# Implementation of Gamification in Al-Quran Learning at Madrasah Diniyah al-Iman Kotabumi

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the implementation of gamification in Al-Quran learning at Madrasah Diniyah al-Amiin Kotabumi as an effort to enhance students' engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes. The research aims to analyze how gamification elements such as points, badges, leaderboards, and interactive challenges are integrated into the learning process, as well as their impact on students' interest and memorization skills. A qualitative descriptive method was employed through observation, interviews with teachers and students, and documentation review. The findings reveal that gamification strategies successfully increase student participation and create a more enjoyable learning atmosphere, which in turn improves students' ability to memorize and understand the Qur'an. However, the study also identifies several challenges, including limited teacher training in digital tools and the need for adequate facilities. Overall, gamification proves to be an effective approach for optimizing Al-Quran learning in a traditional madrasah setting when supported by proper planning and resources.

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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Quran is the primary source of Islamic teachings and serves as the center of education in various Islamic schools, particularly Madrasah Diniyah, such as Al-Amiin Kotabumi. Generally, Quranic instruction is still conducted using a traditional approach: reading, memorizing, and manually explaining the meaning and tajweed (Susanto, Munir, & Basuki, 2025; Taftahi, 2017). This approach, while long proven effective, has limitations in engaging and motivating today's students, who have grown up in a digital age with distracted attention and an energy that tends to be conducive to interactive activities. Nationally, data shows that children's interest in religious learning tends to decline with the penetration of technology and social media; this is an important social fact: today's millennials and Gen Z enjoy interactive challenges, have short attention spans, and expect immediate feedback (Ika, Wasmin, Oktori, & Nurhalimah, 2023; Setiadji, 2020).

At Madrasah Diniyah al-Amiin Kotabumi, similar problems were identified: students often lost focus during the teaching of lafadz and tajwid; low levels of active engagement during class;



high levels of forgetfulness in memorizing the Quran after a few weeks; and a lack of internal motivation to deepen their understanding of the verses' meanings. Several teachers reported that the material felt monotonous and that they themselves lacked innovative tools to spark student enthusiasm. On the one hand, parents increasingly expect their children not only to memorize but also to actively and enjoy learning the Quran. This situation raises a strong need to find new pedagogical strategies that are relevant and adaptive to the characteristics of modern students (Mulenga & Shilongo, 2024). One emerging solution in education is gamification—the application of game elements (such as points, levels, badges, leaderboards) to non-game learning contexts. By integrating game mechanics and game dynamics, gamification has proven effective in increasing motivation, engagement, and retention in learning various subjects, such as language arts, science, and mathematics. The implementation of gamification in formal schools has shown positive results, such as increased student interaction, frequency of learning efforts, and a spirit of healthy competition among participants (Mannan & Annisa, 2025).

Despite this, the application of gamification, particularly in the context of the Quran, in Islamic schools—especially in settings like Kotabumi—is still rare. Previous research, for example, has shown that gamification in religious studies at the junior high school level successfully increased students' motivation to memorize hadith (Solihin, Hasanah, & Fajrussalam, 2020; Yahuda, Susanto, Widodo, Kolis, & Abdillah, 2023). Other research in the context of formal education in Islamic boarding schools shows that the use of point-reward applications can increase the frequency of repeating the memorization of the Qur'an (Parhan, Syafitri, Rahmananda, & Aurora, 2022). However, these studies are still limited to mobile-based digital applications and have not integrated social elements and madrasa traditions, such as classical memorization challenges, collaboration between students, or community-based spiritual rewards. There is also research from local sources that highlights how smartphone-based teachers help children in rural madrasas memorize the hijaiyah letters, but has not yet used a game-like atmosphere. Thus, there remains a gap—both scientific and practical—between the potential of gamification and its application in Quranic learning in traditional madrasas, particularly in areas like Kotabumi.

The method that will be used in this research is descriptive qualitative with a field study approach (Huberman & Jhonny, 2014). The first step is participatory classroom observation, followed by in-depth interviews with teachers and students and focus group discussions with parents and madrasah administrators. In addition, documentation of activities during the gamification implementation will be conducted, including recording grades, badges or rewards earned by students, frequency of memorization repetition, and other quantitative indicators such as the number of students actively participating. Data analysis will then be conducted using content analysis techniques and data triangulation across sources—teachers, students, and documentation—to ensure the validity of the results. The main objectives of this study are to describe how gamification is implemented in Quranic learning at Madrasah Diniyah al-Amiin Kotabumi; to identify its influence on student motivation, engagement, and memorization outcomes; and to explore obstacles and potential future developments. More specifically, this study aims to provide practical recommendations for teachers and madrasah administrators so that gamification can be designed according to the characteristics of local institutions and students, while remaining grounded in Islamic values.

