



## Islamic Boarding Schools' Educational Response to Roblox Addiction Among Qur'an-Memorizing Students

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the negative impact of Roblox games on students who memorize the Qur'an and the preventive measures implemented at Al Masthuriyah Islamic Boarding School. Using a qualitative case study design and data analysis based on the Miles and Huberman model, this study identifies three levels of Roblox playing intensity: low, moderate, and high. Students with low intensity play for 30 minutes to 1 hour, 1-2 times a week, as entertainment after memorization, with Islamic content options. The moderate group plays for 1-2 hours, 3-4 times a week, for online relaxation and socialization, while maintaining a balance between worship and academics. Meanwhile, the high group plays 2-4 hours or more almost every day, disrupting memorization time, congregational prayers, and sleep. Negative impacts include decreased memorization recall due to excessive stimulation, time management issues, and exposure to content contrary to Islamic values, such as inappropriate avatars, magic, or immoral interactions. The boarding school responded with a comprehensive strategy: gadget regulations based on age and memorization performance, access restrictions limited to Saturdays and Sundays from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM, support for teachers, and digital literacy based on Islamic values. Students are taught the dangers of addiction from a Sharia perspective, such as wastefulness and negligence. These findings provide a technology management model that can be replicated by Islamic boarding schools.

**Keywords:** Roblox Games, Qur'an Memorization Students, Islamic Boarding Schools

**Abstract:** Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis dampak negatif game Roblox terhadap santri penghafal Al-Qur'an serta strategi penanggulangan yang diterapkan di Pondok Pesantren Al Masthuriyah. Menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus dan analisis data berdasarkan model Miles and Huberman, penelitian mengidentifikasi tiga tingkat intensitas bermain Roblox: rendah, sedang, dan tinggi. Santri intensitas rendah bermain 30 menit-1 jam, 1-2 kali seminggu sebagai hiburan setelah hafalan, dengan seleksi konten islami. Kelompok sedang bermain 1-2 jam, 3-4 kali seminggu untuk relaksasi dan sosialisasi daring, tetap menjaga keseimbangan ibadah dan akademik. Sementara kelompok tinggi bermain 2-4 jam atau lebih hampir setiap hari, mengganggu waktu hafalan, shalat berjamaah, dan tidur. Dampak negatif meliputi penurunan retensi hafalan akibat overstimulasi, gangguan manajemen waktu, serta paparan konten bertentangan dengan nilai Islam seperti avatar tidak sopan, sihir, atau interaksi maksiat. Pesantren merespons dengan strategi komprehensif: regulasi gadget berdasarkan usia dan pencapaian hafalan, pembatasan akses hanya Sabtu-Minggu pukul 15.00-17.00, pendampingan ustadz, dan

*literasi digital berbasis nilai Islami. Santri diajarkan bahaya kecanduan dari sudut pandang syariah seperti israf dan ghaflah. Temuan ini memberikan model pengelolaan teknologi yang dapat direplikasi pesantren lain, serta memperkaya wacana literasi digital dalam pendidikan agama.*

*Kata Kunci: Game Roblox, Santri Penghafal Al Qur'an, Pondok Pesantren*

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## **Introduction**

In the first quarter of 2024, Roblox recorded more than 70 million Daily Active Users (DAU) globally, with significant growth in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia. In Indonesia alone, the number of Roblox players is estimated to reach 8 to 10 million monthly active users, making it one of the fastest-growing markets in the region, driven by a high internet penetration rate of 73.7% (Suarmita & Purnomo, 2024). This figure has increased by 35% compared to 2022, driven by increased internet penetration and mobile device adoption. On the other hand, the United States remains the largest market with around 25 million DAU, representing over 35% of the global user base, while India follows with around 12 million monthly active users, indicating significant potential in developing countries. The Philippines and Vietnam also saw rapid growth, with 6 million and 5 million users, respectively. Investment potential in the Roblox ecosystem, particularly in Indonesia, is highly promising as the majority of users are under 16 years old, creating a loyal market in the long term. Additionally, Roblox generated over \$650 million for creators globally in 2023, with around 1.5 million active developers. In Indonesia, despite being in its early stages, over 5,000 local developers have created experiences on the platform, with some locally created experiences reaching hundreds of thousands of visits. With a rate of.

