Challenges and Opportunities for Using Smartphones as Learning Media for Students of Islamic Education Study Program, State University of Jakarta

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ABSTRACT
The development of technology today is increasingly rapid, including the use of smartphones that make it easy for users to access anything. Smartphones have a very important role for students as a tool to facilitate the learning process and do assignments. The purpose of this study is to analyze the opportunities and challenges of students towards the use of smartphones as a learning medium for students of the Islamic Religious Education Study Program at UNJ. This research uses a qualitative method. The data collection instrument used a questionnaire with 70 respondents of Islamic Religious Education students at the State University of Jakarta. The results of this study smartphones make it easier for students to find information but smartphones can also be a challenge because it harms students such as rarely interacting with their environment, this makes it difficult for students to understand the concept of effective communication, high-level and rational thinking, and high productivity, so that their mindset becomes simple and dependence, and disrupt concentration.

Keywords: Learning Media, Smartphone, Challenges, Opportunities

INTRODUCTION
The role of communication technology is becoming increasingly crucial due to the high demands for rapid and accurate information exchange. The development of communication technology has enabled people to connect without being restricted by distance, space, and time (Hidayat, 2021). Various communication functions have been integrated into a single device called a smartphone. A smartphone is a mobile phone with capabilities and functions resembling a computer. It serves as a learning tool where individuals can explore new things through content or messages. Additionally, smartphones are used for entertainment and hobbies such as playing games, listening to music, and even playing musical instruments using supporting applications (Aida & Hendra, 2023; Panova & Carbonell, 2018) With the diverse functions they possess, smartphones have become an integral part of modern life, going beyond being just a communication device. Smartphones are also effective tools for accessing
real-time information, providing convenience in finding answers to various questions, and serving as practical guides in various situations.

In the context of education, the presence of smartphones introduces dynamic and interactive learning methods. Educational content accessible through applications and the internet allows users to expand their knowledge, creating a new paradigm where learning is not confined to the classroom (Singh & Samah, 2018). Communication technology, especially smartphones, makes the learning process more inclusive and relevant to the current era. The utilization of smartphones in education has several benefits that enhance its effectiveness, including flexible access, collaboration, personalized learning, and innovation (Lestari & Kurnia, 2023). Students can develop understanding through internet research and practice skills through practical work. However, the use of smartphones in education also faces challenges, including distractions, dependency, and access limitations. Therefore, a suitable approach is required to leverage smartphones as a learning medium to address potential challenges.

On the other hand, the presence of smartphones significantly impacts the entertainment sector. Its ability to play videos, listen to music, and run various entertainment applications creates a personalized and customizable entertainment experience (Amez & Baert, 2020). Moreover, smartphones serve as platforms for individuals to express their creativity, whether through photography, video creation, or digital art. Despite the convenience and benefits offered, challenges related to smartphone use need attention. Excessive dependency or unwise usage can have negative impacts on mental and physical health (Vahedi & Saiphoo, 2018). Therefore, smartphone usage should be balanced with awareness of time limits and healthy usage policies.

The advent of smartphones, especially among students, significantly contributes to information access and facilitates academic activities. Pre-survey results indicate that students’ use of smartphones can assist in accessing guidance data, academic portals, and other essential information sources. With numerous supporting features and internet connectivity, students feel the need to have smartphones as tools for coursework, research, and other academic activities. However, despite its benefits, smartphone usage also carries the potential for negative impacts, especially on social interaction. Phenomena of neglecting the surroundings due to smartphone attachment are observed in various situations, such as walking, eating, or socializing with others (Elhai et al., 2019; Grant et al., 2019; Guo et al., 2020). Face-to-face interactions among individuals or groups may be disrupted, creating challenges in building interpersonal communication.

The advancement of technology, particularly the use of smartphones, also brings about several issues in the context of lectures. Some students tend to continuously hold and use their smartphones, even during lecture activities. The primary challenge that arises is the difficulty in breaking the dependence, even during lecture activities that require full attention.

Previous research has extensively explored smartphone usage in an educational context, but this study provides a new contribution by focusing on students of the Islamic Education Program at the State University of Jakarta. With technological advancements, previous research indicates that smartphones have become potential learning tools (Kacetl & Klímová, 2019; Kim & Park, 2019; Nugraha, 2018; Utami, 2019). However, this research attempts to delve further into the challenges and opportunities of using smartphones as a learning
medium, especially in the context of Islamic education. The novelty of this research lies in a deeper understanding of how Islamic Education students at the State University of Jakarta utilize smartphones in the learning process and how they overcome potential challenges. This study is expected to provide specific insights related to the application of technology in Islamic education, which may have unique characteristics and challenges compared to other fields of study.

