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THE READINESS OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION STUDENTS AT FITK UINSU AS PROSPECTIVE EDUCATORS IN DESIGNING DIGITAL-BASED LEARNING MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

The rapid advancement of information and communication technology has significantly impacted various aspects of life, including education. In today's digital age, technology-based learning media has become an essential tool in the learning process. This study investigates the readiness of Islamic Education (PAI) students at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FITK), State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UINSU), to design digital learning media. Using a qualitative research approach, this study collects data through interviews and observations. The findings indicate that PAI students face challenges in designing digital learning media, particularly in utilizing instructional design software and developing digital teaching materials tailored to student characteristics. However, students demonstrate potential and interest in developing digital learning media. This study concludes that PAI students require adequate skills and knowledge to design effective digital learning media. Therefore, efforts are necessary to enhance PAI students' readiness in designing digital learning media. The study's findings are expected to contribute to the development of innovative and effective digital learning media in Islamic education, ultimately improving the quality of Islamic education in Indonesia.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Learning media is a key component in improving the quality of education. This is in line with the advancement of technology in the world of education, which demands a more efficient and effective learning process. To achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness, one of the efforts that can be made is to minimize or even eliminate dependence on verbalistic teaching systems through the use of learning media (Kristanto, 2016). In the current era of globalization, everything is modern and sophisticated, and we can be said to be living side by side with technology. With the rapid development of technology in modern life, we are also required to be able to adapt to technological developments in order to compete with the times. Similarly, the presence of digital technology has a significant impact on the world of education. There has been a shift from conventional education to digital technology.

The transformation from conventional learning to digital technology has brought significant impact and potential to change the face of global education. One of the main characteristics of educational transformation in the digital era is the ease of access to information. Thanks to the increasingly widespread internet network, both students and educators can access various learning sources instantly. Geographic boundaries and traditional curricula are no longer obstacles, as the world has become a limitless classroom for those who want to explore it. However, this change is not just about accessibility. The presence of educational applications, simulations, and learning games has given birth to more interactive, effective, and enjoyable teaching methods (Hasnida et al., 2023).

The word "media" comes from the Latin "medius", which means intermediary or connector. Its function is as a tool for conveying messages from sources of information to recipients. Students' independence in learning can increase if supported by appropriate learning media, as media help facilitate the delivery of material. Meanwhile, the term "digital" comes from the Greek word "digitus" (finger). Digital media refers to devices specifically designed to convey messages in the learning process through digital technology (Aisyah et al., 2025).

Given the rapid development of digital technology, it has been incorporated into the world of education as a supporting medium for learning. Digital technology also helps educators to simplify the explanation of lessons to students, making it easier for lessons to be conveyed effectively. Therefore, before entering the world of education, students must undergo training in the academic world to prepare themselves to integrate digital technology as a learning medium. One example of a method that can be developed using digital technology is the lecture method. If only using the lecture method to discuss Islamic Education material, students may get bored and sleepy easily. However, the lecture method can be combined with digital technology to prevent students from getting bored, especially when discussing Islamic Education material. Prospective teachers must also be able to develop students' interest in learning, one of which is through the role of digital technology, which enables the development of students' interest in learning.

The word "pendidik" (educator) comes from the root word "didik", which means to educate, nurture, and train someone to acquire certain knowledge (such as ethics, intellect,

morality, and others). The addition of the prefix "pe-" forms the word "pendidik", referring to someone who carries out educational activities. According to the Indonesian Language Dictionary (KBBI), a pendidik is defined as an educator. In Arabic, there are several terms that have similar meanings, such as al-mualim (teacher), murabbi (educator), mudarris (instructor), and ustadz. Terminologically, as stated by Ahmad Tafsir, Islamic education experts define a pendidik as someone responsible for developing students' potential comprehensively, covering affective (emotional), cognitive (intellectual), and psychomotor (physical) aspects (Ramli, 2015).