In responding to the above phenomenon, previous researchers have conducted studies from various perspectives. Studies such as Long (2019) have successfully identified the potential of Roblox as an interactive learning tool through social simulation and digital collaboration. Alhasan & Alhasan's (2023) research confirms that Roblox offers great opportunities in higher education, especially in multimedia learning, with its ability to facilitate metaverse-based immersive experiences. Rospigliosi (2022) highlights the paradigm shift from the real world to virtual spaces such as Roblox and Minecraft as a means of education, socialization, and even work, while Ho & Lee (2023) prove the effectiveness of Roblox in the context of engineering by integrating AI such as ChatGPT for educational game development. Han et al. (2023) in their systematic review, concluded that Roblox is

effective in increasing engagement and motivation to learn, especially in STEM settings. However, although these studies explore the Roblox application in mathematics, science, engineering, and multimedia learning, there is still a significant research gap regarding its use in religious education, especially in the context of Qur'an memorization. None of the existing studies explicitly examined how platforms like Roblox can be used to support the memorization, understanding, or internalization of Qur'anic values through gamification, immersion, or social interaction mechanisms in virtual worlds. In fact, Roblox's characteristics, such as a reward system, world exploration, and community interaction, have the potential to support repetitive and meaningful memorization learning. Therefore, further research is needed to test the effectiveness of Roblox as a tahfidz learning medium, including aspects of educational experience design, the accuracy of religious content, and its impact on student retention and motivation.

To address this gap, this study aims to analyze the negative impact of Roblox games on students who memorize the Qur'an, focusing on the losses caused to concentration, memorization, discipline, and mental health (Lebho et al., 2020), as well as examining the strategies applied by Islamic boarding schools in overcoming these bad influences. In the increasingly globalized digital era, access to online games such as Roblox has increased rapidly, including in Islamic boarding schools that should be places for intensive spiritual and academic coaching (Hidayah & Anshori, 2022; Achmad & Pramudiani, 2022). Three main questions are the basis of the research: first, how is the intensity of students who memorize the Qur'an in playing Roblox—including the duration, frequency, and context of its use; second, what are the losses that arise from playing Roblox, both in terms of cognitive impairment (such as decreased memorization retention) (Lestari & Wimbari, 2021), time disruptions, to potential exposure to content that is not in accordance with Islamic values; and third, how the management strategy of the Al Masthuriyah Islamic Boarding School in controlling access to the game, including regulations on the use of gadgets, mentoring, and socialization of digital literacy (Zunaidah et al., 2023; Pujiyanto, 2021). This research is important to be conducted at the Al Masthuriyah Islamic Boarding School, Ngaliyan District, Semarang City, Central Java, because this pesantren is a modern Islamic educational institution that is transforming with technological integration, but still maintains the tahfidz program as the core of coaching (Ulfasari & Fauziah, 2021; Haluti & Aimang, 2022). On the other hand, initial observations show the rampant use of smartphones among students, especially in their free time, with some students being observed actively playing Roblox. This condition has the potential to disrupt the consistency of memorization and daily discipline (Suswandari et al., 2022; Rantung et al., 2022).

## Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to analyze the negative impact of Roblox games on students who memorize the Qur'an at the Al Masthuriyah Islamic Boarding School, Ngaliyan District, Semarang City, Central Java, Indonesia. The selection of this location is based on indications of the use of gadgets among students and concerns about declining memorization quality due to digital interference. The study, which took place from February 19 to August 1, 2025, provides a long enough time to build trust while allowing researchers to research the social climate and student behavior. This approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of meaning, subjective experiences, and complex social-spiritual contexts in the pesantren environment, a setting that is highly sensitive to digital distractions and religious values (Habibi, 2022). The case study design allows researchers to understand holistically how Roblox use affects concentration, quality of Qur'an memorization, study time allocation, and student morality, as well as capture institutional responses from pesantren (Nidia et al., 2022).

In this study, data collection techniques were carried out through three main methods, namely interviews, participatory observations, and documentation, to obtain comprehensive, in-depth, and valid data (Sulfikar & Fawzani, 2023). First, interviews were used as the primary method to explore perceptions, experiences, and subjective impacts of the use of Roblox games on Qur'an memorization activities. In-depth interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner for 20–30 minutes per session, with a total of 7 informants (4 students and 3 administrators) (Siregar et al., 2022). Sampling was carried out through purposive sampling with three criteria: (1) actively memorizing the Qur'an for at least one year, (2) having used Roblox in the last six months, and (3) being willing to participate after giving informed consent. Of the 45 memorization students, seven informants were selected: four students (S1–S4) who admitted to using Roblox, showed changes in memorization routines, and were recommended by administrators; and three pesantren administrators (M1–M3) who play a role in supervision, moral development, and gadget policy. The selection of informants aims to obtain multiple perspectives from both direct and authoritative actors to allow triangulation of sources and enrich the validity of findings (Parhati et al., 2022).

