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## Islamic Education through the Digital Storytelling Method in Islamic Date Learning (Classical Narrative Revitalization Study for the Millennial Generation)

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### Abstrak

This study aims to examine how the digital storytelling method can be used as a means of revitalizing classical narratives in learning Islamic tarikh for the millennial generation. Using a qualitative research approach based on library research, this study analyzes various academic literature and relevant classical and contemporary Islamic scholarly sources. The results show that digital storytelling can be an effective pedagogical medium to convey Islamic history in a contextual, interesting and meaningful way. The transformation of classical narratives into digital formats-such as animated videos, podcasts, and interactive infographics-increases learners' absorption, interest in learning, and emotional engagement. In addition, this method is in line with the visual, fast-paced and technology-based learning characteristics of the millennial generation. In the context of Islamic education, digital storytelling not only functions as a medium for delivering material, but also as a means of character building, value internalization, and strengthening students' Islamic identity. This study concludes that digital storytelling has great potential in recontextualizing Islamic history and becoming an epistemological bridge between classical scientific traditions and the challenges of the digital world. Therefore, the integration of this method in the Islamic tarikh curriculum is an important strategy in responding to today's pedagogical needs.

**Keywords:** *Tarikh Islam, Digital Storytelling, Classical Narratives, Islamic Education, Millennial Generation, Digital Media, Contextual Learning*

## INTRODUCTION

Islamic education is a fundamental pillar in shaping the character and identity of Muslims. One of the important components of Islamic education is the date of Islam or the history of Islamic civilization which is full of values, inspiration, and examples. Unfortunately, the presentation of Islamic history often feels dry and uncontextual for the younger generation, especially the millennial generation who live in the digital era (Rahman & Ahmed, 2020). This poses a great challenge in reconveying Islamic historical values that are relevant, inspiring, and grounded through an approach that is in accordance with the character of the times. In the context of contemporary education, the digital storytelling method (technology-based storytelling) is starting to gain attention as an effective approach in the learning process. This method allows classical narratives to be conveyed with interactive visualizations, animations, and other digital media that are more appealing to the digital native generation (Isbell et al., 2024). This approach is also able to integrate affective and cognitive aspects in harmony, so that it can foster empathy and imagination of students.

The importance of this research lies in the effort to re-present the treasures of Islamic history through an approach that is relevant to the times, namely digital storytelling. Given that the millennial generation grows up in a highly visual and interactive digital environment, Islamic education needs to adjust its methods and media so as not to lose its appeal and effectiveness in transforming values (Hofman-Bergholm, 2022). Islamic dates rich in stories of example and struggle have great potential to be revitalized through digital technology.

Locally, the learning of Islamic dates in schools and madrassas still uses conventional approaches such as lectures and memorization of historical facts. In fact, on a global scale, the trend of digital storytelling-based education has become a popular alternative in history and religious education, especially in countries that are experiencing digital transformation in their education systems (Robin, 2018). Indonesia, as a country with the largest Muslim population in the world, needs to explore similar transformations to improve the quality of Islamic education. Unfortunately, studies on the integration of digital storytelling in Islamic education, especially Islamic dates, are still very limited. Previous studies have focused more on the use of technology in general learning or in the field of science and mathematics (Aljaraideh, 2020). This creates an important research gap to bridge, namely the need for studies that emphasize digital storytelling methods in the context of Islamic religious education based on historical narratives.

The absence of a contextual and digital narrative approach can result in a low understanding of holistic Islamic history among the younger generation. This has had an impact on the weakening of Islamic identity, the loss of inspiration from classical Muslim figures, and a decline in interest in the study of Islamic history. When history is only memorized without being interpreted, then its function as a source of value and life orientation loses its meaning (Tsigilis et al., 2021).

Data from UNESCO (2021) shows that visual and digital narrative-based methods significantly improve information retention and student learning motivation. Meanwhile, a report from We Are Social (2023) shows that Indonesia's young generation spends an average of more than 8 hours a day using digital media. This fact shows that Islamic education must be present in the digital space to remain relevant and impactful.

Several previous studies have indeed raised the theme of the use of digital media in education, but the focus is more on general learning or strengthening digital literacy (Yang & Wu, 2021; Rodríguez et al., 2021). Meanwhile, research on the use of narrative methods in

learning Islamic dates is still minimal, and almost no studies of classical narratives specifically as objects of revitalization through digital approaches for the millennial generation.