The urgency of this research is very high. The growth of digitalization in the world of education has widened the gap between traditional learning methods and contemporary learning preferences. Without adaptation, madrasas like Al-Amiin risk losing the relevance and vitality of

religious education in the eyes of the current generation. Furthermore, increasing student motivation not only impacts academic outcomes-such as memorization mastery and understanding of Tajweed-but also on character formation, love of the holy book, and future religious attitudes. Therefore, finding an engaging approach such as gamification that is aligned with the principles of Islamic education is a strategic and urgent choice. The novelty of this research lies in several aspects: first, the application of gamification in Islamic madrasas (madrasah diniyah), which practically combines traditional elements (group memorization, collective recitation) with modern game mechanics; second, the integration of non-material rewards such as spiritual recognition, teacher praise, and the opportunity to lead Quranic recitations as part of the gamified system; third, the use of simple technology-for example, online tools (WhatsApp, lightweight apps, or interactive whiteboards) instead of expensive applications—so that it is more appropriate to the conditions of madrasas; and fourth, a comprehensive approach that assesses the impact not only on memorization but also on students' mood, self-confidence, and social interactions. All of this makes this research a breakthrough in the realm of religious education in Islamic boarding schools/madrasah diniyah environments, especially in the context of Western Indonesia, such as Kotabumi—an area where such studies are still minimal. By compiling this background narratively and comprehensively, it is hoped that it will be clear how general facts about Qur'anic education, social facts related to the learning preferences of the current generation, problems in local madrasahs, emerging gamification solutions, gaps in previous research, the methods to be implemented, the research objectives, its urgency in the context of modern religious education, and the novelty of this research are all strongly interwoven. Furthermore, other parts of the proposal-such as the literature review, conceptual framework, intervention design, and evaluation procedures—can be built as logical derivatives of this background.

#### 2. METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach because it aims to deeply understand the implementation process of gamification in Quranic learning at Madrasah Diniyah al-Amiin Kotabumi. Qualitative research was chosen to explore the phenomenon naturally, uncover the experiences of teachers and students, and assess the impact of gamification on learning motivation and engagement (Creswell, 2018; Sugiyono, 2015). The research subjects consisted of Al-Quran teachers, students at Madrasah Diniyah al-Amiin Kotabumi, and madrasa administrators. Subjects were selected using purposive sampling, selecting informants deemed to have the most relevant information regarding gamification implementation.

Data collection was conducted through several techniques. First, participant observation to directly monitor learning activities, teacher-student interactions, and the implementation of gamification elements such as points, badges, or leaderboards. Second, in-depth interviews with teachers, students, and madrasah administrators to explore their experiences, obstacles, and perceptions regarding the use of gamification. Third, documentation, in the form of photos, videos, class activity notes, and student grades before and after the implementation of gamification. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles & Huberman model, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data validity was maintained through triangulation of sources and techniques, comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. This research was conducted over three months, covering the preparation, data collection, and analysis stages. The results are expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of gamification in Quranic learning, as well as strategic recommendations for developing similar methods in other madrasahs.

#### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

# The Concept and Principles of Gamification in Learning the Qur'an

Gamification is a learning strategy that incorporates game elements into non-game contexts, such as education, with the goal of increasing student engagement, motivation, and participation. The term gamification comes from the words game (play) and -fication (the process of making something like a game) (Fanani, 2025). In education, gamification does not mean completely transforming learning materials into games, but rather inserting game elements that stimulate enjoyment, healthy competition, and psychological satisfaction into the learning process. In Quranic learning, this concept can be implemented through a reward system, achievement levels, challenges, and the use of simple technology to visualize student progress. The application of gamification in Quranic learning in Islamic Madrasah Diniyah has a strong philosophical foundation. This principle aligns with the Islamic recommendation to cultivate a spirit of competition in goodness (fastabiqul khairat). In Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 148, Allah SWT commands Muslims to compete with one another in good deeds. The healthy competition presented in gamification is not intended to bring down, but rather to motivate each other to be more active in good deeds, including studying and memorizing the Quran. Thus, gamification does not conflict with Islamic values and can even be an effective medium for revitalizing the spirit of learning within the framework of worship (Lilis, 2017).

