as a game streamer whose activities when playing video games broadcast Islamic values, such as saying tahmid and tahlil. Other streamers, such as Citra Cantika, who in her video game streaming activities, wears a headscarf that characterizes a Muslim woman. These things certainly can be a puller and a pusher so that video games can be utilized for the benefit of (learning) Islam broadly. Although, such phenomena are explicitly not included in the context of education, but implicitly, these actions can eradicate various stereotypes about video games which tend to be negative towards learning or even educational efforts. Various forms of praxis that utilize video games as a medium of learning, as explained above, are of course still in the form of perspectives, which of course are not standard. It should be realized, the method of using video games as a medium for learning PAI certainly has pros and cons. So, before deciding to make video games as learning media, it is necessary to carry out due diligence and support from related parties so that the use of video games can be effective. In addition, it also needs to be massiveized and not just used as an alternative learning media.

### **Conclusion**

Video games have now become part of the civilization of modern society with all the technological sophistication that allows direct involvement in it. On this basis, it is not surprising that video

games can be called the most sophisticated and complex form of cultural art. Video games have a wider dimension when compared to other forms of cultural creations. Thus, the use of video games can be utilized or developed in various ways, including in terms of Islamic religious education. In this context, it means that video games can be an alternative learning media. Video games can be used in PAI learning seen from their role as a medium for transferring information and values. There has been a paradigm shift in understanding video games, from what was originally a trivial thing, free of secular values, to something that has educational value and even corrections to reality.

Through a theoretical approach, there are at least three conceptual paradigms in making video games a medium for learning PAI. First, video games as a learning-intervention tool. This becomes a video game as a way of delivering (intervention) values aimed at changing the behavior patterns of players. Second, video games as an interactive medium. This makes video games a function of simulation/modeling in presenting meaningful experiences that make it possible for players to complete an achievement/task. That is, video games become a cognitive companion in producing changes in the behavior of the players when the players carry out the process of completing their tasks. Third, video games as part of the player's environment (immersion games). This means that video games provide a variety of activities (directly) that can be used and interpreted as activities that occur within a system.

Practically, there are at least a number of concepts that make video games a medium for learning PAI. First, by building an entire video game platform with the aim of being a medium for Islamic education. This concept practically necessitates the presence of large capital in its activities. The second praxis is to insert various elements of Islamic education, so that in the process of "playing" video games, Islamic interpretation efforts can be made of these elements. This concept was developed as an answer to the difficulty of implementing the first concept massively. And the third praxis is to collaborate between platforms outside of the video game system, including by providing internet network support and the involvement of various application platforms outside of video games

The emergence of several video games that have Islamic elements (whether in whole or in part), can be an example that

Muslims also play an active role in the process. In the end, video games can also be (alternative) Islamic education learning media because they have the power to form narratives as well as active involvement visually, which is a special attraction that other learning media don't have. As a result, even though there are still pros and cons regarding the use and development of video games, the use of video games as a medium for learning PAI bridges the need for learning – as well as playing. Furthermore, if video games can be put to good use as a medium for learning PAI, it is not impossible that the negative stigma of video games will be reduced, replaced by their positive influence in spreading the values of Islamic education.

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