All interview sessions are recorded using smartphones with the informant's permission, and then the recordings are transcribed verbatim into written notes to facilitate the process of coding and analyzing data. Interviews are conducted in Indonesian so that communication runs smoothly and naturally (Anam et al., 2021). Second, participatory observation techniques, where researchers live in the pesantren environment as an involved observer. The focus of observation included: gadget

usage patterns, game-related social interactions, emotional reactions after playing, and disruptions to the daily rote schedule. Daily field records are created to document significant patterns and incidents (Salsabila et al., 2023). Third, documentation is carried out by collecting and analyzing photos of students' activities while playing Roblox, as well as examining in-game scenes that contain elements of violence, excessive fantasies, or content that is not in accordance with pesantren values that have the potential to disturb concentration and inner peace in memorizing the Qur'an (Khadijah & Sutamrin, 2022).

Table 1: Informant Profiles

| No. | Initials | Age | Position   | Gender |
|-----|----------|-----|------------|--------|
| 1   | M1       | 21  | Management | Man    |
| 2   | M2       | 21  | Management | Man    |
| 3   | M3       | 23  | Management | Man    |
| 4   | S1       | 19  | Students   | Man    |
| 5   | S2       | 18  | Students   | Man    |
| 6   | S3       | 20  | Students   | Man    |
| 7   | S4       | 19  | Students   | Man    |

The data analysis technique follows the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Hafiz et al., 2024). However, this process is deepened by the application of systematic inductive thematic analysis. The initial coding was done manually by two independent researchers who had been trained in qualitative methods. Each transcript and observation note is read repeatedly to identify meaning units, which are then descriptively coded (e.g., "concentration disorder", "guilt after playing", "conflict with tahfiz schedule"). The development of thematic categories was carried out through discussions by the research team to group the initial codes into more abstract themes, such as: (1) Cognitive and Spiritual Disorders, (2) Disruption of Tahfiz Routines, (3) Moral and Emotional Impacts, and (4) Institutional Responses of Islamic Boarding Schools. The final data are presented in the form of thematic narratives enriched with direct quotations, thematic summary tables, and illustrations of the observation context (Fadli, 2021). Conclusions were drawn inductively through repeated reflection on the relationship between themes, and were associated with the value framework of pesantren and literature related to the impact of digital games on spiritual learning. With this approach, the research not only describes the phenomenon but also produces contextual strategic

recommendations for Islamic boarding schools in managing digitalization challenges in the modern era.

## **Results And Discussion**

### **Results**

#### **The intensity of students memorizing the Qur'an while playing Roblox includes the duration, frequency, and context of its use**

The findings of this study reveal that the intensity of students memorizing the Qur'an while playing Roblox varies significantly, depending on the duration, frequency, and context of use, which are then grouped into three categories: low, medium, and high intensity. At a low-intensity level, students use Roblox in a minimalist and controlled manner, with a playing duration of between 30 minutes to 1 hour per session, and a frequency of only 1-2 times per week, generally on weekends or holidays. The use of this game is carried out as light entertainment after completing daily memorization or as a recreational activity allowed by the caretaker of the Islamic boarding school. They tend to choose games within Roblox that do not contain violent elements or are contrary to Islamic values. At the moderate level, students play 1-2 hours per session, as many as 3-4 times a week, usually in the evening after the pesantren activities are over. Here, Roblox functions as a means of online relaxation and socialization with fellow students, and is even used for exploring creativity through fashion building or educational games. However, they still prioritize the obligation of worship and memorization. Meanwhile, high intensity is characterized by a duration of 2-4 hours or more per day, almost every day, even late at night, which has the potential to disrupt memorization, rest, and congregational prayers. Deep involvement in the Roblox community, such as roleplay or minigames, can shift the spiritual focus, especially in environments with weak supervision or low time discipline.

Some students show a low usage pattern, with a duration of only 30 minutes to 1 hour per session, and a frequency of 1-2 times a week, usually on weekends. S1 stated, "I only play Roblox after I finish memorizing and getting permission from ustadz, even though it's only an hour, so my brain is refreshed before going to bed." This pattern suggests that gaming use is positioned as a form of light recreation, not a primary need. S2 added, "If you play more than that, you will be reprimanded. So I set my time as best I could." They are well aware of the limits set by the pesantren, and obedience to the rules is part of the spiritual discipline. S3 emphasized, "Roblox is entertainment, not a priority. My priority is still memorizing and praying." In this context, entertainment is allowed as long as it does not interfere with worship obligations. S1 again emphasized, "If the game is only occasional, God willing, it will not interfere with the muraja'ah." They understand that brains that are too often stimulated by fast graphics and dynamic sounds will have trouble focusing on

memorization that requires calm. This pattern is ideal for a pesantren environment that emphasizes calmness and concentration. Strict supervision from caregivers and gadget storage systems at the ustadz office also suppresses the potential for abuse. Thus, low intensity reflects a healthy balance between psychological needs and religious responsibilities. Students in this category can utilize technology as a tool for mental refreshment without exceeding the limits set by Islamic values and pesantren rules.