In principle, gamification emphasizes several core elements relevant for application in Quranic learning. First, points. Points are awarded as a form of appreciation for specific achievements, such as completing a verse, reciting it with tartil, or correctly answering a Tajweed question. These points are not only a symbol of success but also a motivator because students can track their progress over time. Second, badges or achievement badges. Badges serve as a token of appreciation given to students after reaching a certain level, such as "Hafidz Juz 30," "Tajweed Champion," or "Best Tartil Reciter." Awarding badges can increase students' sense of pride and self-confidence, as they feel recognized for their efforts. From an educational psychology perspective, this recognition is important for building intrinsic motivation that encourages students to continuously improve their abilities. Third, levels or stages. The concept of levels refers to the gradual achievements students attain according to their memorization progress. For example, students start at the "Beginner" level when they have memorized a short surah, then move up to the "Intermediate" level when they have completed a juz, and so on. This level system provides a structured learning experience and sparks students' curiosity to reach the next level (Amaliya, Monika, Mar, & Hidayah, 2025).

Fourth, the leaderboard. The leaderboard displays student rankings based on the number of points, badges, or levels achieved. This element fosters healthy competition among students. However, its implementation must be managed wisely to avoid feelings of inferiority or envy, but rather to foster a spirit of mutual motivation. Teachers play a crucial role in explaining that this ranking is not merely a worldly competition, but rather a means to earn rewards through a passion for learning the Quran. Fifth, challenges. Challenges can include a competition to recite a specific chapter within a limited time, answer a Tajweed quiz, or memorize additional verses as a bonus. This element provides variety in learning so students don't get bored. Furthermore, challenges encourage students to improve their skills, both individually and in groups (Susanto & Sugiyar, 2023). These gamification principles need to be adapted to align with Islamic educational values and existing Quranic learning methods, such as talaqqi, tikrar, and habituation. Talaqqi is a learning method that involves listening to a teacher's recitation directly

and then imitating it. In the context of gamification, talaqqi can be combined with awarding points each time a student correctly recites a verse after hearing the teacher recite it. Tikrar (repetition) can also be incorporated into daily challenges, for example, a student who can repeat a memorization 10 times without error receives a special badge. Meanwhile, the habit of daily Quranic reading can be combined with a streak or bonus system, which is a reward for students who consistently attend and read every day for a month.

The relevance of gamification to Islamic educational values is also evident in the principle of reward. In Islam, motivation for learning is not only material but also spiritual. Therefore, rewards in gamification should not be limited to physical gifts, but also include social and spiritual recognition, such as praise in front of friends, prayers from a teacher, or the opportunity to lead prayers. This approach ensures that gamification remains a form of worship and does not foster an attitude of showing off. In addition to rewards, gamification emphasizes healthy competition. This aligns with Islamic teachings on musabaqah, or competitions in good deeds. Competition in gamification should be directed toward strengthening brotherhood, not causing division. Teachers can manage this competition by emphasizing that all students are winners in the sight of Allah if they put in maximum effort in studying the Quran. Intrinsic motivation is one of the main goals of gamification. From a psychological perspective, intrinsic motivation arises when someone learns for pleasure and satisfaction, not solely for external rewards. The proper implementation of gamification will foster a love for the Quran, so that students learn not only to earn points or badges, but because they enjoy the learning process itself. Thus, the concept of gamification in Quranic learning is not simply adopting modern game mechanics, but integrating them with Islamic values and classical methods such as talaqqi and tikrar. This approach not only makes learning more engaging and interactive but also helps teachers create a competitive, enjoyable, and worshipful learning environment. Gamification presents itself as an innovative solution that can address the challenges of the times without neglecting the sacred essence of Quranic education.

## Implementation of Gamification at Madrasah Diniyah al-Amiin Kotabumi

The application of gamification in Quran learning at Madrasah Diniyah al-Amiin Kotabumi is an innovation designed to increase student interest, motivation, and engagement in studying the holy book. This implementation is carried out through three main stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation, taking into account the madrasa's current reliance on traditional methods (**Deka, 2020, p. 34**). Although simple, this strategy still refers to the principles of gamification which are in accordance with Islamic educational values.

