

PEDIA

Education and Innovation Journal

Volume 1, Issue 3, July 2026



Integrating ChatGPT into Islamic Religious Education: Exploring Student Motivation and Teachers' Roles at SMP Islam Al-Azami Cianjur

Integrasi ChatGPT dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam: Eksplorasi Motivasi Belajar Siswa dan Peran Guru di SMP Islam Al-Azami Cianjur

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Submitted : 15 May 2026

Revision : 3 June 2026

Accepted : 20 June 2026

Abstract

The development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has created new opportunities to establish Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning that is more interactive, contextual, and aligned with students' characteristics in the digital era. This study aims to analyze the implementation of ChatGPT as an AI-based learning medium and its contribution to the learning motivation of ninth-grade students at SMP Islam Al-Azami Cianjur. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design using observation, interviews, and documentation techniques, with data analyzed through the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings revealed that the use of ChatGPT enhanced students' engagement through classroom discussions, question exploration, and critical evaluation of AI-generated responses. The improvement in learning motivation was reflected in students' increased confidence in asking questions, greater ease in understanding learning materials, higher enthusiasm during the learning process, and their ability to connect PAI concepts with everyday life. The successful integration of ChatGPT depended not only on technological sophistication but also on the teacher's role as a facilitator and validator who ensured that AI utilization remained aligned with Islamic values, ethical principles, and instructional objectives.

Keywords: ChatGPT; Digital Learning; Islamic Education; Learning Motivation; Student Engagement

Abstrak

Perkembangan kecerdasan buatan (Artificial Intelligence/AI) memberikan peluang baru dalam menciptakan pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) yang lebih interaktif, kontekstual, dan sesuai dengan karakteristik siswa di era digital. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis implementasi ChatGPT sebagai media pembelajaran berbasis AI serta kontribusinya terhadap motivasi belajar siswa kelas IX SMP Islam Al-Azami Cianjur. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan desain studi kasus melalui teknik observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi yang dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan ChatGPT mampu meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa melalui kegiatan diskusi, eksplorasi pertanyaan, dan evaluasi terhadap jawaban AI secara kritis. Peningkatan motivasi belajar terlihat dari meningkatnya keberanian bertanya, kemudahan memahami materi, antusiasme dalam pembelajaran, serta kemampuan menghubungkan konsep PAI dengan kehidupan sehari-hari. Keberhasilan implementasi ChatGPT tidak hanya bergantung pada kecanggihan teknologi, tetapi juga pada peran guru sebagai fasilitator dan validator yang memastikan penggunaan AI tetap sesuai dengan nilai-nilai Islam, prinsip etika, dan tujuan pembelajaran.

Kata Kunci: ChatGPT; Pembelajaran Digital; Pendidikan Islam; Motivasi Belajar; Keterlibatan Siswa



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INTRODUCTION

The development of artificial intelligence has transformed the way teachers and students interact with knowledge. In the classroom, students no longer rely solely on textbooks and teachers' explanations but have also become familiar with technologies that can answer questions, organize ideas, and help them understand materials quickly. This transformation has also influenced Islamic Religious Education (PAI), particularly when students require explanations that are closer to their language and understanding. ChatGPT has become one of the most widely discussed forms of AI because it can provide interactive responses and is easily accessible. In the context of PAI, the presence of this technology creates new opportunities but also requires teachers to maintain the accuracy of learning materials, ethical values, and alignment with Islamic teachings.¹

Previous studies have shown that ChatGPT can assist PAI teachers in preparing teaching materials, learning media, instructional modules, and evaluation questions. Setiawati, Nasri, and Amalia found that the use of ChatGPT facilitates teachers in conducting learning activities because teachers can access various learning needs more efficiently.² Muttaqin also explained that ChatGPT can be utilized in planning, evaluation, and enhancing creativity in Islamic education, although teacher validation remains necessary because issues related to the accuracy and authenticity of religious information are still challenges.³ Rahmah and Jannah added that the utilization of AI in PAI learning needs to be supported by policies, infrastructure, human resources, and ethical considerations to prevent dependency and misinformation related to religious knowledge.⁴ These findings indicate that AI has begun to function as a learning support tool rather than a replacement for teachers.

