

## Gamification Of Islamic Education: Exploring The Role Of Wordwalls In Increasing Student Participation In Learning The Qur'an And Hadith

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### ABSTRACT

*The use of Wordwall media in learning Qur'an Hadith has proven to be quite effective. Students appear more engaged and active when completing the interactive questions and games provided through the Wordwall platform. This media offers a user-friendly and dynamic way for students to respond to questions, making the learning experience more enjoyable. The use of engaging and varied instructional media is essential for teachers aiming to foster active student participation, ensuring that learning is not solely teacher-centered but also involves students meaningfully. Wordwall, as a web-based learning tool, serves as an alternative solution to address challenges related to student engagement and focus during the learning process. The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of Wordwall media in increasing student participation. Utilizing a qualitative research method, the data in this study is presented in the form of descriptive narratives, aligning with the principles of a qualitative approach. Viewed from the perspective of the research problem, this study falls into the category of descriptive research. Descriptive research involves collecting data sources and processing them into information that helps address the research questions particularly those related to current conditions. It aims to objectively describe the state of a subject or phenomenon based on observed realities.*

## INTRODUCTION

Today, education is a field that is continuously being improved due to the increasing number of problems and the influence education has on people's way of thinking. As a result, education has become a complex issue. It consists of several interconnected components (Diana & Azani, 2024). Therefore, if we aim for the effective implementation of education, it must be carried out in a structured and systematic manner something that can only be achieved by understanding the various influencing factors. This includes having a deep understanding of every part of the educational system, from the smallest to the largest elements. It is expected that these components will function effectively to support the development of education in line with the intended goals (Abdalla et al., 2022; Boyd, 2022).

In classroom learning, complex issues often arise that significantly affect students. As such, a truly conducive learning environment is essential because, fundamentally, learning is a process of behavioral change oriented towards students' attitudes, behavior, and skills. A conducive learning

environment can be fostered and supported by several factors, one of which is the learning media and models used by teachers, along with their ability to use them effectively (Abdussalam et al., 2019; Adegoke, 2014). A creative teacher will strive to implement appropriate learning media that align with the material being delivered. As a result, students will experience a notable difference when media is used effectively in class (K. Abidin et al., 2021; Agustin & Wintarti, 2021). This creates an active, enjoyable, focused learning atmosphere that prevents students from becoming bored. Moreover, appropriate media enables material to be delivered and absorbed more quickly by students. The use of engaging and varied learning media is therefore essential, as it encourages students to be more actively involved, shifting the focus from the teacher to the learners themselves.

In delivering quality education, teachers often face challenges, particularly in conveying learning material. Based on research conducted at SMP Muhammadiyah PK Surakarta with a sample of 32 seventh-grade students, it was found that the learning process often remains teacher-centered. This results in limited student engagement, especially in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) classes, where the use of strategies and learning media has not been optimized. Many students were observed not paying attention to the teacher, becoming preoccupied with their own activities, or lacking focus during lessons. For seventh-grade students, this may be due to the transitional phase from elementary to junior high school, which requires adaptation. Therefore, alternative approaches are needed to encourage greater student engagement and focus during the learning process.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SMP Muhammadiyah PK Surakarta is divided into several focus areas, including Qur'an and Hadith, Islamic History, and Aqidah Akhlaq, while Arabic and Muhammadiyah Studies are taught separately. This study focuses on the Qur'an and Hadith component. To deliver Qur'an and Hadith material effectively, engaging learning strategies are needed so that students can actively participate in the learning process. One such strategy is using a website-based learning medium called Wordwall (Agustin & Wintarti, 2021; Herman, 2022). Wordwall is a web-based educational platform designed as an alternative to address the issues of student engagement and focus during lessons. This online learning tool aligns with classroom settings and teaching styles and offers a variety of interactive instruments. It is expected that by using Wordwall, interactive learning activities can be created. Its flexible access in terms of time and location using internet-connected devices such as computers or laptops connected to projectors also supports its effective implementation, allowing all students to clearly see the Wordwall content (Harmon et al., 2009; Sugiani, 2022).

Essentially, this website features educational content in the form of electronic games, packaged either as learning materials or quizzes that are educational and interactive. It can be used as a learning resource, evaluation tool, and an accessible instructional medium for students (Pradini & Adnyayanti, 2022; Purwitasari, 2022). Efforts to enhance the effectiveness of learning continue to be made, particularly in today's world, where everything increasingly relies on technology. Consequently, both teachers and students are required to keep up with technological developments, especially in applying technology in the teaching and learning process, to create a more efficient classroom experience.

## METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research approach, as the data presented and described are in the form of words rather than numerical values. Based on the nature of the problem being studied, this research falls under the category of descriptive research. Descriptive research involves collecting sources and processing them into data to answer research questions, particularly those related to current conditions. It aims to objectively describe the condition of the subject or object under study. Qualitative research emphasizes understanding and meaning that relate to the topic being discussed, focusing more on the process than measurement. It highlights meaning rather than mere explanation

(Arif, 2023; Arif, bin Abd Aziz, et al., 2023) This research was conducted at SMP Muhammadiyah PK Surakarta during the 2024/2025 academic year and spanned a period of four weeks. The trial evaluation was conducted directly using the Wordwall platform as a learning medium. The research population consisted of two classes, namely Class VII B and VII D of SMP Muhammadiyah PK Surakarta.

Data collection techniques used in this study include interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher for seventh-grade students at SMP Muhammadiyah PK Kotabarat to gather insights (Yin, 2018), opinions, and experiences related to the research topic. Observation involved directly monitoring the learning activities in the classroom, particularly during the PAI lessons, to understand the ongoing phenomena with attention to detail and context. Documentation was carried out through photos and videos taken during the research process (Afifi & Andriana, 2024). Data analysis techniques employed in this study included data reduction, which helps streamline data collection for subsequent stages, followed by data presentation through narrative texts and visual diagrams, and finally, drawing conclusions. The qualitative nature of the research is expected to yield new findings as the ultimate outcome of the study.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Efforts to Increase Student Learning Engagement through Wordwall Media in the Al-Qur'an Hadith Subject at SMP Muhammadiyah PK Surakarta**

The use of Wordwall media in Al-Qur'an Hadith learning at SMP Muhammadiyah Program Khusus Surakarta received positive responses from various parties. Based on interviews with several Islamic Education (PAI) teachers, it was found that this media effectively increased student engagement and created a more dynamic classroom environment.

AS, an Al-Qur'an Hadith teacher, shared that before using Wordwall, the learning process tended to be one-directional, with students showing little enthusiasm. However, after the implementation of Wordwall, there was a noticeable shift.

"The classroom became more active, and students were more enthusiastic during lessons. They even looked forward to the Wordwall sessions because it felt like playing a game while still learning," she explained. This was supported by classroom observations, where students were visibly more engaged, actively asking questions, and expressing enjoyment during lessons.

In a similar vein, BN, another PAI teacher, mentioned that Wordwall enriched his teaching methods, which were previously limited. He used features such as Open the Box and Quiz to present questions related to Surah Al-Fajr verses 1–30.

"It really helps, because students are not just receiving information passively they're actively involved in the process, cognitively and emotionally," he noted. During observations, students were seen actively answering questions and enthusiastically participating in group discussions.

SH, a teacher also involved in developing digital learning strategies at the school, noted that Wordwall made formative assessments more practical. Students' answers were displayed instantly, and teachers could download reports of the results.

“It really helps us assess students' understanding in real time. The accuracy of their answers has also improved with each session,” she stated. Supporting documentation, such as screenshots of quiz results, showed that most students scored above 70% correct answers by the third and fourth sessions.

From the student perspective, TA, a seventh-grade learner, shared her enthusiasm for using Wordwall. She felt that lessons became more enjoyable and less monotonous.

“I like Wordwall. It feels like playing a game. I don’t get sleepy, and it’s easier to understand the material. I even review the questions at home using my phone,” she said. TA also mentioned feeling more confident when answering questions because she had become familiar with the formats presented through the interactive games.

Observational data reinforced these interview findings. Over four sessions, students appeared highly engaged, eager to answer questions on-screen, and participated actively in group discussions. Teachers served more as facilitators, while students took an active role in their learning. Photos and video documentation captured a dynamic, collaborative classroom atmosphere, with students using devices effectively to engage with the Wordwall platform. Overall, the interview, observation, and documentation findings indicate that Wordwall not only successfully increased student participation but also helped create more meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences. This use of technology offers an innovative alternative for teachers to deliver material while fostering stronger interaction between teacher and student.