By detailing challenges and opportunities in a contextual manner, this research is expected to make a meaningful contribution to the development of strategies for effective smartphone usage as a learning tool for Islamic Education students. Through this specific understanding, it is hoped that more appropriate solutions can be found to enhance the quality of Islamic education through smartphone technology. The research aims to analyze the opportunities and challenges faced by Islamic Education students at the State University of Jakarta regarding the use of smartphones as a learning medium. Involving 70 student respondents, this research attempts to understand how students optimize the benefits of smartphones in the learning process while identifying potential challenges. With a deeper understanding of these opportunities and constraints, it is expected that suitable strategies can be developed to make smartphones an optimal learning tool.

METHODS OF RESEARCH

The research employed a descriptive method with a qualitative approach and was conducted within the Islamic Religious Education Program at Jakarta State University. The sample consisted of 70 students selected through purposive sampling from the Islamic Religious Education program. Data collection utilized a questionnaire based on the Learning Style Inventory theory. The research instrument comprised 11 statements, including five related to smartphone usage and six addressing the challenges and opportunities associated with smartphone use. This study aimed to explore and understand the dynamics of smartphone usage among 70 students in the Islamic Religious Education Program at Jakarta State University, utilizing the Learning Style Inventory as a theoretical framework. Data were collected through a questionnaire containing 11 statements focusing on smartphone usage, challenges, and opportunities. The sample selection followed a purposive sampling technique to ensure representation from the target population.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Use of Smartphone as Learning Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I use my smartphone to do my coursework</td>
<td>73.9%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use my smartphone to search for information</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use my smartphone to study anytime, anywhere</td>
<td>60.9%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use my smartphone to answer questions in class</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use my smartphone to quiz</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 reveals that 73.9% of the respondents stated they always use smartphones for doing college assignments, with 21.7% using smartphones frequently. No respondents claimed to never use smartphones for academic tasks. Regarding information searches, 85.5% of respondents always use smartphones, while 14.5% use smartphones frequently. In terms of learning anytime and anywhere, 60.9% of respondents always use smartphones, demonstrating the flexibility and accessibility of this technology. Interestingly, when answering questions in class, 56.5% of respondents frequently use smartphones, while 30.4% always utilize them. For exam purposes (Quizzes), 52.2% of respondents always use smartphones. Table analysis shows percentages consistent with previous research, highlighting the trend of students still heavily relying on smartphones to support their learning processes in class. Thus, smartphone usage among students continues to be a focal point in recent research to explore the impacts and implications of this technology integration in an educational context.

Research on the impact of smartphone usage among students has become an increasingly interesting topic with technological advancements. Several relevant studies have made valuable contributions to understanding how smartphones are integrated as learning tools (Atas & Çelik, 2019; Hochberg et al., 2018; Wiratman & Rahmadani, 2022). Mobile learning theory serves as the foundation supporting these findings, emphasizing flexibility and ease of access in the teaching-learning process. Additionally, social interaction theory provides valuable insights into the impact of smartphone usage on social interactions among students (Dwyer et al., 2018). Thus, this research aims to complement existing knowledge and further explore how smartphones not only affect learning but also social interactions in the academic environment.

In mobile learning theory, the use of smartphones for completing assignments, searching for information, learning anytime and anywhere, and participating in classes and exams is a strategy expected to enhance the effectiveness of learning. This finding aligns with the fact that the majority of respondents in this study actively use smartphones for learning purposes. From a social interaction perspective, the use of smartphones in an academic context creates new dynamics in interactions among students. In this theory, the tendency to answer questions in class via smartphones and participate in exams using these devices reflects a change in how students interact in the learning environment.

Overall, these findings provide deeper insights into the influence of smartphones in higher education, while strengthening the theoretical foundation of mobile learning and social interaction theories in the digital era. Through further research, we can continue to understand the role and impact of technology in enriching students' learning experiences in the modern era.
Challenges and Opportunities of Using Smartphones as Learning Media

Table 2 Challenges and Opportunities of Using Smartphones as Learning Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I often ignore my surroundings because I’m playing with my smartphone</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk with friends while looking at my smartphone</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I listen to the lecturer's explanation while looking at my smartphone</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smartphone makes it easier for me when I want to ask the lecturer</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t pay attention to the lecturer’s explanation because I’m playing with my smartphone while studying.</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often spend my time playing with my smartphone instead of studying</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The use of smartphones as a learning tool among students in the Islamic Education Program presents a range of challenges and opportunities that warrant attention. In Table 2, it can be observed that 52.2% of respondents always ignore their surroundings while playing with smartphones, while 31.9% do so frequently. These challenges impact students’ social awareness and concentration, indicating the need for a deeper understanding of students' interaction with their surroundings. The importance of social interaction is revealed by the fact that 75.4% of respondents sometimes talk to friends while looking at their smartphones. On the other hand, 15.9% of respondents admitted to never doing so. This phenomenon provides insights into the tendency of students to use smartphones as intermediaries in their daily communication, with implications for the quality of social interactions and interpersonal communication skills.

