

The Phenomenon of Digital Media Use in Arabic Langauge Learning at Secondary School: A Digital Psychology Persppective

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Abstract

This study examines the phenomenon of digital media use in Arabic language learning at secondary schools from a digital psychology perspective, focusing on students' attention, memory, and motivation. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative method, data was collected via interviews, observation, and documentation. Findings indicate that digital media, such as Canva based visuals, interactive animations, and digital quizzes, effectively attracted student attention and enhanced motivation compared to conventional methods. This multisensory approach facilitated material comprehension and strengthened vocabulary and sentence structure retention. From a digital psychology perspective, these media fostered emotional engagement, promoting active, consistent, and reflective learning. Despite technical constraints like limited data and mobile phone regulations, student preference for digital media remained high, leading to increased focus, participation, and motivation. This study confirms the significant role of digital media in improving student attention, memory, and learning motivation, emphasizing proper utilization and digital literacy for an effective and engaging learning experience.

Kata kunci:
Media digital;
Memori;
Motivasi belajar;
Pembelajaran bahasa
Arab sekolah
menengah;
Psikologi digital.

Abstrak

Studi ini meneliti fenomena penggunaan media digital dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab di sekolah menengah dari perspektif psikologi digital, dengan fokus pada perhatian, memori, dan motivasi siswa. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa media digital, seperti visual berbasis Canva, animasi interaktif, dan kuis digital, secara efektif menarik perhatian siswa dan meningkatkan motivasi dibandingkan dengan metode konvensional. Pendekatan multisensori ini memfasilitasi pemahaman materi dan memperkuat retensi kosakata dan struktur kalimat. Dari perspektif psikologi digital, media ini mendorong keterlibatan emosional, mempromosikan pembelajaran aktif, konsisten, dan reflektif. Terlepas dari kendala teknis seperti keterbatasan data dan peraturan telepon seluler, preferensi siswa terhadap media digital tetap tinggi, yang menyebabkan peningkatan fokus, partisipasi, dan motivasi. Studi ini menegaskan peran penting media digital dalam meningkatkan perhatian, memori, dan motivasi

belajar siswa, menekankan pemanfaatan yang tepat dan literasi digital untuk pengalaman belajar yang efektif dan menarik.

**Article
Information**

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INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology in the modern era has brought fundamental changes to various aspects of life, including education. The use of technology now serves not only as a tool but also as an integral part of creating an adaptive and innovative learning ecosystem. Through digital media, the teaching and learning process can be more dynamic, flexible, and engaging. This statement aligns with findings by Rais (2024) that digital technology allows students to access a wide range of learning resources and adapt their learning styles to individual needs. Furthermore, various studies, including one by Alfi et al. 2023, consistently affirm that digital technology has significantly reshaped the educational landscape, driving educational institutions to adapt and innovate Said et al., 2025).

In the context of foreign language learning, particularly Arabic, digital media plays a crucial role in creating interactive and communicative learning experiences (Nurbayan & Sanusi, 2025; Sanusi et al., 2024). Learning is no longer limited to conventional lecture methods; instead, it is evolving through the use of digital platforms such as instructional videos, interactive visual designs, audio conversations, and creative media that encourage active student participation. Widiastari et al. (2024) showed that digital media helps students understand Arabic vocabulary, sentence structure, and pronunciation more effectively and enjoyably. Moreover, recent research by Azizah Said et al. (2025) highlights that AI based applications, as a form of digital media, have a significant positive effect on students' Willingness to Communicate (WTC) and self confidence in Arabic language learning, by creating a supportive, interactive, and adaptive learning environment. These findings underscore the transformative potential of digital media in this domain.

However, conditions in the field indicate a gap between the immense potential and optimal implementation of digital media. Based on initial observations at the Secondary School, the use of digital media in Arabic language learning has not been implemented consistently. The media utilized by teachers predominantly focuses on Canva for

material design, AI generated images, and supporting audio, which are then displayed via projector. In contrast, the direct use of mobile phones by students is still restricted by school regulations. Beyond these technical and policy limitations, there exist critical pedagogical and psychological challenges. Research consistently points out that low Willingness to Communicate (WTC) and self confidence in Arabic language learning are significant barriers to mastering communicative competence (Said et al., 2025). This challenge is further compounded by a prevailing focus on grammatical and theoretical aspects, often neglecting the affective dimensions like motivation and confidence crucial for active participation (Hamid et al., 2024). This aligns with findings by Saleha et al. (2025), who explored the various social and academic motivations behind students' choice of Arabic language, underscoring the importance of understanding and catering to these underlying motivations for effective learning. These unaddressed psychological and systemic factors constitute a major problem statement in the effective integration of digital media.