### **Challenges in Implementing Efforts to Increase Student Learning Activeness through the Use of Wordwall Learning Media in the Al-Qur'an Hadith Subject**

Although the use of Wordwall has proven effective in increasing student engagement, interviews with several teachers and one student revealed that its implementation is not without challenges both technical and pedagogical that require further attention.

AS explained that one of the challenges she faced was maintaining student focus during the explanation of the material prior to the Wordwall session.

“Sometimes the students just want to jump straight into Wordwall, so when I’m explaining the material at the beginning, they’re not paying much attention,” she shared. This was confirmed during classroom observations, where several students were seen chatting and not fully engaged. To address this, AS began incorporating ice breakers and supporting visuals before starting the lesson to boost enthusiasm and focus from the outset.

BN added that the interpersonal relationship between teachers and students also played a role in classroom order. He mentioned that some students still showed a lack of discipline, especially during group activities.

“Sometimes they talk among themselves or even approach other groups without permission,” he said. Observations showed that off-task interaction between groups often disrupted the learning focus. In response, BN implemented role assignments within groups and began providing positive reinforcement to those who demonstrated good collaboration and discipline.

SH highlighted technical limitations as another obstacle. She noted that the Wordwall display size was often too small to be clearly seen by all students.

“When I use a small screen, it’s hard for them to see, so many students come to the front just to get a better view. It ends up making the class noisy and less conducive,” she explained. To overcome this, she started using a larger projector screen and rearranged seating so that all students had a clear view. If available, students were also allowed to access the content on their own devices in small groups.

From the student’s perspective, TA shared that she initially found it confusing to use Wordwall.

“The first time I used it, I was kind of confused about where to click, especially when the internet was slow,” she said. TA mentioned that not all students were familiar with web-based applications. In response, the teachers began allocating time to provide short tutorials before each session, including simulations and brief instructions on how to use Wordwall, so students could participate more confidently.

Another challenge that arose was the lack of order in classroom seating due to students being allowed to choose their own seats and group members. As a result, desks and chairs became disorganized, and some students sat beyond the screen’s visible area. Recognizing this issue, teachers started forming groups based on a mix of abilities and personalities and guiding the seating arrangement to ensure a more supportive learning environment. Interviews and observations also revealed that time management during lessons had not gone entirely as planned. Introductory sessions often ran overtime due to technical issues, leaving insufficient time for completing Wordwall activities. To address this, teachers began creating more flexible and realistic time allocations, including buffer time for potential signal or device disruptions. Overall, while several obstacles were encountered in implementing Wordwall-based learning, teachers responded with practical and solution-oriented strategies. Documentation, including classroom photos and Wordwall screenshots, showed improvements in orderliness and student engagement over the course of multiple sessions. With the right adjustments, Wordwall remains a valuable tool for fostering active, creative, and enjoyable learning experiences.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Efforts to Increase Student Learning Engagement through Wordwall Media in the Al-Qur'an Hadith Subject at SMP Muhammadiyah PK Surakarta**

Research conducted in Grade VII of SMP Muhammadiyah Program Khusus Surakarta indicates that the use of Wordwall media in Al-Qur'an Hadith classes is relatively effective. Students appeared more engaged when completing questions presented through Wordwall, whether in quiz or game form. Wordwall provides ease of access and interaction, allowing students to respond directly without needing to write questions in notebooks or worksheets. This ultimately enhances both the efficiency and comfort of the learning process (Saputra et al., 2021).

Student enthusiasm increased significantly as the questions were packaged in interactive game formats, creating a more enjoyable learning atmosphere. The instrument used in this study consisted of conceptual multiple-choice questions related to the content of Surah Al-Fajr verses 1 to 30. During implementation, students were divided into two large groups, each given the opportunity to choose one of ten question cards available. These cards were presented through the Wordwall platform and

could be accessed independently by students on their devices. This approach aimed to allow students to review the questions later and study independently (Anoum et al., 2022). Once the questions were completed through Wordwall, their results were displayed automatically and could be downloaded using features within the platform. The students' answers were shown in visual form (Abubakari, 2024).

Observations revealed that the level of student engagement while using Wordwall media was quite high (Launin et al., 2022). This was evidenced by their seriousness in answering the questions and their active participation in group discussions. The accuracy of their answers was also considered satisfactory, as many students could correctly answer the questions. However, a few students were less active in discussions, with some dominating the question-answering process. Using Wordwall as a teaching medium in the form of the "open the box" game with ten multiple-choice questions proved effective. This was shown by the high level of student engagement observed directly in the classroom. Students showed enthusiasm and competed for the highest score in their group work (Ds- et al., 2024).