Several other studies have also emphasized the relationship between AI and students' learning motivation. Anggraeni showed that Islamic chatbots can improve learning motivation, accelerate access to Islamic knowledge, and support the personalization of PAI learning in the Society 5.0 era.⁵ Auwaliah, Syarif, and Rohmad found that the use of AI in PAI learning can broaden references, support independent learning, improve task efficiency, and encourage students' confidence in seeking new knowledge.⁶ Clarisya, Hifdil, and Solihin also showed that ChatGPT and Canva AI help teachers prepare learning materials, create practice questions, and

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- 1 Yuli Andriansyah, "The Current Rise of Artificial Intelligence and Religious Studies: Some Reflections Based on ChatGPT," *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies* 22, no. 1 (February 28, 2023): ix–xviii, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol22.iss1.editorial>.
 - 2 Lilis Setiawati, Ferriza Nur Rofiqah Nasri, and Ayu Rizki Amalia, "Implementasi {Chat-GPT} Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam," in *International Conference on Humanity Education and Society (ICHES)*, vol. 3, 2024.
 - 3 Z. Muttaqin, "Implementation of Islamic Education Learning with Artificial Intelligence (Chatgpt)," in *International Conference on Islamic Studies*, 2023, 1–9, <https://proceeding.uingusdur.ac.id/index.php/icis/article/view/1436%0Ahttps://proceeding.uingusdur.ac.id/index.php/icis/article/download/1436/578>.
 - 4 Atika Rahmah and Nur Jannah, "Pemanfaatan Artificial Intelligence dalam Meningkatkan Keterampilan Berpikir Kritis pada Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Ilmuna: Jurnal Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam* 7, no. 2 (2025): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.54437/ilmuna.v7i2.2475>.
 - 5 Alfa Rohmatin et al., "Pendekatan Religius Dan Psikologis Dalam Mengatasi Dekadensi Moral Peserta Didik Di Sekolah Berbasis Islam," *Jurnal Manajemen Dan Pendidikan Agama Islam* 3, no. 6 (2025): 199–211, <https://doi.org/10.61132/jmpai.v3i6.1585>; Andi Eki Dwi Wahyuni et al., "Integrasi Artificial Intelligence Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Indo-MathEdu Intellectuals Journal* 6, no. 1 (2025): 1271–80, <https://doi.org/10.54373/imeij.v6i1.2625>.
 - 6 Rofiati Auwaliah, M. Syarif, and Muhammad Ali Rohmad, "Dinamika Penggunaan Artificial Intelligence (AI) dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam di SMA," *Atta'dib Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 6, no. 2 (September 24, 2025): 148–65, <https://doi.org/10.30863/attadib.v6i2.10339>.

present more engaging visual learning experiences, thereby increasing students' interest in learning.⁷ More specifically, Zakaria et al. found that the implementation of ChatGPT in digital PAI learning significantly influenced the improvement of students' learning motivation compared with conventional learning methods.⁸

Although studies on AI and PAI continue to develop, research that specifically discusses the implementation of ChatGPT to improve the learning motivation of ninth-grade students in Islamic schools still needs to be strengthened. Previous studies have mostly discussed the use of AI from the perspective of general benefits, teacher efficiency, technological readiness, or its impact on digital learning more broadly. Studies connecting ChatGPT implementation with students' learning experiences in PAI subjects at the junior high school level are still limited, especially within the context of Islamic-based schools in regional areas. SMP Islam Al-Azami Cianjur has a learning environment that places religious values as an essential part of shaping students' character. This condition makes the use of ChatGPT necessary to be examined more carefully, not only as a digital medium but also as a tool that must remain under the guidance of PAI teachers.

Based on this gap, this article aims to describe the implementation of AI-based learning through ChatGPT in Islamic Religious Education for ninth-grade students at SMP Islam Al-Azami Cianjur. This article also examines students' responses after the implementation of ChatGPT and its contribution to improving learning motivation. This study is based on the assumption that ChatGPT can enhance learning motivation when it is used appropriately, adjusted to learning needs, and continuously validated by PAI teachers. Therefore, the main contribution of this article lies in providing empirical explanations regarding the practice of using ChatGPT in PAI learning within an Islamic school context, particularly in developing a more interactive, responsive, and relevant learning environment that aligns with the characteristics of contemporary students.

Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design to explore the implementation of ChatGPT-based artificial intelligence in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at SMP Islam Al-Azami Cianjur.⁹ This approach was selected because the research focused on understanding the learning process, student responses, and changes in learning motivation following the integration of ChatGPT, rather than measuring statistical relationships. The research was conducted from February to March 2026. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in AI-assisted learning. The informants consisted of one PAI teacher, Asep, and six ninth-grade students, namely Rizki, Aisyah, Dimas, Nabila, Fajar, and Putri. These names were used as pseudonyms to maintain the confidentiality and privacy of participants throughout the research process.

The primary data were obtained from the experiences and perspectives of the teacher and students involved in ChatGPT-based learning, while secondary data were collected from teaching modules, learning materials, student assignments, and classroom documentation. The researcher acted as the main research instrument supported by observation sheets, semi-structured interview guidelines, field notes, and documentation records. Data collection was

7 Clarisya amalia Sholehah, Muhammad Hifdil Islam, and Mohamad Solihin, "Implementasi Teknologi Pembelajaran Adaptif Berbasis Artificial Intelligence Pada Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Di SMK Negeri 2 Kraksaan," *JKIP: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan* 6, no. 2 (2025): 436–48, <https://doi.org/10.55583/jkip.v6i2.1359>.

8 Zaky Zakaria, Asep Tutun Usman, and Yufi M Nasullah, "Implementasi AI (ChatGPT) Pada Pembelajaran Digital PAI Terhadap Motivasi Belajar," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 02, no. 01 (2025): 365–70.

9 Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan RD*, Cet. ke 23 (Bandung: Penerbit Alfabeta, 2016).

conducted through classroom observations, interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out in four learning sessions to examine how ChatGPT was integrated into teaching activities, classroom discussions, and evaluations. Meanwhile, interviews were conducted directly with the teacher and students to obtain deeper insights regarding the benefits, challenges, and influence of ChatGPT on students' learning motivation.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, including data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification.¹⁰ The analysis process began with organizing and selecting relevant information related to the implementation of ChatGPT, students' engagement, and their motivational changes during the learning process. The findings were then presented in a narrative form to identify patterns and relationships among the collected data. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study applied source triangulation by comparing information from the teacher and students, as well as technique triangulation by examining the consistency of observation, interview, and documentation data. All participants voluntarily participated after receiving explanations regarding the objectives and procedures of the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of AI-Based ChatGPT Learning in Islamic Religious Education

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning in ninth-grade classes at SMP Islam Al-Azami Cianjur demonstrated the need for a more interactive learning model that aligns with students' characteristics in the digital era. Before the implementation of ChatGPT, PAI learning predominantly relied on teacher explanations, textbook reading, memorization, and limited question-and-answer activities. Based on interviews with Asep, the PAI teacher, conventional lecture-based instruction was frequently applied because it was considered effective in maintaining the accuracy of religious concepts and values. However, Asep acknowledged that this approach caused some students to become passive, mainly listening and taking notes without actively participating in classroom discussions. This condition indicated that the learning process had not fully provided students with opportunities to ask questions, examine their understanding, and connect religious concepts with issues closely related to their daily lives.¹¹

The implementation of ChatGPT in PAI learning was carried out as a supporting educational tool rather than replacing the teacher's role. The teacher remained responsible for selecting learning materials, providing guidance, validating AI-generated responses, and ensuring that the information aligned with Islamic teachings. In practice, Asep utilized ChatGPT to create contextual case examples, provide alternative explanations for complex topics, and develop stimulating questions that encouraged classroom interaction. Classroom observations revealed that students such as Rizki and Aisyah demonstrated greater enthusiasm when learning activities involved discussions based on ChatGPT-generated cases related to their everyday experiences. These findings are consistent with the study of Setiawati, Nasri, and Amalia, which reported that ChatGPT supports PAI teachers in preparing instructional media, teaching modules, and assessment materials.