In the context of learning, data indicates that 78.3% of respondents sometimes listen to the lecturer’s explanations while looking at their smartphones. However, there is a dilemma, as 72.5% of respondents sometimes pay less attention to the lecturer’s explanations due to being too focused on smartphones during studying. This illustrates the expansion of smartphone usage as a learning aid but also highlights the risk of insufficient focus on the taught material. Amid these challenges, opportunities arise. As many as 53.6% of respondents admitted to sometimes spending time playing with smartphones rather than studying. Meanwhile, 29% do so frequently, and 10.2% even stated they never do. This data reflects that smartphone usage has the potential to be an effective learning tool but also requires wise time management.

Overall, this research provides a comprehensive overview of the dynamics of student learning in the context of smartphone usage. The identified challenges and opportunities align with the evolution of educational technology, reinforcing the urgency of awareness of social impacts and the need for wise time management in utilizing smartphones as learning tools.

Despite the challenges faced in using smartphones as a learning tool, this research opens opportunities for the development of more adaptive learning strategies. Data shows that 50.7% of respondents feel that smartphones often facilitate their communication with professors when they have questions. This creates the potential to enhance interactions between students and professors through the use of technology. However, it is essential for students to understand the risks of the tendency to pay less attention to the lecturer's
explanations due to being too focused on smartphones during studying. Understanding these impacts can create space for planning more effective learning strategies, utilizing technology as a supportive tool without compromising the main focus.

In terms of time management, 53.6% of respondents stated they sometimes spend time playing with smartphones rather than studying. While some admit to doing so frequently, the 10.2% of respondents who claimed never to spend time playing with smartphones rather than studying provide inspiration for potential changes in student behavior. This opens opportunities for colleges and professors to introduce learning strategies that motivate the wise use of smartphones.

With awareness of these challenges and opportunities, students in the Islamic Education Program can better utilize technology as an effective learning tool. Joint efforts between students, professors, and educational institutions are needed to develop guidelines and policies that support the integration of smartphones in learning while encouraging students to optimize their benefits without sacrificing essential aspects such as social interaction and focus on learning materials.

Based on the data collected, several reasons underlie the use of smartphones among students in the Islamic Education Program at UNJ. Students use smartphones due to the need for information and communication in the learning process, facilitated by internet access (Amez & Baert, 2020). The use of smartphones in learning brings numerous opportunities, including quick access to educational resources, learning applications, e-learning platforms, lecture and presentation recordings, productivity applications, collaboration, communication, and game-based learning (Atas & Çelik, 2019; Han & Yi, 2019). Despite providing opportunities, smartphone usage also has negative impacts. The advanced features in smartphones make some students tend to be less interactive with their surroundings, leading to simplified thought patterns. Some students become more sensitive to events on their smartphones than their surroundings, creating potential issues for users. Direct observations in the Islamic Education Program at UNJ indicate that almost all students have smartphones, with some even having more than one. Most students find it challenging to detach from smartphones, feeling uncomfortable if they don’t use them for more than an hour. Some of them are seen engrossed in playing with various facial expressions such as smiling, upset, or angry. Research also shows that when students gather, some are more interested in playing with smartphones alone than interacting. This is reinforced by questionnaire responses from some students who state that they still talk to friends while using smartphones or even prefer to play alone. In conclusion, there is a tendency for students in the Islamic Education Program at UNJ to be addicted to smartphones. This is evident from the intensity and frequency of smartphone usage, which tends to increase and can reach more than 5 hours per day. Other challenges include concentration disturbances, dependence, a lack of interaction with the environment, mental impacts, academic stress, and a lack of quality rest. Therefore, students need to increase awareness of the impacts of smartphone usage and develop healthy habits in integrating them into learning activities. Additionally, an active role from universities and professors is required to guide students in using smartphones wisely and effectively.
CONCLUSIONS

The use of smartphones among students has increased, with many using them for positive learning activities such as accessing academic portals, scholarly posts, and scholarship information. Smartphones also facilitate access to academic administrative data and knowledge accumulation. However, negative smartphone use can lead to a decline in face-to-face communication and interpersonal skills. During lectures, some students may find it challenging to detach themselves from their smartphones, potentially missing out on important information. Based on the research results, it can be concluded that students in the Islamic Education Program at Universitas Negeri Jakarta are not immune to the impact of using smartphones as their learning media. The research shows that around 60% of students perceive the opportunities of using smartphones to aid them in the learning process in class, while about 40% of students still feel challenges that make them less focused. They tend to pay more attention to their smartphones than to the people or lecturers talking to them. Through this research, we gain insights into the experiences of students in the Islamic Education Program at Universitas Negeri Jakarta when using their smartphones for learning. The ultimate outcome indicates a more dominant positive usage compared to negative usage.

REFERENCE