Media refers to anything used by teachers in the teaching process. The term comes from the Latin word "medius," which means intermediary. Hence, media is considered a tool used to deliver messages with the aim of achieving learning objectives (Z. Abidin et al., 2022; Alty et al., 2006). Media facilitates the transfer of messages from teacher to student, ensuring the learning process runs as it should. Media also serves as a learning resource that stimulates students to learn through tangible forms, making the material easier to understand.

A website is a collection of pages that can display text, information, static or moving images, video data, sound, and animation (Fitria, 2023; Yustin et al., 2025). The data may be static or dynamic, interlinked with one another. A static website has fixed content and rarely changes, usually created and updated by the website owner alone. In contrast, a dynamic website is one in which content changes frequently and can be added by users as well as the owner, allowing for interactive engagement. Examples of static websites include company or school profiles, while dynamic websites include platforms like Friendster and Multiply (Jesica Dwi Rahmayanti & Muhamad Arif, 2021). Wordwall is more than just a viewable website it is designed to enhance student engagement through interaction, despite challenges such as limited signal and device access (Ma'arif, 2017). Teachers using Wordwall could observe student skill development after learning sessions. Wordwall encourages students to build active and critical thinking skills. Below are steps for using and operating the Wordwall website:

- a. Prepare a device (phone/laptop/computer) with a stable internet connection
- b. Go to Google and type "Wordwall"
- c. Sign up or log in to access the available features
- d. Click "create activity" to develop a quiz or game, with multiple formats like "open the box"
- e. Enter the title and fill in the question and answer content
- f. Adjust the definition according to the lesson theme
- g. Test the game by clicking on question boxes and responding within the given time
- h. Share the game with students via link. As a type of hypermedia, Wordwall encourages active participation and time-bound answering, making the learning process lively and engaging for both students and teachers.

Active learning refers to a vital component determining classroom success. It involves both physical and mental engagement doing and thinking are inseparable (Maarif, 2018; Rustiana & Maarif, 2022). Wordwall's flexibility makes it suitable for various educational levels and both in-person and online learning. This allows teachers to tailor content based on student ability and group dynamics. Wordwall is appealing and non-monotonous, offering 18 different game features, including:

- a. Match Up: matching questions to definitions
- b. Open the Box: guessing questions by opening boxes
- c. Random Cards: guessing randomly shuffled cards
- d. Anagram: arranging letters in correct order
- e. Labelled Diagram: dragging images to match labels
- f. Categorize: grouping items in categories
- g. Quiz: multiple-choice format
- h. Find the Match: matching images with descriptions
- i. Matching Pairs: tapping tiles to find matching answers
- j. Missing Word: drag-and-drop missing words into blanks

These features make learning more enjoyable and less tedious, increasing student motivation due to greater comfort and engagement (Nurulloh et al., 2020). Wordwall is designed to motivate students to participate actively. Students learn through play, which boosts their enthusiasm both inside and outside the classroom. For instance, students can participate in interactive quizzes with immediate feedback. In the Al-Qur'an Hadith subject, students often struggle to understand or memorize verses and hadiths. Wordwall allows teachers to create activities that simplify memorization and deepen comprehension. Its non-monotonous and interactive format makes learning more enjoyable and encourages participation.

Another key advantage of Wordwall is that it is easily customizable. Teachers can adapt any game to align with their curriculum. They can modify the questions, formats, and game types to fit specific topics (Arif, 2019). For example, for lessons on prophetic stories, teachers can create fun quizzes to test student understanding. With customization features, teachers can tailor learning materials to class needs. This flexibility energizes students, especially through Wordwall's varied game formats. As supported by Arif, Abd Aziz, et al., (2023), Wordwall's strength lies in its diverse game types, which are engaging rather than repetitive. This drives active participation and helps students grasp material better, both individually and in groups. Its implementation not only enhances student engagement but also improves learning outcomes. With a dynamic and interactive environment, students become more motivated, better understand the content, and engage more actively in class discussions. In conclusion, Wordwall is an effective tool to boost student engagement in Al-Qur'an Hadith learning at SMP Muhammadiyah Program Khusus Kottabarat Surakarta. With its various strengths, Wordwall offers a more enjoyable learning experience and supports students in achieving optimal academic results. Therefore, it is essential for teachers to continue exploring and utilizing educational technology like Wordwall to enhance the quality of learning in the digital era (Fitria, 2023).