At the initial stage of implementation, Asep introduced ChatGPT as a learning support tool that should be used wisely and not considered the primary source for understanding Islamic teachings. Students were encouraged to compare AI-generated responses with teachers'

10 Matthew B Miles, A Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2019).

11 Eva Fitri Yunengsih, "Analysis of the Science Perspective of the Qur'an Surah Al-Alaq Verses 1-5)," *ASLIM Journal of Education and Islamic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2024): 10–17, <https://aslim.kjii.org/index.php/i/article/view/2>.

explanations, textbooks, the Qur'an, Hadith, and other authoritative Islamic references. Interview findings showed that Nabila and Fajar understood that ChatGPT functioned only as a supporting medium that facilitated the learning process, while the accuracy of religious information still required verification through teacher guidance. This approach was essential because Islamic education emphasizes not only rapid access to information but also accuracy, careful consideration, and moral responsibility in acquiring knowledge. These findings support the argument that the use of AI in PAI learning should be accompanied by ethical awareness, source validation, and attention to the reliability of information.¹²

In the learning process, ChatGPT was applied in several key activities. First, the teacher utilized ChatGPT to generate introductory questions that stimulated students' curiosity regarding the lesson. For example, in moral education topics, students discussed issues related to honesty, responsibility, and ethics in social media use through contextual cases created with ChatGPT assistance. Second, ChatGPT was employed to provide simpler explanations for concepts that students found difficult to understand. Third, the technology assisted students in preparing summaries, developing questions, and conducting learning reflections. Documentation of students' assignments demonstrated that were able to use ChatGPT to deepen their understanding by creating summaries and reflective questions related to the application of Islamic values in everyday life.¹³

This pattern of ChatGPT utilization demonstrates its role as a bridge connecting PAI materials with students' real-life experiences. Religious concepts that were previously perceived as merely normative teachings began to be explored through issues closely related to students' lives, such as communication ethics on social media, discipline in worship, and responsibility toward their social environment. Classroom observations throughout the learning process showed that the teacher no longer functioned solely as a transmitter of information but also acted as a facilitator who guided discussions, clarified AI-generated responses, and encouraged students to provide arguments for their opinions. This transformation illustrates that AI does not replace the teacher's role but rather strengthens the teacher's pedagogical function in managing meaningful learning experiences.

The use of ChatGPT also helped teachers develop more engaging and diverse instructional strategies. Asep explained that the technology supported lesson preparation, particularly in designing stimulating questions, case studies, reflective activities, and alternative explanations of learning materials more efficiently. This advantage allowed teachers to focus more on facilitating discussions and guiding students during classroom activities. These findings are consistent with perspective that ChatGPT can support instructional planning, evaluation processes, and the enhancement of teacher creativity in Islamic education.¹⁴

From a technical perspective, ChatGPT implementation was conducted gradually. During the initial stage, Asep primarily demonstrated the use of ChatGPT through classroom devices displayed in front of students. The teacher showed how to formulate effective prompts, examined AI-generated responses, and encouraged students to evaluate whether the

12 Zakaria, Usman, and Nasullah, "Implementasi AI (ChatGPT) pada Pembelajaran Digital PAI terhadap Motivasi Belajar."

13 Engkos Kosasih, Mohammad Rindu Fajar Islamy, and Rizzaldy Satria Wiwaha, "Artificial Intelligence in the Era of Society 5.0: Compromising Technological Innovation Through TheWasathiyah Approach within the Framework of Islamic Law," *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 9, no. 2 (September 20, 2024): 551–72, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v9i2.9596>.

14 Wafa Naif Alwakid et al., "Exploring the Role of AI and Teacher Competencies on Instructional Planning and Student Performance in an Outcome-Based Education System," *Systems* 13, no. 7 (June 27, 2025): 517, <https://doi.org/10.3390/systems13070517>.

information was appropriate for PAI materials. After students became familiar with the process, they were given opportunities to formulate their own questions based on the learning topics. Interview findings from Rizki, Aisyah, and Dimas indicated that creating questions and evaluating ChatGPT responses made the learning process more engaging because they could explore the material according to their curiosity and personal experiences. This process demonstrates that students became not only technology users but also developed critical thinking skills in evaluating information generated by AI.

