Chapter 35
A Survey on Islamic Mobile Applications for Children

Fitria Maulida Machfud
International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia

Murni Mahmud
International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates Islamic mobile applications for children and evaluates the quantity as well as the quality of such applications. The existing and new criteria for exploring Islamic mobile applications used in this study have been enhanced and extended from the level of quality assessment to a deeper aspect of Islamic mobile application's design and interface. Similarly, additional aspects have also been considered to analyse whether it is suitable for children in terms of language, examples used, and whether it is in accordance to the Islamic foundation of Shari'ah that relies on primary and secondary sources of knowledge, which are: Qur'an, Sunnah, and Fiqh Science. The finding shows that there are very few of Islamic apps for children, especially in Malay and Indonesian language. This study suggests that developers should design and develop more Islamic mobile apps for children, especially with education and entertainment features. This study also recommends some requirements and guidelines in designing Islamic apps that are suitable for Muslim children.

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital world, children are exposed to technology at a very early age. Technology can have a positive impact on children's development if used appropriately with rules that are set up by the parents, monitoring usage time and suitable media content. According to Shoukry (n.d.), computers can contribute to children's cognitive and social development, enhance their visual attention and processing speed, increase their level of spoken communication, and improve their attitude toward learning. Everything has its advantages and disadvantages, and technology is no exception. There are two concerns regarding

children's use of technology, one of the most-feared being social isolation; next is the addictive nature of technology. However, it all depends on how the parents control the use of technology (Plowman, Stephen & McPake, 2010; Parker-Pope, 2010).

Technology comes in many forms, including mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets/pads. With increased Internet usage, the use of mobile devices has also increased, not only among adults, but also among children. Parents tend to give their children mobile devices (or gadgets) for entertainment purposes; however, they also persuade their children to use them for educational purposes. Not only at home, but also nowadays many schools around the world are making use of mobile devices in support of teaching and learning.

The use of the smartphone or tablet/pad cannot be separated from the use of applications and places where people can download them. The commonest operating systems for mobile applications are iOS, Android, Windows Phone, and Blackberry OS, with iOS and Android the most popular throughout the world. The mobile applications vary in type, such as business, games, education, productivity, etc. There is also an increase in developing mobile applications for religious purposes; one of them is Islamic mobile application.

Islam urges Muslims to utilize any techniques and tools to collect, process and disperse information and knowledge. In this era of ubiquitous technology, the use of modern technology in supporting religious education is encouraged as it helps towards the development of positive thinking, enables or enhances the ability to innovate and triggers the drive for self-improvement.

Indonesia is the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation; Malaysia also has a large Muslim population. Both countries are part of ASEAN and are neighbours, having a similar culture and language. As the majority of Indonesians and Malaysians are Muslims, it has been recognized that teaching Islam from an early age is very important. The practice of Islam gives Muslims a tangible identity that they live with and project to the rest of the society. This identity can be preserved by their dynamic interaction with the realities of life, influencing as well as reforming society through Islamic thoughts. The use of mobile technologies and the Internet is increasing in both countries, and nowadays in public places we can see not only adults using smartphones or tablets, also but children as young as three holding a gadget in their hands. As already mentioned, parents give their children these gadgets for both entertainment and education. They are also given to Muslim children in order for them to learn Islam in a fun and entertaining way.

In this chapter, the use of technology in support of Islamic education refers to mobile applications, which have become an essential part of educating children. They make learning about Islam an enjoyable process, attractive and interactive. However, an examination of application stores has shown that, out of the millions of applications, only thousands are for children, with even fewer based on Islamic applications for children. Those that do exist are mostly in English or Arabic. Therefore, this chapter will discuss the need to investigate the quantity of Islamic mobile applications for children and their quality, whether they are in accordance with *Qur'an, Sunnah*, and the *Fiqh* science. Additionally we will investigate whether they are suitable for the Muslim children of Malaysia and Indonesia, from design, language and cultural perspectives.

Related Content

Mobile Learning to Support Computational Thinking in Initial Teacher Education: A Case Study
Cornelia Connolly, Raquel Hijón-Neiraand Seán Ó. Grádaigh (2021). *International Journal of Mobile and Blended Learning (pp. 1-15).*
www.irma-international.org/article/mobile-learning-to-support-computational-thinking-in-initial-teacher-education/274496

Differential Reactions of Urban and Rural Teachers to Blended Learning: Evidence From Chinese Secondary Schools
Lin Wang, Muhd Khaizer Omar, Noor Syamilah Zakariaand Nurul Nadwa Zulkifli (2024). *International Journal of Mobile and Blended Learning (pp. 1-19).*
www.irma-international.org/article/differential-reactions-of-urban-and-rural-teachers-to-blended-learning/337492

Implementing a Personalized Learning Initiative
(2020). *Evaluation of Principles and Best Practices in Personalized Learning (pp. 102-123).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/implementing-a-personalized-learning-initiative/255681

The Human Element MOOC
Whitney Kilgoreand Patrick R. Lowenthal (2017). *Blended Learning: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications (pp. 1736-1755).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-human-element-mooc/163601

Intercultural Awareness and Short-Term Study Abroad Programs: An Invitation to Liminality
David Starr-Glass (2020). *Academic Mobility Programs and Engagement: Emerging Research and Opportunities (pp. 31-56).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/intercultural-awareness-and-short-term-study-abroad-programs/238320