### **Challenges in Implementing Efforts to Increase Student Learning Activeness through the Use of Wordwall Learning Media in the Al-Qur'an Hadith Subject**

In essence, the use of digital or online learning media is often accompanied by certain challenges during implementation, particularly those related to signal quality and the availability of devices. In the implementation of learning activities using the Wordwall application, several obstacles were identified that require attention as part of the evaluation and improvement process for future cycles. One of the main difficulties encountered by teachers was attracting students' attention to listen to and engage with the material being delivered during lessons. The interpersonal relationship between teachers and students had not yet been optimally established, leading to a lack of discipline in class, with some students still chatting among themselves during the lesson. Additionally, the

display size of the Wordwall media was limited, making it difficult for all students to see clearly. This prompted many students to move closer to the front, which in turn disrupted the classroom environment (Arif & Sulistianah, 2019).

Another issue was that students were given the freedom to choose their group members and seating positions (Dewey, 1986), which resulted in disorganized seating arrangements and a chaotic classroom atmosphere. During Wordwall-based learning activities, there were still instances of interaction between groups that went against the given instructions, such as discussions with other groups, which disrupted the focus of the activity. Moreover, time management during implementation did not run according to plan, and some students still appeared confused about how to operate the Wordwall application, which impeded the effectiveness of the learning process.

To optimize the use of Wordwall media in learning, these emerging issues need to be addressed through strategic and practical solutions. The aim is to make the learning process more effective, interactive, and conducive for all students. Teachers can improve student engagement during the explanation of material by using more interactive approaches, such as short ice breakers, thought-provoking questions, or additional visual media before introducing Wordwall. This helps students stay focused and motivated from the beginning. Developing stronger relationships between teachers and students is also essential. Teachers need to foster emotional connection and empathy, which can be achieved by giving individual attention, encouraging two-way communication, and creating a comfortable and inclusive learning environment.

To overcome the limitations of the Wordwall display, teachers can use a projector (Djazilan & Hariani, 2022) or larger screen so that all students can see clearly. Alternatively, if available, students can be divided into smaller groups with their own devices. The organization of group formation and seating arrangements should be guided by the teacher based on pedagogical strategies, such as diverse abilities or personalities. Teachers can also establish classroom layout rules to maintain a conducive learning environment. Clear instructions should be provided to manage inter-group interaction, and students can be assigned roles within their groups (e.g., leader, recorder, speaker) (Kenny & DePaulo, 1993). Teachers should monitor and positively reinforce well-disciplined groups. Finally, teachers need to plan a realistic time allocation and provide technical training. Before core lessons begin, a brief tutorial or simulation can be given on how to use the Wordwall application especially helpful for students who are less familiar with technology.

## **CONCLUSION**

One way to encourage increased student engagement in learning activities is by implementing appropriate strategies and selecting effective learning models. In addition, it is important for teachers to continuously develop their skills in using engaging instructional models, supported by relevant interactive media. The use of digital technology in education is a highly suitable choice for example, by utilizing web-based platforms such as Wordwall. The use of Wordwall media in the Qur'an Hadith subject has proven to be quite effective for implementation in Grade VII at SMP Muhammadiyah PK Surakarta. Students were observed to be more active in working on the exercises presented through Wordwall, which includes a variety of question types and games. Wordwall encourages a shift in the teacher's role from merely delivering content to becoming a facilitator who creates a collaborative and participatory learning environment. This transformation contributes to a more conducive and enjoyable classroom atmosphere and enhances interaction both between teachers and students and among the students themselves.

Thus, Wordwall has proven to be an innovative solution in addressing low student engagement in the Qur'an Hadith subject and can be recommended as an active, technology-based learning strategy within the context of Islamic education in today's digital era. The use of electronic learning

media such as the Wordwall application positively contributes to enhancing interactivity and student involvement in the learning process. However, in practice, it is not free from various technical and pedagogical challenges, such as signal disruptions, limited access to devices, and classroom dynamics that are not yet fully managed effectively. These obstacles include a lack of student attention to the material, weak interpersonal relationships between teachers and students, limited display media, disorganized groupings, uncontrolled intergroup interactions, and suboptimal time management. To ensure the maximum effectiveness of Wordwall, systematic and solution-oriented efforts are needed. With such efforts, digital application-based learning is expected to be more effective, efficient, and enjoyable for all students.

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