A teacher is a professional educator who serves as an educator and instructor in formal educational institutions with certain qualifications. The main tasks of a teacher include educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students, both at the primary and secondary levels. In the Islamic perspective, teachers are considered among the fortunate people in this world and the hereafter. This is because they are knowledgeable individuals who promote goodness and prevent evil.

The Prophet Muhammad's statement to Abu Darda strengthens this: "Be a knowledgeable person, a seeker of knowledge, a listener of knowledge, or a lover of knowledge. But do not be the fifth one, for you will perish." (HR Al-Baihaqi).

An educator needs to create a conducive learning atmosphere by applying various teaching methods. One strategy to increase students' interest in learning is through the use of attractive learning media. The utilization of technology, for example, can enrich the learning process in the classroom. Unfortunately, many teachers still rely solely on textbooks as the only source of learning, even though there are many alternative methods that can be used. Professional teachers must continually develop their teaching techniques to stimulate students' thinking, one of which is by utilizing educational media (Sari et al., 2024).

The Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE) No. 11 of 2008 regulates various aspects of the use of information technology, including electronic transactions. This law aims to provide guidelines for the community to engage in safe and responsible activities in the digital world (Republik Indonesia, 2008). With the existence of electronic laws, digital technology is increasingly used in the community, especially in the field of education. As prospective educators, it is their responsibility to master digital technology.

After understanding the background above, the researcher can conclude several problems that make the researcher interested in exploring this research. The focus of the problem to be studied is how ready are PAI students at FITK UINSU as prospective educators in designing digital-based learning media, what factors influence the readiness of PAI students at FITK UINSU in designing digital-based learning media, and what efforts can be made to improve the readiness of PAI students at FITK UINSU in designing digital-based learning media, and to what extent does the campus support students in developing their digital potential in designing digital-based learning media.

This research is based on previous research, including the first study by (Eka et al., 2024), Analysis of Factors Affecting the Readiness of Prospective Teacher Students to Become Professional Educators. Then followed by (Fatahillah, Muh. Zainuddin. R. Kasau, 2022), Readiness of Students to Apply Online Learning, and the study by (Yunior, 2023), The

Effect of Digital Literacy on Readiness to Become Teachers in the Era of Society 5.0 Among Economic Education Students at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sriwijaya University.

Based on this narrative and background, especially to determine the extent to which prospective educators (students) prepare themselves to face digital technology and design digital media for application in education, the researcher is interested in examining "The Readiness of PAI Students at FITK UINSU as Prospective Educators in Designing Digital-Based Learning Media". The purpose of this study is to test how far prospective students are prepared to face the digital-based education world, and what role lecturers play in preparing students who are skilled in using digital technology, as well as what positive impact it has on students who master digital technology and what negative impact it has on students as prospective PAI teachers who do not master digital technology, and what effectiveness it has for students if they are skilled in designing digital-based learning media.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used by the researcher is descriptive qualitative, where the researcher conducts research accurately and describes the research object and data according to what happens in the field (valid) (Febriani et al., 2023) . The type of research used is Phenomenology, which is a type of qualitative approach that focuses on understanding subjective experiences and the meaning given by individuals to a particular phenomenon. Its main goal is to deeply explore and describe how someone experiences an event, situation, or certain concept (Hamid, 2015). The main focus of this research is to determine the extent to which PAI students at FITK UINSU are ready to develop digital-based teaching media, starting from their experiences since college and what supports can help students prepare to enter the digital-based education world. Based on this research, the researcher will examine what makes students ready and able to have digital competence so that they can utilize digital technology optimally as a teaching material.