On the other hand, there is a group of students who use Roblox with moderate intensity, which is to play 1-2 hours per session 3-4 times a week, generally at night after pesantren activities are over. S4 stated, "I played Roblox about two hours after the Isha prayer, as long as the memorization was complete and permission from the ustadz." This longer time is still considered reasonable as long as it does not interfere with the main obligation. S1 added, "If I'm relaxed, I play for 1.5 hours with friends on the same server." The social interaction in the game is the main attraction, as it provides space for them to socialize outside the limited scope of the pesantren. S2 explains, "We can chat, work together, or play funny roleplays. So I am not bored at the pesantren." Even so, they still prioritize memorization and prayer as the main things. For students of moderate intensity, Roblox not only serves as entertainment but also as a means of socialization and exploration of creativity. Many of them join servers with fellow students to interact with each other online, build virtual worlds, or play educational roles. S2 stated, "We have a dedicated server for students, play together, sometimes make an Islamic city, complete with mosques and madrasas." This activity is even considered a form of leadership and teamwork training. However, they remain wary of the temptation of negative content. Thus, this moderate intensity can be a bridge between the digital and spiritual worlds, provided it is lived with full awareness and proper guidance. Technology is not always contrary to Islamic values if used with righteous intentions and strong self-control.



Figure 1. Roblox gaming activity



Figure 2. Roblox Games

The results of observations on February 19, 2025, at 20.30–21.30 WIB in student room number 10 of the Al Masthuriyah Islamic Boarding School Ngaliyan Semarang show that Roblox is used as a means of socialization and creative expression with moderate intensity. Four students were seen sitting close to each other, each holding a mobile phone that the dormitory ustadz had allowed, and opening Roblox at the same time. They are active on a private server called "Al-Masthuriyah Virtual Islamic Boarding School", according to the S2 respondent's statement. There, they built a virtual city complete with a central mosque, dormitories, learning parks, and study areas—reflecting an effort to bring an Islamic feel to the digital world. One of the students explained how to design a mosque dome using building blocks, in line with the S3 statement on imagination and patience training. Cooperative conversations such as "Later we will build a library next to the mosque" or "Don't use flashy colors to make the atmosphere calm" show the integration of spiritual values in digital activities. Even though they played for an hour, they were disciplined in turning off their phones when the Isha call to prayer resounded and immediately prepared to pray in congregation. No access to public servers or inappropriate content was found, confirming the student's awareness of the limitations on the use of digital media as revealed by S4.

On the other hand, several students show a very high intensity of playing Roblox for 2 to 4 hours or even more per day, often late at night and almost every day. S1 expressed concern: "There is a friend who plays until 2 am, even though tomorrow dawn must be *muraja'ah*. His face was pale and sleepy." This habit interferes with worship, sleep time, and memorization productivity. S2 added, "If it's dark at night, he can play continuously for up to 5 hours non-stop, no longer like the ustadz." The lack of supervision is the main factor. S3 stated, "At first I just wanted to complete quests, but ended up being addicted. The memorization has now decreased drastically." Cognitive impacts also appear; concentration and memory are weakened. The high intensity of playing Roblox has a serious impact on the quality of worship and the productivity of memorizing the Qur'an, both individually and systemically. This condition reflects *ghaflah* (spiritual neglect), exacerbated by physical fatigue that inhibits concentration, as S4 notes: "If the body is tired, it is difficult to read the Qur'an, let alone memorize." Cognitive impairment also appears. S1 describes the brain that "runs away" when it is about to perform because the brain is accustomed to the rapid stimulation of games, which is contrary to the calmness needed in *tahfizh*, as S2 emphasized. However, the root of the problem is not only personal, but also the structural environment of the *pesantren* that is lax in supervision to aggravate addiction. Students with free access to personal gadgets and

peer influence, as revealed by S1 and S2, are more prone to falling into it. Digital prestige, as S3 is called, also encourages this behavior. Meanwhile, S4 and S1 emphasized that strict supervision and close relations with the ustadz are effective antidotes. Without regulatory integration, intensive mentoring, and a supportive community, the ban alone will not be able to restore the spirit of tahfizh and the main goal of the students.