## 1. Planning Stage

The initial stage begins with designing activities that integrate gamification elements into the structure of Quranic learning. Teachers, along with madrasah administrators, formulate activity plans that include determining learning levels (e.g., Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced), a point accumulation mechanism, and the types of rewards to be awarded. Each student achievement is assigned a point value, such as reading one page with tartil (10 points), memorizing one surah (50 points), and answering a tajweed question correctly (20 points). Next, clear indicators of success are defined, including: increased student attendance, consistency of muraja'ah (recitation), and ability to complete memorization targets. These indicators are not only quantitative (amount of memorization) but also qualitative (accuracy of tajweed and fluency of recitation). Supporting media are

also provided at this stage. Due to limited digital resources, teachers use simple media such as whiteboards to display leaderboards and individual achievement cards to record points and badges. Badges are designed in the form of stickers or award cards that can be attached to students' memorization books. The teacher also prepares weekly challenges in the form of "Memorization Missions" which are announced every week, for example memorizing 10 verses with makhraj accuracy.

### 2. Implementation Stage

The gamification process was implemented in stages to ensure students didn't feel overwhelmed. Initially, the teacher oriented the gamification system, explaining the meaning of points, badges, levels, and how to earn rewards. The explanations were simple and easy for the children to understand, emphasizing that the primary goal was to compete in good deeds. Learning activities combined traditional methods such as talaqqi (listening to the teacher's recitation and imitating it) and tikrar (repetition) with game elements. For example, every student who correctly recited a verse according to Tajweed (the Quranic recitation) received an immediate point. The teacher marked these points on each student's achievement card, motivating them to improve their recitation and increase their memorization. A leaderboard was a key attraction. It was posted in the classroom and updated weekly. The student with the highest points was announced at the end of each week, fostering a spirit of healthy competition. Furthermore, the teacher awarded special badges such as "Tartil Reciter," "Tajweed Champion," or "Best Memorization" to students who achieved certain standards. This badge not only serves as an award, but also as social recognition among their friends (Susanto et al., 2025; Yahuda et al., 2023).

To maintain enthusiasm, teachers implement weekly challenges, such as "Who can memorize Surah Al-Mulk the fastest in a week?" or "Compete to answer the most tajweed questions in 10 minutes." These challenges are conducted individually and in groups, thus fostering cooperation among students. In practice, the teacher's role is crucial as a facilitator. Teachers not only award points but also ensure that the learning process remains focused on the quality of reading, rather than simply chasing scores. Teachers also instill Islamic values, such as sincerity and togetherness, so that the gamification system does not foster arrogance or envy (Cahyaningtyas, Wardani, & Ali, 2025; Susanto & Syahrudin, 2024). Teachers emphasize that rewards are merely a means of motivation, while the ultimate goal is to seek God's pleasure. A concrete example of reward implementation can be seen in the "Great Student of the Week" program. Students with the highest points are given the opportunity to lead a group prayer, recite the opening verse in front of the class, or receive a free tajweed pocket book. These simple rewards are quite effective in fostering enthusiasm for learning without prioritizing materialism.

# 3. Evaluation Stage

The evaluation stage is carried out continuously to assess the effectiveness of the gamification system (Islam, 2022; Siregar, 2022). Teachers monitored memorization progress, student engagement, and classroom atmosphere. Observations showed significant improvements in attendance and motivation. Previously less active students began to show enthusiasm, with some even competing to arrive early to prepare for memorization. The evaluation also included teacher and student reflections. Teachers identified challenges such as limited time to record points and the challenge of maintaining healthy competition. As a

solution, teachers formed study groups to share responsibilities and strengthen collaboration. Initial evaluation results showed that the implementation of gamification created a more interactive and enjoyable learning environment. Students not only learned to memorize but also enjoyed the process. Teachers found this method helpful because it reduced student boredom and increased discipline (Yunita Awwali Salehah, 2023). The preliminary conclusion from this implementation phase is that gamification can be adapted to Islamic schools (madrasah diniyah) with simple tools, provided the teacher's role as a guide remains strong and Islamic values are maintained. The implementation of gamification not only improves memorization but also fosters positive habits such as consistency, cooperation, and a spirit of competition for good.