Therefore, this research offers novelty in the form of an integrative approach: between classical narrative methods, digital technology, and the context of the millennial generation. This approach not only answers today's pedagogical challenges, but also makes a theoretical contribution to the development of Islamic education methods based on technology and digital culture.

The purpose of this research is to examine in depth the digital storytelling approach in the revitalization of the classical narrative of Islamic dates and how this approach is able to answer the needs of the millennial generation in the context of learning Islamic history that is more relevant, inspiring, and transformative.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative method with a library research approach. This approach was chosen because the main focus of the research is to examine and analyze various relevant literature sources related to digital storytelling methods, Islamic date learning, and the dynamics of the millennial generation in the context of Islamic education. This type of research emphasizes critical analysis of written documents such as scientific journal articles, academic books, dissertations, proceedings, and previous research reports that have been validly published and academically recognized (Bowen, 2019).

The main formulation in this study is: How can the digital storytelling method be used as a means of revitalizing classical narratives in learning Islamic dates for the millennial generation? The purpose of this research is to explore the conceptual foundations, implementive potential, and pedagogical strategies that can be used in integrating digital storytelling into Islamic history learning, with a focus on acceptance and meaningfulness for the current young generation of Muslims (Merriam & Tisdell, 2018).

The data collection technique in this study was carried out through searching academic literature from Scopus and Google Scholar-indexed journals, the latest academic books, and official digital sources related to Islamic education, educational technology, and millennial generation studies. The search was conducted using keywords such as "*digital storytelling in Islamic education*", "*Islamic history learning*", "*millennial learners*", and "*narrative pedagogy*". These sources are then strictly selected based on the criteria of relevance, publisher reputation, and up-to-date (Denzin & Lincoln, 2021). The validity of the data is checked through source triangulation techniques and critical evaluation of the validity and credibility of each reference used. Researchers also conduct a comparative analysis between the literature to avoid bias and ensure objectivity in compiling conceptual findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). With this method, every data used has gone through a systematic literature verification process and can be accounted for academically.

The data analysis technique in this study uses a content analysis model with a thematic approach. The analysis stages start from the identification of the main theme, categorization of the content of the literature, interpretation of meaning, to conceptual synthesis. This procedure allows researchers to find patterns and relationships between concepts that are relevant to the research objectives (Krippendorff, 2019). The entire analysis process is done manually and digitally using reference management software such as Zotero and Mendeley.

The design of this research is descriptive-analytical. In this study, the process of data collection, analysis, and synthesis was carried out in a spiral, following a flexible but systematic pattern. The research diagram can be described as follows:

- Identify issues →
- Literature search →
- Selection and classification of sources →
- Thematic content analysis →
- Synthesis of concepts →

Formulation of findings and conclusions.

This design aims to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework regarding the integration of digital storytelling methods in learning Islamic dates for the millennial generation (Saldana, 2021).

With this methodology, it is hoped that the research results can be a significant theoretical contribution to the development of Islamic learning methods based on narrative technology, as well as a practical reference for educators, curriculum developers, and Islamic educational institutions who want to adapt to the challenges of the digital era (McKenney & Reeves, 2021).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Research Results

This study found that digital storytelling is an effective pedagogical approach to revitalize classical narratives in learning Islamic dates, especially for the millennial generation who have distinctive characteristics as digital natives. Classical narratives that were previously only conveyed textually can now be revived in multimedia formats, reinforcing the visual, auditory, and emotional dimensions of Islamic history. The characteristics of the millennial generation who are multitasking, visual-oriented, and connected to the digital world make them more interested in a dynamic and interactive form of information presentation (Hofman-Bergholm, 2022). The digital storytelling approach, which combines text, images, sound, and animation, has been proven to be able to reach the affective and cognitive aspects simultaneously, which is very important in Islamic history education (Robin, 2018).

Digital storytelling is not just an entertainment medium, but can be a value-based learning medium. When Islamic historical figures such as the Prophet PBUH, Umar bin Khattab, or Salahuddin al-Ayyubi are visualized in the form of educational animations, their moral messages and examples become easier to capture and internalize by students (Rofiq et al., 2024; Rodríguez et al., 2021).

One of the main challenges in learning Islamic dates is the lack of interest in historical narratives that are considered far from their reality. The use of digital approaches reduces this distance by framing classic stories into more familiar forms, such as short videos, narrative podcasts, to interactive infographics (Yang & Wu, 2021). The revitalization of classical narratives through digital storytelling also facilitates the integration between historical and contemporary aspects. The story of the hijrah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, for example, can be linked to the theme of migration and modern refugees, thus establishing contextual connections that enrich historical meaning in the contemporary context (Multisilta & Niemi, 2019).