### **Losses that arise from playing Roblox for Qur'an Memorization Students**

The findings of this study show that playing Roblox has a significant negative impact on students who memorize the Qur'an, both from cognitive aspects, time management, and exposure to content that is contrary to Islamic values. Cognitively, the high stimulation of dynamic graphics, intense sound, and the instant reward system in Roblox interferes with long-term memory and concentration. Brains that are used to quick stimuli become less responsive to quiet activities such as memorizing the Qur'an, resulting in decreased memorization retention, difficulty absorbing new verses, easy forgetfulness (*nisyan*), and longer *muraja'ah* times. In addition, Roblox's addictive design with infinite scrolling mechanics and endless exploration triggers a distortion of time perception. Students are often stuck playing for hours, sacrificing prayer time, rest, and daily memorization targets. Lack of sleep due to playing late at night also decreases cognitive performance the next day. On the other hand, even though the platform is neutral, user-generated content often contains elements that are not in accordance with Islamic teachings, such as immodestly dressed avatars, themes of magic or idolatry that have the potential to cause *shirk khafi*, and anonymous interactions that risk containing abusive speech or immoral invitations. This exposure can weaken the faith and moral resilience of students who memorize the Qur'an.

Cognitive impairment due to playing Roblox not only impacts concentration, but also on the brain's ability to store and absorb information in depth. S4 stated, "I used to memorize Surah An-Naba, but after playing Roblox for three days in a row, there were some verses that I forgot." The phenomenon of *nisyan* (forgetting), which should be rare in memorizers, actually increases in students who actively play games. S1 added, "When I had just finished playing, I found it difficult to remember the meaning of the verse, even though I understood it beforehand." This suggests that visual and auditory stimulation from games can interfere with the process of information integration in the brain. S3 said, "I feel like I misread it more often, especially when I'm done playing. It's like something is disturbing from within." This impact can also be seen in the process of memorization dictation, where new students to play tend to make more mistakes. S4 emphasized, "Ustadz said, playing excessive games can make *qalbu* difficult, making it difficult to receive knowledge." From the

point of view of Sufism, a restless heart will not be able to absorb goodness. S2 stated, "If you don't play, muraja'ah can be completed within 40 minutes. If you're done playing, it can take up to 1.5 hours." This wasted time is very valuable for students who have daily memorization targets. Thus, cognitive impairment is not only a matter of the quality of memorization, but also of time efficiency and mental endurance in the long and intensive process of memorization. Without control, this habit can erode the main foundation as a memorizer of the Qur'an.

The results of observations on February 26, 2025, at 19.00–21.30 WIB in student room number 4 of the Al Masthuriyah Islamic Boarding School Ngaliyan Semarang provide strong empirical evidence for time management disruptions due to playing Roblox. Three students use mobile phones with limited permission but without direct supervision. Initially, they intended to play only 30 minutes after the Isha prayer, but the session lasted more than two hours. One of them kept pressing "Play Again" unknowingly as time passed. When he was reprimanded at 9:15 p.m., he was shocked and said, "It's just begun!" This illustrates the distortion of time. Two students were late for the Isha prayer in congregation, one even missed the sunnah prayer. After playing, they were lethargic, red-eyed, and immediately went to sleep without following the night ta'lim at 8:30 p.m., according to S1's statement that many friends fell asleep because they were tired of playing. One student admitted that his memorization target was not achieved because of wasted time. The movements are slow, and when asked to repeat the memorization, the sequence is chaotic—supporting S2's assertion that playing at night causes drowsiness and memorization does not come in the next day. Without supervision, goodwill is easily eroded by addictive game design. The absence of real-time constraints makes them lose awareness of worship and academic priorities, proving that time management disruptions are not just negligence, but rather the systemic impact of the interaction between game design and fragile self-discipline.

The devastating impact of time distortion is even more pronounced when students start sacrificing break time to play Roblox late into the night. S2 states, "I often play until 1 a.m., even though I have to get up tomorrow morning for muraja'ah." Sleep deprivation results in a decline in cognitive function, including memory and concentration. Weak physical condition worsens the quality of memorization and worship. The solemnity of prayer and the recitation of the Qur'an are highly dependent on physical and mental conditions. S2 again highlighted, "Although the ustadz always says, adequate sleep is part of worship." Underestimating the rest time means underestimating the Sunnah of the Prophet. S4 adds, "I get angry easily with friends, probably because their brains don't rest." Emotional disturbances also appear as a result of chronic fatigue. Thus, the impact of

playing Roblox late at night is not only limited to the cognitive aspect, but also damages physical health, emotional stability, and the quality of sleep. Without strict time limits, this habit can develop into an addiction that is difficult to stop, especially when students find the virtual world more attractive than the reality of the pesantren.