## Implications of Gamification for Quranic Learning

The application of gamification in Quranic learning is an innovative step that brings significant change to the world of religious education, particularly in Islamic schools. Gamification, which refers to the application of game elements in non-game contexts, such as learning, aims to increase student motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes (Saharani & Ningsih, 2025). In the context of Quranic learning, gamification can be implemented through the awarding of points, badges, leaderboards, and memorization challenges or missions, designed in an engaging and interactive manner. The impact of this method can be seen in three main dimensions: learning motivation, active engagement, and improved Quranic memorization. Gamification has been proven to increase students' motivation to memorize and understand the Quran. Healthy competitive elements, such as leaderboards, fuel the desire to achieve higher levels than their peers (Pipit, Kasan, & Mursid, 2022; Susanto, Widodo, & Kolis, 2023). Furthermore, rewards in the form of badges or points recognize their efforts, so students feel valued and motivated to continue striving. This motivation is not only external but also internal, as students find learning more enjoyable, less monotonous, and more challenging. Thus, gamification is an effective way to overcome the boredom that often arises in conventional methods.

One of the main advantages of gamification is that it encourages active student engagement. Learning designed with a game system allows students to be more focused and actively participate, both during the process of reading, memorizing, and understanding the meaning of Quranic verses (Cahyaningtyas et al., 2025; Hasruddin, 2021). Challenge-based activities, such as "leveled memorization" or "verse quizzes," encourage students to be more daring and less afraid of failure, as each mistake is seen as part of the process of reaching the next level. This has an impact on increasing students' self-confidence and fighting spirit in completing memorization. From an academic perspective, gamification has shown a positive influence on Quranic memorization achievement. The level and reward system encourages students to memorize gradually but consistently. The process of repeating memorization is also made more interesting because it is packaged in the form of games such as "memorization battles" or "guess the verse." In addition to memorization, understanding of the meaning of verses also improves because gamification often includes quizzes on concise interpretations or Quranic vocabulary (Sahroni, Furqoni, & Martoyo, 2025; Triventi, Nevena, Jan, Blossfeld, & Hans, 2013). Thus, gamification not only increases the quantity of memorization, but also the quality of students' understanding.

Students' responses to this method were generally very positive. They felt happier and more motivated because the learning was no longer rigid and monotonous. Teachers also

welcomed this method because it created a more lively learning atmosphere. However, some teachers felt the need to adapt because gamification requires a high level of creativity and technological understanding. Parents also expressed appreciation for this method because they saw their children become more enthusiastic about memorizing the Quran at home. Despite its positive impact, implementing gamification is not without challenges. One major obstacle is limited technological facilities, especially in madrasas that lack adequate equipment. Furthermore, not all teachers are prepared to manage gamification-based learning due to a lack of training and experience. Another challenge is the potential for distraction, where students focus more on the game aspect than on the learning content. Therefore, teachers need to balance the game elements with the primary learning objectives.

In the long term, the application of gamification has great potential in developing Quranic learning methods in Islamic schools (madrasah diniyah). Gamification can be an inclusive and interactive technology-based learning model, in line with the needs of the digital generation. Future innovations could include the development of dedicated applications for gamification-based Quranic learning, the use of augmented reality (AR) to visually introduce the meaning of verses, and the integration of an online leaderboard system that connects madrasahs. If challenges can be overcome through teacher training, provision of facilities, and clear regulations, gamification could be a strategic solution to improve the quality of Quranic learning in the modern era.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The implementation of gamification in Al-Qur'an learning at Madrasah Diniyah al-Amiin Kotabumi has proven to be an effective strategy for enhancing student motivation, engagement, and memorization skills. By integrating elements such as points, badges, leaderboards, and challenges into the learning process, students experienced a more interactive and enjoyable environment, which significantly increased their participation and consistency in memorization. Gamification also encouraged healthy competition and fostered a sense of accomplishment among students. Despite these positive outcomes, several challenges emerged, including limited digital resources, insufficient teacher training in managing gamified learning, and the risk of students focusing more on rewards rather than learning objectives. Nevertheless, when applied carefully and aligned with Islamic educational values, gamification offers a promising approach to modernizing traditional Qur'anic education. To optimize gamification in Al-Qur'an learning, several steps are recommended. First, teachers should receive adequate training on how to design and manage gamified learning strategies to maintain balance between fun and educational goals. Second, schools and madrasah administrators need to provide simple yet effective supporting media, such as visual boards, stickers, or lightweight digital tools, to facilitate gamification without requiring high costs. Third, the integration of spiritual rewards, such as leading prayers or gaining acknowledgment for sincerity, should complement material rewards to avoid fostering unhealthy competition. Lastly, future research should explore the development of gamification-based applications tailored for Islamic education and evaluate their long-term impact on students' cognitive, affective, and spiritual development.

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