Despite these constraints, students exhibit a strong preference for engaging digital content. While game based learning apps, which are often highly engaging, are not implemented at MTs Almunawwaroh due to phone restrictions and data quota limitations, teachers have innovatively adapted. They utilize self-created visual media through Canva and employ the singing method (Ghina), creating a more interactive learning environment. Some materials are developed in the form of conversational designs, simple animations, and audio. This approach aligns with findings by Adhwa et al. (2025) that visual, audio, and digital creativity elements can significantly increase student attention and participation in language learning, even without the full use of gamification apps. Such creative adaptations by teachers reflect the general principle, as noted by Azizah Said et al. (2025), that creating a supportive, interactive, and adaptive learning environment is key to boosting student engagement and confidence.

As a theoretical basis, this study employs Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986), which explains that the learning process is formed through reciprocal interactions between individuals, behavior, and the environment. In the context of digital learning, students learn through observing and imitating visual and audio stimuli presented by digital media. This theory emphasizes three main components: attention, retention, and motivation, which together shape learning behavior. These three aspects

The Phenomenon of Digital Media Use in Arabic Language Learning at Secondary School. are highly relevant to understanding how digital media, whether visual Canva, audio, or the Ghina method, influence students' learning behavior and motivation at MTs Almunawwaroh.

Various previous studies have highlighted the effectiveness of digital media in language learning, but most have primarily focused on English or other foreign languages (Adhwa et al., 2025). Studies specifically addressing the use of digital media in Arabic language learning in madrasas are still limited. Furthermore, most existing studies tend to emphasize the technical aspects of application use, while the psychological dimensions of students interacting with digital media such as their attention, motivation, and emotional engagement have not been studied in sufficient depth. This specific research gap is explicitly highlighted by Azizah Said et al. (2025), who note that "kajian terhadap pengaruh AI dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab, khususnya dalam meningkatkan WTC, masih terbatas. Hal ini menunjukkan adanya kesenjangan penelitian yang perlu diisi, terutama untuk memahami bagaimana teknologi ini dapat mendukung pembelajaran bahasa Arab di Indonesia." This clear statement from a relevant journal publication underscores the precise gap your current study aims to address, making the specific differences with previous research clearer.

The persistent gap between the enormous potential of digital media and its current implementation in Islamic schools, coupled with the identified psychological challenges, underscores the primary reason for the importance of this research. Many educational institutions, particularly at the secondary level, still face limited facilities, restrictive device policies, and varying levels of teacher digital competency. Consequently, the full positive impact of digital media on student motivation, their Willingness to Communicate, and overall learning outcomes has not been optimally demonstrated. Therefore, this study aims to describe the phenomenon of digital media use in Arabic language learning at MTs Almunawwaroh and analyze it comprehensively from a digital psychology perspective, guided by social cognitive theory, to understand how digital media use affects students' attention, memory, and emotional engagement in the learning process.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative, descriptive phenomenological approach. This approach was chosen because it aligns with the research objective, which focuses on an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of digital media use in Arabic language learning at Secondary School, MTs Almunawwaroh, Muaro Jambi Regency, from a digital psychology perspective. The phenomenological approach allows researchers to explore the subjective meanings experienced by teachers and students in utilizing digital media as part of the teaching and learning process.

In this study, the researcher served as the primary instrument, directly involved in data collection. The researcher's presence on-site was intended to observe the digital media-based Arabic language learning process, conduct in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and collect various supporting documents. Through this direct involvement, the researcher sought to understand the dynamics of interactions between teachers, students, and digital media, as well as uncover the psychological meanings that emerge during the learning process, such as student motivation, attention, and emotional engagement.

The research subjects included Arabic language teachers, students participating in digital media-based learning, and madrasah principals as supporting informants to obtain an overview of institutional policies regarding the implementation of learning technology. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, which is the deliberate selection of individuals deemed to have knowledge, experience, and direct involvement with the phenomenon being studied.

Data collection was carried out using three main techniques, namely in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation.