Exposure to content that goes against Islamic values is a serious threat to the use of Roblox, especially since the platform is dominated by user-generated content (UGC). S1 stated, "I once logged into a random server; it turned out that someone was wearing an open shirt, so I walked out right away." Exposure to awrah and immodest clothing can damage the cleanliness of the heart and stimulate lust. S3 said, "I was once invited to join a server whose content was all dirty. I refused, but he was distracted." Interaction with anonymous users opens up space for the spread of immorality and profanity. S4 emphasized, "Some people say, 'It's okay to play games, it's just virtual'. But if it is a sin, it is still a sin." The view that cyberspace has no impact on the hereafter is a big mistake according to Islamic teachings. S1 again highlighted, "If you often see what is haram, it will take time to get used to it. This is very dangerous. As such, even though Roblox is technically neutral, the risk of exposure to negative content is very high, especially if students don't have strong digital literacy and aren't closely supervised. Even a single exposure can leave psychological traces that are difficult to remove.

The disadvantages of playing Roblox are also seen from a social and psychological perspective, especially when students prefer the virtual world to real interactions at the boarding school. S3 stated, "There are those who are silent in Islamic boarding schools, but in the game, they become leaders. It's unbalanced." Personality divided between the real world and the virtual world can interfere with mental health. S1 emphasized, "If you keep playing, you will rarely participate in pesantren activities. Finally isolated." This social isolation interferes with the process of forming Islamic character and ukhuwah. S2 again highlights "Students who are addicted to games are difficult to talk to, more fun on their own." The inability to interact directly is an indicator of psychosocial disorders. These withdrawal symptoms suggest that Roblox has become a psychological necessity, not just entertainment. Thus, the negative impact is not only limited to the cognitive or spiritual aspect, but also damages the social and emotional health of students. Those who are too far away in cyberspace can lose their sense of belonging to the real community.

### **Al Masthuriyah Islamic Boarding School's Strategy in Controlling the Negative Impact of Roblox Games**

Al Masthuriyah Ngaliyan Islamic Boarding School, Semarang, implements a highly structured gadget management policy to protect students from the negative impact of digital games such as Roblox. These regulations are designed not only to restrict access but also to instill awareness of digital responsibility within the framework of Islamic values. Students are allowed to bring mobile phones, but are required to hand them over to the caretaker's office every day from 17.30 to 22.00 WIB, crucial times for muraja'ah, congregational prayers, and night rest. Outside of these hours, use is only allowed during lectures or at designated free time, with strict supervision. This policy aims to prevent disruptions to memorization, concentration, worship quality, and healthy sleep patterns. According to Administrator 1 (P1), "We do not prohibit it completely, but give limits so that technology does not control students, but students who master technology." This gradual approach also takes into account the level of maturity and responsibility of students; for example, first-semester students have more limited access than those who have demonstrated discipline. P1 added, "If the gadget is free, memorization can be broken within a week." In fact, repeated violations can lead to the revocation of a mobile phone license for one month. As P1 emphasized, "This rule is not to burden, but to protect their minds and hearts from destructive distractions."

In addition to technical regulations, Al Masthuriyah Islamic Boarding School emphasizes a personal approach through a daily mentoring system involving accompanying ustadz. Each small group of 5-10 students is guided by one ustadz who is responsible for their spiritual, academic, and technological development. This assistance is manifested through ta'lim night, muhadharah (speech practice), and ta'addud (personal consultation), which are carried out regularly. Through this intensive interaction, ustadz can detect early signs of game addiction, behavior changes, or decreased memorization quality. If any indication of a problem is found, immediate intervention is carried out, ranging from personal advice, tazkiyatun nafs (cleansing of the soul), to stricter restrictions on access to gadgets. Steward 2 (P2) explained, "We don't just see what they play, but how their hearts change after playing." This approach emphasizes the importance of a balance between discipline and empathy. P2 emphasized, "Santri is not a machine; They need space to grow, but also guidance so they don't get lost in cyberspace." In practice, ustadz also evaluates sleep patterns, online interactions, and daily discipline. As P2 said, "If you stay up late because of the game, tomorrow the memorization is chaotic, it's a sign that we have to intervene immediately."