The use of AI in PAI learning also possesses a strong value foundation when positioned as a means of acquiring knowledge. Islam places high importance on knowledge and those who pursue it, but the process of seeking knowledge must remain grounded in proper ethics, responsibility, and appropriate guidance. This principle is reflected in the words of Allah in Qur'an Surah Al-Mujadalah [58]:11:

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

"Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge by several degrees. And Allah is All-Aware of what you do. [11]" – Surah Al-Mujadalah: 58

This verse emphasizes the significance of seeking knowledge in Islam. Within the context of AI-based learning, ChatGPT can be understood as a technological medium that assists students in accessing knowledge in a more engaging manner aligned with contemporary educational developments. However, the use of this technology must continue to be accompanied by critical thinking, teacher supervision, and moral responsibility, ensuring that the knowledge obtained is not only easily accessible but also accurate, meaningful, and beneficial in accordance with Islamic values.

Student Responses to the Use of ChatGPT in Islamic Religious Education Learning

Students' responses to the use of ChatGPT in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning demonstrated a generally positive tendency. Based on interviews with Rizki, Aisyah, Dimas, Nabila, Fajar, and Putri, the use of ChatGPT provided a different learning experience compared to previous instructional methods. Students perceived the learning process as more interactive because they had opportunities to explore questions, compare responses, and connect religious materials with situations encountered in their daily lives. Classroom observations also revealed that when the teacher incorporated ChatGPT as part of learning activities, students became more attentive and actively participated in classroom discussions. This condition indicates that changes in learning strategies and media can create a more participatory learning environment.

The improvement in students' learning motivation was reflected through several indicators, including the courage to ask questions, easier understanding of learning materials, enthusiasm during discussions, and confidence in expressing opinions. Based on interview findings, Nabila explained that explanations generated with the assistance of ChatGPT were easier to understand because they used simpler language and provided examples closely related to students' experiences. Meanwhile, Rizki and Aisyah demonstrated greater involvement in classroom discussions because they were able to evaluate and respond to AI-generated answers. These findings reinforce previous studies indicating that AI-based chatbots in PAI learning can increase learning motivation, expand access to Islamic knowledge, and support more personalized learning experiences.¹⁵

15 Yadi Fahmi Arifudin and Akil Akil, "Integrating Artificial Intelligence into Islamic Religious Education: Toward a Model for Ethical and Values-Based Technology Adoption in Faith-Based Schools," *Al-Tarbawi Al-Haditsah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 2 (October 30, 2025): 298, <https://doi.org/10.24235/tarbawi.v10i2.20988>.

One of the most significant changes was the improvement of students' confidence in asking questions. Before the implementation of ChatGPT, Dimas and Putri admitted that they mostly received information passively from teacher explanations and rarely asked questions because they worried that their questions might be considered inappropriate. After the implementation of ChatGPT, students felt they had greater opportunities to explore their curiosity through questioning, comparing answers, and conducting discussions with teachers and classmates. This change demonstrates that AI technology can function as a catalyst for developing students' confidence in the process of seeking knowledge. This finding further confirms previous research showing that the use of AI in PAI learning can enhance students' independent learning and confidence in exploring new sources of knowledge.¹⁶

Learning motivation was also reflected in increased attention and cognitive engagement during the learning process. Observations conducted over four learning sessions showed that students became more focused when they were asked to analyze responses generated by ChatGPT. They not only read the available information but also compared it with teachers' explanations and learning resources used in the classroom. Fajar also demonstrated critical thinking by questioning several AI responses that were considered too general and required explanations more relevant to the context of PAI learning. This situation indicates that the use of ChatGPT does not merely create emotional interest in learning but also encourages deeper cognitive engagement.

In PAI learning, motivation is not only measured by students' technical participation but also by their ability to understand the values and meanings embedded within the learning materials. Documentation of students' assignments demonstrated that they began connecting PAI materials with real-life issues, such as ethics in social media comments, honesty in completing assignments, responsible use of AI, and discipline in worship. These findings illustrate that ChatGPT can serve as a bridge between normative religious concepts and students' everyday realities.

The findings of this study indicate that ChatGPT has the potential to improve learning motivation by providing more personalized and adaptive learning experiences. Students who experience difficulties understanding certain materials can obtain alternative explanations using simpler language, while students with better comprehension can further develop their knowledge through more advanced questions. However, interviews with Asep showed that the use of ChatGPT still requires teacher guidance to prevent students from relying on AI as an instant source of answers without meaningful understanding. Therefore, technology serves as a supporting tool that enriches the learning process rather than replacing students' critical thinking.