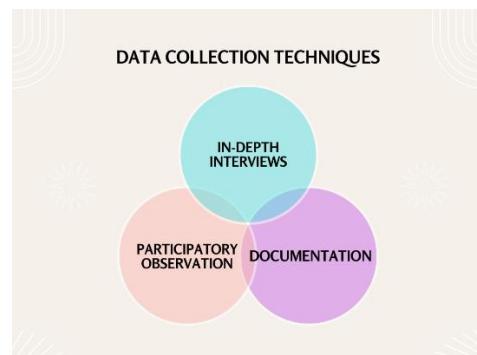


Figure 1. Data collection techniques

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with teachers and students to explore their experiences using digital media, particularly the Canva platform, which is frequently used in Arabic language learning. Observations were conducted throughout the learning process to determine how digital media influenced student behavior, interactions, and motivation in the classroom. Documentation in the form of activity photos, lesson schedules, teacher notes, and digital teaching materials was used to supplement and strengthen the data from the observations and interviews.

The data analysis process uses the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model, which includes three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and concluding/verification.

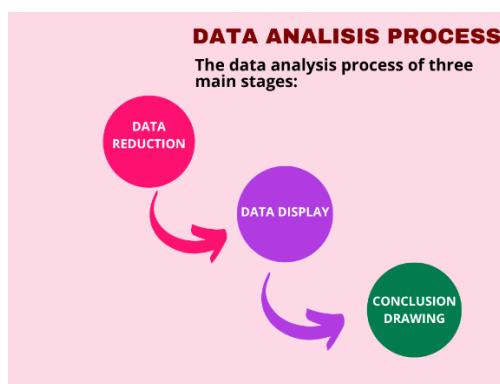


Figure 2. Data Analysis

In the data reduction stage, data from interviews, observations, and documentation were categorized according to the research focus. Relevant data were then presented in descriptive narrative form to identify patterns and relationships between categories. The final stage, concluding, was conducted by linking the field findings to Albert Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory, specifically regarding attention, retention, and motivation, the primary psychological indicators in this study. This statement is explained in the following table.

Table 1. Research indicators of Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory

No	Indicator	Operational description	Observation focus
1	Attention	The extent to which digital media attracts students' focus and interest in	• Do students show attention when digital media is used?

	learning Arabic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do the visual and interactive displays of the media engage students' learning interests?• How do students respond to the variety of media used by the teacher?
2	Retention	<p>Students' ability to remember and understand material through visual displays and digital interactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are students able to recall vocabulary or sentence structures after digital learning?• How often do students review the material through digital media?• Do interactive features help them understand Arabic concepts?
3	Motivation	<p>Students' internal drive to continue learning using digital media due to factors of enjoyment, challenge, or reward (such as scores or rankings)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What motivates students to be active in digital learning?• Does the ranking/scoring system increase enthusiasm for learning?• Do students enjoy learning through digital media?

To ensure data validity, this study employed source and method triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing data from teachers, students, and the madrasah principal, while method triangulation was conducted by matching the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. Furthermore, the researcher conducted member checks, which involved reconfirming the preliminary interpretations with informants to ensure the data matched their experiences. These steps were intended to maintain the validity and reliability of the findings, ensuring that the research results truly represent the phenomena occurring objectively and in-depth in the field.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digital media attracts students' focus and interest in learning Arabic

The research results show that digital media plays a significant role in increasing students' focus and interest in learning Arabic at MTs Al-Munawwaroh. Based on interviews with four students, the majority stated that they preferred digital device-based learning over conventional textbook-based methods. They revealed that using mobile phones and audio-visual media made the learning process more exciting, interactive, and easier to understand, thus helping them maintain concentration longer and absorb the material more optimally.

Students explained that digital media provides visual and audio stimuli that make learning more lively and engaging. They noted that the animation, sound, and interactive activities in digital media help increase motivation to learn. If errors occur, the system typically provides immediate feedback and prompts for repetition, making the learning process more active, reflective, and encouraging independence. According to the students, these experiences are rare in learning that relies solely on textbooks.

Table 2. Interview Findings Related to Students' Focus and Interest in Digital Media

No	Informant	Key Findings	Impact on Focus & Interest
1	I1	Prefer digital learning; material is easier to understand; familiar with interactive applications.	Focus increases due to engaging visuals and audio; motivation to learn is higher.
2	I2	Books feel boring; more interested in quizzes and visual materials via iFocus.	More motivated; a visual presentation makes it easier to remember.