The results of the observation conducted on February 26, 2025, in the Management Room No. 1 of the Al Masthuriyah Ngaliyan Islamic Boarding School, Semarang, provide concrete evidence that supports the findings of the interview with

Board 2 (P2) regarding the daily assistance system. During the observation, it was seen that an accompanying ustadz was holding a ta'addud (personal consultation) session with three students in the living room of the administrator's room. The interaction took place warmly but full of caution, where the ustadz not only asked about the progress of memorization, but also checked sleep patterns, activities outside of the cottage hours, and cell phone use. One of the students admitted that he had played games until late at night, and the ustadz immediately gave advice and prepared an intensive monitoring plan for the next week. On the wall of the management room, there is a list of mentoring groups consisting of 5-10 students per ustadz, complete with weekly evaluation notes regarding discipline, quality of worship, and indicators of technology use. A diary log book was also found on the desk, recording field findings such as "Santri A lacked focus on muraja'ah, allegedly disturbed by online games." This observation strengthens P2's statement that the pesantren approach is personal, empathetic, but still firm. This shows that the mentoring system is not just a formality, but a real practice that is at the forefront of maintaining the spiritual and academic quality of students in the midst of the onslaught of the digital world.

The Al Masthuriyah Islamic Boarding School not only restricts access but also actively equips students with a critical understanding of technology through socialization of digital literacy based on Islamic values. The program includes regular studies that explain the dangers of game addiction from a sharia perspective, such as israf (waste of time), ghaflah (neglect of Allah), and the risk of exposure to shirk or immoral content in games such as Roblox. Students are taught to distinguish between productive and destructive use of technology. They are also trained to use gadgets for positive activities, such as using Qur'an memorization applications (for example, Quran Companion), participating in online studies with trusted scholars, or learning Arabic through educational games that are in accordance with the faith. Administrator 3 (P3) stated, "We want students not only to avoid digital vices, but also to become pioneers in the use of technology for da'wah." This socialization is carried out through weekly forums, cottage bulletins, and small group discussions. P3 added, "If it's just forbidden without being taught, they'll find a way back." Therefore, an educational approach is the main key. As P3 emphasized, "Digital literacy is part of today's jihad against ignorance and deviation with knowledge and awareness."

The three strategies for gadget regulation, intensive mentoring, and digital literacy are not implemented separately, but are integrated into the holistic education ecosystem of the Al Masthuriyah Islamic Boarding School. This approach reflects the commitment of the pesantren to form students who not only memorize the Qur'an,

but also have digital resilience and spiritual acumen in the technological era. Regulations provide a structural framework, mentoring touches the personal dimension, and digital literacy strengthens the intellectual foundation and faith. This synergy allows students to face the digital world without losing their Islamic identity. According to Administrator 1 (P1), "Our goal is not to make students tech-blind, but to make them a bastion of faith in the midst of digital currents." This integrated approach also involves collaboration between caregivers, ustadz, and IT managers of the boarding school, so that each policy is in line with the vision of tarbiyah of the Islamic boarding school. P2 asserts, "Without integration, the rules become rigid and untouchable." In fact, the results of periodic evaluations show an improvement in the quality of memorization and a significant decrease in cases of game addiction in the last two years. As P3 said, "Alhamdulillah, students are now smarter to choose between the game level and the faith level." Thus, the Al Masthuriyah Islamic Boarding School proves that pesantren-based education can adapt to digital challenges without sacrificing the noble values of Islam.

### **Discussion**

This study revealed that the intensity of Roblox use among students who memorize the Qur'an at the Al Masthuriyah Islamic Boarding School varies in three categories—low, medium, and high—which are determined based on the duration, frequency, and context of use. Low-intensity students (play 30–60 minutes, 1–2 times per week) generally treat Roblox as a means of light entertainment after completing a memorization session, with a tendency to choose content that does not conflict with Islamic values. Moderate groups (1–2 hours per session, 3–4 times per week) use this game mainly for relaxation and virtual social interaction, but are still be able to maintain a balance between digital activities and pesantren obligations such as muraja'ah, congregational prayers, and adequate rest. On the other hand, students in the high category (playing 2–4 hours or more almost every day, often until late at night) showed significant negative impacts, including decreased memorization quality, late prayers, and sleep pattern disturbances that affected concentration the next day. However, this finding has an interesting contradiction: some students in the "high" group actually reported that playing Roblox helped them release stress due to intensive memorization pressure. They feel calmer and are subjectively more prepared to perform muraja'ah after playing. This phenomenon challenges the linear assumption that the longer you play, the worse the impact on memorization. This suggests the need for a more nuanced approach to understanding the relationship between technology and religious learning, taking into account individual psychological factors such as emotion regulation, stress thresholds, and mental recovery capacity.