This approach also provides space for strengthening the digital literacy of Muslim students. Through activities such as creating Islamic history-based digital storytelling projects,

students not only understand historical material, but also develop 21st-century skills, such as collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity (Zou & Wang, 2021).

The results of the study show that there are three main pillars in the use of digital storytelling for Islamic date learning: (1) narrative validity, (2) contextualization of messages, and (3) media technology. Narrative validity means that the story conveyed must be based on authentic and authoritative Islamic historical sources (Rahman & Ahmed, 2020).

Contextualizing messages is important so that Islamic historical values do not only romanticize the past, but actually shape students' ethical and moral understanding in responding to the challenges of their times. Concepts such as justice of Umar bin Khattab, for example, can be attributed to contemporary social justice issues (Tsigilis et al., 2021). Media technologization means that material delivery must utilize platforms and formats that suit the digital learning style of the millennial generation. Applications such as Canva, Powtoon, or Adobe Spark have been used extensively in this context (Aljaraideh, 2020).

## **B. Research Discussion**

### **1. Implementation of Digital Storytelling in Islamic Date Learning**

The implementation of digital storytelling requires the active role of teachers as narrative facilitators, not just as informants. Teachers need to master digital story presentation techniques, understand the dynamics of the learning psychology of the younger generation, and be able to choose the right classical narrative to revive (Merriam & Tisdell, 2018). Another advantage of digital storytelling is its ability to build a personal and reflective learning experience. In some studies, students reported that they felt more connected to Islamic values when historical stories were told in the format of personal stories through sound and visualization (Ritonga et al., 2025; Isbell et al., 2024).

Digital storytelling also allows students to be active subjects in the learning process. In a project-based learning model, students can create their own digital projects, such as videos of the stories of the Prophet's companions or podcasts on the history of Islamic civilization, which reinforce creative mastery of the material (Staley & Freeman, 2020).

However, this study also found several challenges, such as the limitations of classical Islamic literature that has been systematically digitized, and the lack of teacher training in the use of digital media for Islamic education (UNESCO, 2021). This is a structural challenge that needs to be overcome through training and curriculum development.

Previous research has discussed digital storytelling in the context of general education, but there are still few that lead to specific Islamic education, especially in the dimension of Islamic dates (Al-Rawi, 2021). Therefore, this study makes a conceptual contribution in expanding the space of adaptive and contextual Islamic pedagogy.

The results of the analysis show that the revitalization of classical narratives requires a historical-hermeneutic approach, in which the old narrative is re-read in a new context, but does not lose its authentic value. This process avoids simply digitizing without meaning, and leads to a reinterpretation of narratives that build bridges between the past and the present (Saldana, 2021). This integration also challenges traditional textual approaches to date learning that are exclusive. Digital narratives open up wider, inclusive, and democratic access to Islamic history, which previously could only be accessed through heavy classics for the younger generation (Yin, 2023).

Thus, the digital storytelling method can be positioned as an adaptive, participatory, and value-based Islamic pedagogical approach. It answers the millennial generation's need to learn in a personalized, visual, and interactive way, without sacrificing the depth

of historical content (McKenney & Reeves, 2021). In a global context, many Islamic educational institutions in the Middle East and Europe have begun to implement this approach. In Indonesia, the opportunity to develop this method is very open, especially with the high penetration of technology and social media among the young generation of Muslims (We Are Social, 2023).

This research as a whole shows that digital storytelling is not only a means of conveying narratives, but is an important instrument in the transformation of Islamic pedagogy, especially in the revitalization of Islamic dates. The use of technology is not to change values, but to strengthen the delivery of values in a more contextual and impactful way.

## **2. The Strengths and Challenges of Digital Storytelling in Islamic Date Learning**

In the process of learning Islamic dates, one of the classic obstacles faced is the tendency of teaching methods that are still textual and descriptive. The material is often delivered in the form of memorizing historical facts without any direct association with the current context. This causes students to feel less relevant to Islamic history with their lives. Digital storytelling is present as a creative solution that transforms historical narratives into imaginative and meaningful learning experiences (Robin, 2022; Abed Khasawneh & Khasawneh, 2024).