3	I3	Likes ghina (singing) and animation; interested in challenge-reward models like apps.	Focus increases when there is animation/song; interest in learning increases.
4	I4	Likes image- and audio-based learning; wants digital quizzes and videos.	More active material is more easily absorbed with digital media.
5	I5	Utilizing Canva videos (singing & conversation) and animations, constrained by school rules & quotas.	Digital media attracts attention, but its use is not yet optimal.

Furthermore, students found textbook-based learning often boring due to the repetitive nature of activities, such as note-taking and memorization. This method was considered less effective at sustaining their attention over long periods. Conversely, when teachers used digital media such as Canva materials, quizzes via InFocus, or illustrations from Gemini AI, students' attention was more focused. They also reported understanding Arabic conversations more easily when audio from worksheets was combined with animated visualizations, as this combination of media created a multisensory experience that engaged more cognitive aspects.

These findings are supported by research documentation. One example shows student responses when a teacher displays an interactive quiz using an Infocus. At this point, students appear more focused, sit facing the screen, and actively follow the teacher's instructions.



Figure 3. Student Enthusiasm

Figure 1 shows visual evidence that the use of digital media can increase student engagement, especially at the opening stage of learning when initial interest needs to be built.

However, there are several technical challenges in implementing mobile-based digital media. Several students reported that they are sometimes distracted by social media when using their smartphones. Furthermore, a limited internet quota is a significant obstacle for students who lack access to adequate data packages. Uneven school Wi-Fi coverage also limits the potential for optimal use of digital media. However, these obstacles have not diminished students' preference for digital media. Most actually hope that Arabic language learning can be supplemented with animations, singing videos, song memorization, and more varied and engaging digital quizzes.

An interview with an Arabic language teacher provided additional context regarding the use of digital media. The teacher explained that she is actually quite active and creative in producing Canva-based digital media, such as conversation designs, singing videos, and animations. However, implementation remains limited due to school policies restricting cell phone use in the classroom. The teacher has also used Quizizz, but data constraints and school regulations have prevented its continued implementation. Nevertheless, she noted that students show greater enthusiasm when digital media is used, so she adapts the program to the situation and available resources.

To support this analysis, the study also includes a diagram of the digital media categories that most attract students' attention based on the tendencies of interview responses.

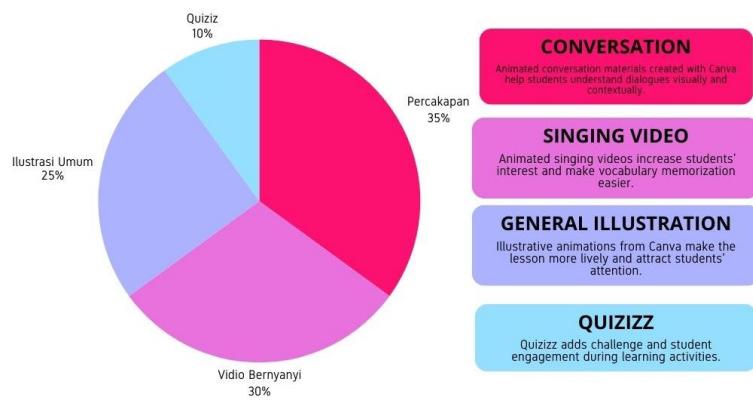


Figure 4. Distribution of Student Interest in Canva-Based Digital Learning Media

Overall, the research results indicate that digital media has significant potential in attracting students' focus and interest in Arabic language learning. This media can provide a more dynamic, interactive, and engaging learning experience, thus supporting memory retention and conceptual understanding. Despite technical constraints and institutional policies, both students and teachers share the perception that digital media is a tool that can strengthen the quality of Arabic language learning when properly facilitated.

Overall, the findings from the first indicator indicate that digital media plays a strong role in increasing student focus and interest in Arabic learning at MTs Al-Munawwaroh. Students consistently stated that learning supported by visuals, audio, and interactive activities was much more engaging than conventional methods. Despite several technical constraints such as limited data quotas, school regulations, and potential distractions when using smartphones, students' preference remained toward using digital media. Teachers also reinforced this finding by stating that student enthusiasm increased when digital media was used. Therefore, it can be concluded that digital media significantly contributes to creating a more lively, enjoyable, and understandable learning environment for students.

Students' ability to remember and understand material through visual displays and digital interactions

Observations showed that most students were able to revise Arabic vocabulary and basic sentence structures after learning using digital media such as *damā'ir* posters and Islamic number materials. In interviews, students stated that the colorful, clear, and engaging visual displays helped them remember the material more easily.