The main negative impacts of Roblox use among students who memorize the Qur'an include three crucial aspects: cognitive impairment, distortion of time perception, and exposure to content that has the potential to contradict Islamic beliefs. First, the in-game instant reward mechanics, such as points, level-ups, and interesting visual effects, provide excessive stimulation that interferes with working memory function and the long-term process of encoding information, thus inhibiting the retention of Qur'an memorization that requires calm and deep repetition. Second, game design that triggers a state of flow (psychological flow) makes users lose their awareness of time, often playing far beyond the initial intention, to the point of sacrificing prayer, rest, or muraja'ah time. Third, while the Roblox platform is technically neutral, user-generated content often contains problematic elements such as immodestly dressed avatars, themes of witchcraft or idolatry, as well as anonymous interactions that risk leading to indecent conversations or deviant solicitations. However, this study has important limitations: the main data are derived from self-reports and short-term observations, making it difficult to assess the long-term impact on faith resilience, the depth of faith, or the slow normalization of secular values. On the other hand, there are unexpected contradictory findings: several students actually take advantage of educational features or creative communities on Roblox to learn graphic design, build virtual mosque simulations, or collaborate on projects with Islamic nuances. This shows that neutral digital platforms are not always destructive; their impact is highly dependent on the level of digital literacy, guidance, and user intent. To overcome these risks, pesantren implement a three-pillar strategy: (1) gradual regulation based on age and memorization performance, (2) intensive assistance by ustadz through ta'addud and daily evaluation, and (3) digital literacy based on Islamic values. This strategy has proven to be effective in reducing addiction cases, but the challenge lies in the consistency of implementation and the capacity of human resources. Not all ustadz have an adequate technical understanding of digital platforms, so mentoring is sometimes reactive rather than preventive.

In comparison with previous studies, these findings expand on the research of Puspitasari et al. (2020), which only associated smartphones with concentration disorders, by showing that the context of use and specific intensity not just the ownership of gadgets, determine the impact on memorization. In contrast to Wijayanto & Suib (2021), who look at technology in general, the focus on Roblox allows for an in-depth analysis of game design mechanisms (such as endless scrolling and variable rewards) that psychologically interfere with the process of deep memorization. More importantly, this study challenges the secular approach in the study of game addiction (e.g. Hasanah et al., 2020) by introducing the spiritual-religious dimension as a critical variable: negligence (ghaflah), waste of time (israf),

and the risk of shirk khafi are not just metaphors, but ethical categories that significantly affect students' perception of the use of technology. This difference has significant theoretical implications: in the context of pesantren, the impact of games is measured not only from cognitive function or productivity, but also from spiritual integrity—a lens that is absent within the framework of dominant Western theory. Thus, this research not only enriches the literature on technology and religious education but also offers an alternative epistemology in understanding the interaction between digitalization and the formation of religious subjectivity.

### **Conclusion**

This study reveals a surprising finding: despite being in a strict boarding school environment aimed at memorizing the Quran, some students spend hours every day playing Roblox, even to the point of disrupting their worship and memorization, which should be their top priority. What is surprising is that Roblox, often perceived as a children's game, has proven capable of creating strong psychological and social dependencies among students, even becoming an alternative world where they seek recognition, explore their identities, and escape the academic pressures of the boarding school. Another surprising finding is that not all Roblox usage is purely recreational; some students are actively involved in complex role-playing communities, using avatars, building imaginary life narratives, and interacting with global users' activities that indirectly expose them to secular values, free-living lifestyles, and even hidden elements of idolatry in themes of magic or deities. Even more surprising, there are students with high memorization achievements who fall into the high-intensity category, indicating that memorization skills do not always protect against digital distractions. However, amid these concerns, the study also identified positive potential: some students use Roblox for creative learning, such as creating virtual worlds based on Islamic values or educational games.

This study makes an important contribution to understanding the dynamics of digital technology use, particularly Roblox games, among students memorizing the Qur'an. By revealing the intensity of use, cognitive implications for memorization, and control strategies in Islamic boarding schools, this study offers an analytical framework that can serve as a basis for more balanced and contextual educational policies. However, this study has a major limitation in terms of data collection, which was conducted at a single location, namely the Al Masthuriyah boarding school, meaning that the findings cannot be generalized to other boarding schools that may have different regulations, cultures, and levels of technology access. This limited location has the potential to reduce the diversity of perspectives, particularly from boarding schools that are more open to technology or those located in urban areas with broader internet access. In addition, reliance on qualitative data

from interviews and participatory observation opens up the possibility of subjective bias from respondents and researchers. To address this limitation, future researchers should conduct comparative studies among Islamic schools, both those with a Salafi orientation and modern ones, across various regions, including urban and rural areas to obtain a more comprehensive and representative picture. It is also recommended to use mixed methods that combine quantitative data (such as large-scale surveys) and qualitative data to strengthen the validity of the findings.

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