Previous research has also demonstrated that the implementation of ChatGPT in digital PAI learning contributes to improving students' learning motivation compared to conventional learning approaches.¹⁷ This evidence further strengthens the findings at SMP Islam Al-Azami Cianjur, indicating that the successful integration of ChatGPT does not solely depend on technological sophistication but also on the teacher's ability to design interactive learning activities, provide appropriate guidance, and cultivate students' critical awareness in utilizing digital technology.

16 Sayidatul Husna Panjaitan, Indriyani Ma'rifah, and Khodijatul Kubro, "Integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in PAI Learning and Its Implications for the Learning Independence of Grade X Students at State Senior High School 8 Yogyakarta," *Kalijaga Journal of Islamic Religious Education* 1, no. 1 (October 23, 2025): 36–54, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jire.12049>.

17 Nisar Ahmed Dahri et al., "Extended TAM Based Acceptance of AI-Powered ChatGPT for Supporting Metacognitive Self-Regulated Learning in Education: A Mixed-Methods Study," *Heliyon* 10, no. 8 (April 2024): e29317, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e29317>.

Table 1. Student Responses to the Implementation of ChatGPT-Based Learning in Islamic Religious Education

Findings Aspect	Form of Implementation	Impact on Students
Understanding of learning materials	The teacher used ChatGPT to provide alternative explanations and contextual case examples.	Students were able to understand complex PAI concepts more easily and relate them to their daily lives.
Classroom discussion	The use of ChatGPT was optimized as a trigger for questions and a medium for critical analysis.	Students became more active in providing responses, arguments, and questions during classroom discussions.
Learning evaluation	The teacher designed practice questions and reflective activities assisted by ChatGPT.	Students demonstrated better readiness in participating in evaluation activities and reflecting on learning materials.
Learning motivation	Students were directly involved in assessing and critically evaluating the accuracy of AI-generated responses.	Students showed increased confidence, curiosity, and enthusiasm toward PAI learning.
Digital literacy	The teacher guided students to compare ChatGPT responses with authoritative Islamic sources.	Students developed critical thinking skills and avoided accepting digital information without evaluation.

Source: Data processed by researchers based on classroom observations, interviews, and learning documentation.

The findings presented in Table 1 indicate that the use of ChatGPT was not merely an additional activity separate from the learning process but was integrated into various stages of instruction, including material delivery, classroom discussion, evaluation, and the development of students' digital literacy. Classroom observations revealed that students' engagement increased when they were given opportunities to evaluate and provide arguments regarding AI-generated responses. Therefore, ChatGPT-based learning not only facilitates students' access to information but also develops critical, reflective, and responsible thinking skills in utilizing digital technology.

The Role of Teachers and Challenges in the Ethical Integration of ChatGPT in PAI Learning

One of the important findings of this study is the transformation of teachers' roles in AI-based learning. The presence of ChatGPT does not eliminate the teacher's position as a learning guide but shifts their role toward becoming facilitators, mentors, and validators of the information obtained by students. Based on interview findings, Asep explained that every response generated by ChatGPT was not immediately accepted as absolute truth but was compared with textbook materials, teachers' explanations, the Qur'an, Hadith, and other authoritative Islamic sources. This process was carried out to ensure that students understood that technology could facilitate rapid access to information but did not possess the same scholarly authority as teachers and primary Islamic sources. These findings reinforce previous research indicating that the use of AI in PAI learning still requires the active role of teachers as guides and guardians of content validity to maintain accordance with Islamic scholarly traditions.¹⁸

The teacher's role as a validator also contributes significantly to developing students' digital literacy. Ninth-grade students belong to a generation that is highly familiar with digital

18 Munadirin. Ahmad, Rifqil Muslim, and Zainal Fatah, "Transformation of PAI Learning Through Approaches to Active Deep Learning Experience (ADLX) In The Digital Era," *Nadwa: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 17, no. 2 (December 27, 2023): 185–202, <https://doi.org/10.21580/nw.2023.17.2.26745>.

technology and accustomed to obtaining information instantly; however, their ability to critically evaluate information still requires development. Based on classroom observations, Asep actively encouraged students to review ChatGPT responses, compare them with learning sources, and discuss the reasons why certain information could be accepted or required further clarification. Fajar and Nabila also demonstrated an awareness that AI-generated responses, despite being systematically structured, were not always completely accurate, particularly regarding specific terms, religious arguments, or concepts within Islamic Religious Education. This condition demonstrates that ChatGPT functions not only as a medium for obtaining information but also as a tool for developing students' critical thinking skills and digital literacy.