These findings are supported by learning documentation demonstrating the use of visual media in the form of posters on *damā'ir* material and posters on the number of Islamic numbers. These posters help clarify the concepts being studied and facilitate students' recognition of vocabulary and sentence structure. These visual media serve as memory enhancers because the material is presented concisely, structured, and easy to read.



Figure 5. Poster of *Dhomir* (Pronoun) Material

MUBTADA' (Subjek)	KHOBAR (Predikat)
Definisi Kata benda yang menjadi pokok pembicaraan dalam kalimat. Mubtada' adalah sesuatu yang kita bicarakan.	Definisi Kata atau kalimat yang memberikan informasi tentang Mubtada'. Khobar menjelaskan keadaan atau sifat Mubtada'.
Hukum I'rob Selalu dalam keadaan ROFA' [مرفوع]	Hukum I'rob Selalu dalam keadaan ROFA' [مرفوع]
Contoh Pelajar itu Ini	Contoh Rajin Seorang pelajar

Figure 6. *Qowaid Al-arabiyyah* material

Interviews revealed that some students reviewed the material by revisiting photos of learning posters sent by the teacher. Furthermore, some students also re-accessed the material through the teacher's TikTok account, @kincayguppyfarm, where the teacher posted posters and brief explanations. These practices demonstrate a self-directed learning initiative that helps strengthen students' understanding of the material presented.

Students' internal drive to continue learning using digital media

Observations and documentation show that students have a strong internal drive to continue learning using digital media. This motivation stems primarily from the enjoyment they experience when learning with interactive media. Activities such as completing digital exercises or quizzes increase students' focus and enthusiasm, thus encouraging them to study consistently.

Beyond enjoyment, the challenges inherent in digital media, such as increasing difficulty of questions or levels to be achieved, also encourage students to keep trying and improve their learning outcomes. The feeling of satisfaction from completing an assignment is a key factor that strengthens this internal drive. Conversely, if students receive a low grade or fail to complete an assignment optimally, they tend to feel embarrassed or inferior, which ultimately motivates them to try harder next time.

This learning drive is further strengthened by the reward system implemented in digital media. Rewards aren't just scores or rankings that allow students to compare their results with their peers, but sometimes also include additional rewards such as prizes or special recognition. By combining fun, challenge, reward, and personal satisfaction, digital media not only makes the learning process more engaging but also significantly increases students' internal motivation to continue learning and improving.



Figure 7. Students complete an interactive quiz using a digital learning application, demonstrating high internal motivation in learning.

DISCUSSION

Research at MTs Al-Munawwaroh shows that the use of digital media in Arabic language learning has a significant impact on students' focus, understanding, and motivation. Observations and interviews revealed that most students were more interested and enthusiastic when teachers utilized digital media compared to conventional textbook-based learning methods. For example, when teachers displayed digital vocabulary posters or interactive animations about basic sentence structures, students were seen following the material attentively, imitating dialogues, or even singing along to the instructional videos. These activities provided a multisensory learning experience, combining visual, audio, and interactive stimuli. The effectiveness of such engaging visual and interactive content in language learning is also well-documented, with studies showing, for instance, that digital comic media significantly improved Maharah Qira'ah (reading skills) and increased student interest among junior secondary level students (Arvianti & Mutholib, 2025). Such an engaging approach, according to Bandura's (1986) theory, increases attention because the material presented is relevant, engaging, and directly observable (Damayanti et al., 2025). In other words, digital media created a more lively learning situation and was able to

capture students' attention for a longer duration compared to repetitive textbook-based learning.

Beyond attention, digital media has also been shown to increase student engagement through elements of challenge and reward. Interactive quizzes featuring scores, rankings, and animations not only make learning more enjoyable but also encourage students to complete exercises and repeat the material if they haven't mastered it. This phenomenon demonstrates that students are not merely passive recipients of information but are actively participating in the learning process. This situation also aligns with social cognitive theory, which emphasizes the importance of active attention and engagement, where observation, feedback, and experience effectively strengthen the learning process. A study by UIN Antasari (2022) also found that using Canva for Arabic vocabulary learning improved students' concentration and engagement, while also helping them remember new words more effectively (Ubaidillah et al., 2023). Furthermore, other research emphasizes that the integration of digital media, including gamification, e-learning, and audio-visual media, significantly increases students' interest and focus in learning Arabic (Anggara et al., 2025).