The main strength of digital storytelling lies in its ability to integrate sound, images, video, and text into a single narrative flow. This opens up space for students to not only listen to the story, but also see and feel it emotionally. In the context of Islamic date learning, this approach allows classic narratives such as the Battle of Badr, the migration of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, or the story of Caliph Umar bin Khattab to be conveyed more vividly and easily understood by the millennial generation (Smeda, Dakich, & Sharda, 2021).

Furthermore, the use of digital platforms such as YouTube, podcasts, and social media as a means of conveying Islamic stories also expands the reach of learning beyond the formal classroom. Content such as Islamic historical animations, Islamic documentary series, or historical narrative vlogs are effective educational alternatives. This reflects the importance of a multimodal literacy approach in delivering Islamic education that is inclusive and responsive to the times (Kearney & Maher, 2019).

A study by Nguyen et al. (2020) shows that students are more likely to remember and understand historical material when presented through an audio-visual narrative form rather than text alone. In the context of Islam, this approach not only increases the absorption of historical information, but also revives the exemplary values of Islamic historical figures who become moral inspirations for students.

The digital storytelling method is also in line with the principles of constructivist pedagogy which emphasizes the active participation of students in building meaning. In practice, students can be encouraged to create their own digital storytelling projects about their favorite Islamic figures or inspiring historical events. This activity not only hone students' creativity and critical thinking skills, but also strengthens their emotional connection with Islamic history (Ohler, 2019).

One of the important aspects of the revitalization of classical narrative is the alignment of language and style of storytelling. Millennials tend to prefer concise, visual, and emotional speaking styles. Therefore, the transformation of classic stories into a digital storytelling format needs to pay attention to the style of popular language without

losing the depth of its historical and spiritual message. This is where the role of teachers as narrative curators is very important so that the delivery of stories remains authentic and educational value (Barkhuizen, 2021).

In addition, digital storytelling has the potential to become a modern da'wah tool that reaches the younger generation outside of formal educational institutions. Digital narratives spread on social media are able to instill Islamic values indirectly through a medium that is familiar to young people. Therefore, educators and da'i need to master digital content production skills so that Islamic messages are not left behind in the global narrative competition (Rao & Menon, 2023).

However, the success of digital storytelling in learning Islamic dates is also determined by the quality of the narrative used. The Islamic stories chosen should be sourced from credible literature such as classical date books (e.g. Tarikh al-Tabari, Sirah Ibn Hisham) and not be stuck in simplification or distortion of meaning. This emphasizes that the digital approach must be accompanied by a commitment to the validity of the content and integrity of Islamic science (Seker, 2018).

Another challenge is the uneven digital literacy of teachers and students. Many PAI teachers are not familiar with video editing applications, podcasts, or other digital narrative platforms. Therefore, educational technology training is an urgent need in realizing the transformation of digital storytelling-based date learning. This training not only targets the technical, but also pedagogical and theological aspects so that the narrative built is in harmony with Islamic values (Alismail, 2020).

Overall, digital storytelling in learning Islamic dates is not just a media innovation, but an epistemological transformation in Islamic education. It combines elements of history, values, technology, and learning psychology in one integrated approach that is effective for millennials. This method can be a bridge between the classical tradition of Islam and today's digital reality, making dates a living, touching, and character-shaping subject.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussions that have been studied, it can be concluded that the digital storytelling method has great potential in revitalizing classical narratives in learning Islamic dates, especially for the millennial generation who grew up in the digital ecosystem. Digital storytelling has proven to be able to bridge the gap between classical Islamic history material and the learning needs of today's students, through the presentation of contextual, visual, and interactive narratives. The revitalization of classical narratives through a digital approach not only reinvigorates Islamic historical values, but also strengthens the moral, spiritual, and Islamic dimensions of students. With the right use of technology, Islamic historical stories can be revived in an interesting way without losing the authenticity of their content.

In the context of Islamic education, digital storytelling does not only function as a medium for delivering material, but also as an instrument for character building, value-based learning, and a tool to build critical and ethical digital literacy. Teachers play a central role as facilitators who ensure that the historical narrative conveyed remains based on authentic Islamic sources. This research also confirms the importance of a historical-hermeneutic approach in rereading

classical stories in a contextual and relevant way. This indicates that digital storytelling is not just a media transformation, but also a new epistemological approach in Islamic pedagogy.

Thus, digital storytelling deserves to be used as part of the design of the Islamic date learning curriculum in schools and madrasas. It allows for a more dialogical, reflective, and participatory learning process according to the characteristics of the millennial generation.

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