Despite providing various benefits, the implementation of ChatGPT in PAI learning continues to face several challenges, particularly related to information validity and the limitations of AI usage. ChatGPT is capable of delivering explanations in accessible language; however, the generated information may not always be supported by strong Islamic scholarly foundations. Based on interview findings, Asep explained that materials related to Islamic law, interpretation of religious texts, and complex religious issues still require references from authoritative Islamic sources. This finding supports previous research emphasizing that the use of AI in religious education requires a verification process to prevent misinformation and misunderstandings.¹⁹ Therefore, the position of ChatGPT in PAI learning should be understood as a supporting learning tool rather than the primary source for determining the validity of religious teachings.

Another challenge identified in this study is the possibility of students developing dependence on AI technology. The convenience of ChatGPT in providing instant answers may encourage students to seek quick solutions without engaging in deeper reading, understanding, and reflection. However, learning documentation showed that the teacher implemented strategies requiring students' active involvement, such as formulating questions, comparing AI-generated responses with other references, and writing personal reflections on the studied materials. Through this approach, the use of AI was not merely oriented toward obtaining answers but was directed toward developing students' analytical abilities and awareness of meaningful learning.

In addition to student-related factors, the successful integration of ChatGPT is also influenced by teachers' readiness and the availability of supporting facilities. Teachers need adequate digital literacy to formulate effective prompts, identify limitations within AI-generated responses, and integrate technology according to instructional objectives. Furthermore, the use of ChatGPT requires appropriate devices and stable internet access; therefore, schools must consider infrastructure readiness to ensure that AI implementation does not create educational inequalities among students. Previous research has also demonstrated that the effectiveness of AI integration in education depends greatly on teacher competence, infrastructural support, and the pedagogical strategies applied during the learning process.²⁰

Therefore, the successful integration of ChatGPT in PAI learning is not determined solely by the sophistication of the technology itself but by the teacher's ability to manage its use in a pedagogically appropriate, critical, and Islamically grounded manner. ChatGPT can serve as a means to broaden access to knowledge, increase student engagement, and create more interactive learning experiences. However, scholarly authority, character development, and the internalization of Islamic values remain the primary responsibility of teachers as the main guides within the educational process.

19 Christos Papakostas, "Artificial Intelligence in Religious Education: Ethical, Pedagogical, and Theological Perspectives," *Religions* 16, no. 5 (April 28, 2025): 563, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16050563>.

20 Maxwell Fundi et al., "Advancing AI Education: Assessing Kenyan in-Service Teachers' Preparedness for Integrating Artificial Intelligence in Competence-Based Curriculum," *Computers in Human Behavior Reports* 14 (May 2024): 100412, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2024.100412>.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of ChatGPT-based artificial intelligence in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning can enhance students' learning motivation by creating a more interactive, contextual, and student-centered learning environment. This improvement occurs not merely because of the presence of technology, but because ChatGPT is integrated through appropriate pedagogical strategies under the guidance of teachers. The use of ChatGPT enables students to explore questions, analyze AI-generated responses, relate religious concepts to everyday experiences, and participate more actively in classroom discussions. At the same time, teachers maintain a crucial role as facilitators and validators who ensure that AI-generated information aligns with authoritative Islamic sources and educational objectives. Therefore, the effectiveness of AI integration in PAI learning depends on the balance between technological innovation, teacher guidance, critical thinking, and Islamic ethical values.

This study contributes to the growing discourse on AI integration in Islamic education by highlighting that ChatGPT can function not only as a technological tool but also as a medium for developing students' engagement, digital literacy, and reflective learning when implemented responsibly. However, this study is limited to a single school context and focuses on qualitative descriptions of students' experiences and learning responses, making the findings not universally generalizable. Future studies are recommended to involve broader educational settings, examine long-term impacts of AI-assisted learning, and employ mixed-method or experimental approaches to provide stronger empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of ChatGPT in improving students' motivation and learning outcomes.

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