In terms of material retention, digital media has been shown to help students better recall vocabulary and sentence structure. Observations confirm that students often review posters, watch teacher instructional videos, or listen to audio pronunciations to reinforce their memory. Visualizing materials with color, illustrations, and animations creates a strong mental representation, enabling students to remember and use vocabulary in sentence contexts. These results align with Bandura's social cognitive theory, which emphasizes the importance of retention as a learning stage, where observation, repetition, and visualization strengthen memory. Research by Pujia (2021) also showed that students who used interactive digital media were able to read Arabic text better than the control group, confirming the effectiveness of digital media on material retention and comprehension (Fatmawati, 2025). Moreover, the use of audio-visual media, where students can hear the correct pronunciation of words while seeing their visual context, greatly facilitates vocabulary and sentence structure mastery (Arisandi et al., 2025).

Students' internal motivation also increases significantly through digital media. Interactive activities such as quizzes, animations, scores, and rewards provide an

The Phenomenon of Digital Media Use in Arabic Language Learning at Secondary School. experience that combines fun and challenge, encouraging students to continue learning, reviewing material, and seeking to understand concepts more deeply. The sense of satisfaction from completing an exercise fuels self-efficacy and a drive to learn further, while failure or low grades motivate students to improve the next time. Research in the Unida Journal (2020) confirms that interactive digital media, such as e-modules and digital quizzes, can increase motivation to learn Arabic at the madrasah level (Belanisa et al., 2022). Digital media also allows for personalized learning to suit students' learning styles, whether visual, audio, or kinesthetic, resulting in a more consistent and independent internal drive to learn. This statement confirms that digital media strengthens not only the cognitive but also the affective aspects of the learning process.

Despite its apparent benefits, the implementation of digital media is not without its challenges. Students face limited internet data, patchy Wi-Fi networks, and school regulations that restrict smartphone use in class. Distractions from social media also pose a real challenge. This situation demonstrates that the effectiveness of digital media is highly dependent on environmental preparedness, institutional policies, and the digital literacy of teachers and students. Without such support, digital media can lose its effectiveness or even become a source of distraction. The literature also emphasizes a similar point: the effectiveness of digital media is closely linked to the preparedness of teachers, students, and the learning environment.

Further analysis shows that digital media is not simply a substitute for textbooks, but creates a dynamic learning environment and supports students' psychological processes. The combination of visual, audio, interactive stimulation, and instant feedback allows students to focus better, retain material better, and be motivated to learn. Digital media transforms the learning process from passive to active, reflective, and enjoyable. Recommended strategies include digital literacy training for teachers and students, providing adequate devices and networks, and planned use of digital media according to the curriculum. A blended learning approach is also recommended to overcome resource limitations while maximizing the benefits of digital media in Arabic language learning.

Overall, this study confirms that digital media plays a strong role in improving student focus, retention, and motivation at MTs Al-Munawwaroh. This media provides a more lively, interactive, and engaging learning experience while strengthening students'

cognitive and affective aspects. Technical constraints or institutional policies do not reduce students' preference for digital media. Both teachers and students agree that digital media is an effective and relevant learning tool for improving the quality of Arabic language learning in the digital era. Appropriate use of digital media can create a fun and motivating learning environment and facilitate continuous understanding of the material.

CONCLUSION

This study successfully describes the phenomenon of digital media use in Arabic language learning at MTs Al-Munawwaroh, revealing its profound impact on student attention, memory, and motivation from a digital psychology perspective. The observed phenomenon demonstrates that media such as Canva-based visuals, interactive posters, animations, and digital quizzes create a multisensory and engaging learning experience. This approach not only facilitates material comprehension and strengthens vocabulary and sentence structure retention but, from a digital psychology viewpoint, also significantly enhances students' emotional engagement. It fosters an internal drive to learn through enjoyment, challenge, and reward, thereby transforming learning into an active and highly motivated process. Notably, despite technical constraints like limited data quotas, Wi-Fi networks, and mobile phone usage regulations, students maintained a strong preference for digital media, indicating its inherent appeal and effectiveness.

As a qualitative study focusing on a single school and primarily gathering student perceptions, this research did not delve into the direct impact on academic achievement. Therefore, future research is recommended to explore this phenomenon across diverse school settings, employing quantitative measures to assess academic outcomes, and thus ensuring more representative and comprehensive findings.

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