Research time 2025 academic year, This research was conducted at Universitas Islam Negeri, Jl. William Iskandar Ps. V, Medan Estate, Kec. Percut Sei Tuan, Kabupaten Deli Serdang, Sumatera Utara, 20371.

a. Sample/Data Source

The sample in this research is purposive. Because the researcher considers the relevance between the sample and the research objective. The person to be sampled has power and authority in the social situation or object being studied. In this research, the informants are PAI students at FITK UINSU and lecturers as educators at UIN Sumatera Utara.

b. Data Collection

The data collection technique used in this research is in-depth interviews. Interviews in this research were conducted offline or face-to-face, with structured interview types. Interviews were conducted as a data collection technique during preliminary analysis and field analysis to reveal how PAI students prepare digital technology as a learning medium. The main focus of data collection is on the subjective experiences of participants. In-depth and reflective approaches, usually through intensive interviews (Sitasari, 2022), explore the meaning and essence of experiences felt by individuals. The use of small samples, but selected purposively. Thematic analysis to find patterns and meanings from the participants' narratives.

c. Data Analysis Technique

The interview data is analyzed descriptively and the words presented are arranged into sentences in the form of text to explain all the questions that have been formulated.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Understanding, Recognition, and Readiness of PAI Students at FITK UINSU as Prospective Educators in Using Digital Technology in the School

Scope Interview Results: The readiness of PAI students in preparing digital-based learning media, to determine the level of readiness of students, researchers conducted interview tests. This interview test involved PAI students at FITK UINSU and also as a complement to the research accompanied by interviews with lecturers. There are several things that were found from the results of the interview, including:

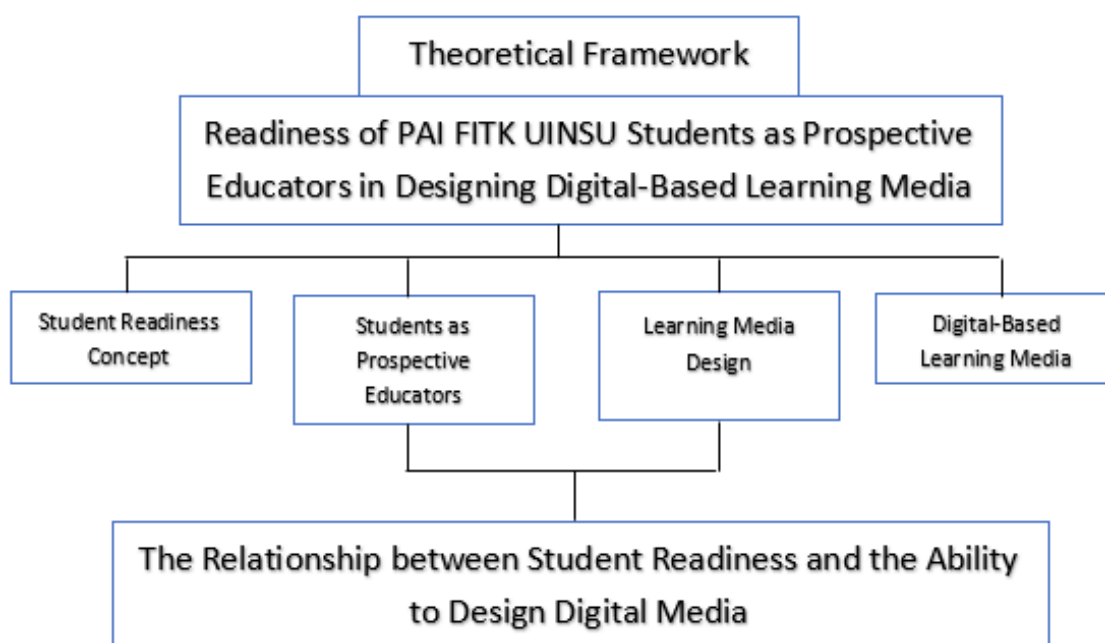


Table 1. Theoretical Framework 1

1) Understanding of PAI Students at FITK UINSU Regarding the Use of Digital-Based Learning

The use of technology in education essentially contributes to and facilitates the implementation of teaching and learning activities. This aligns with the study conducted by Tondeur et al. (2012), which emphasizes that teachers' understanding and readiness in utilizing technology are significantly influenced by their experiences during teacher education programs. Teacher education programs that explicitly include digital technology training are more likely to produce future educators who are well-prepared to face the challenges of the 21st century. "Teacher preparation programs that integrate technology meaningfully within pedagogy produce future educators who are better prepared to use digital tools in classrooms." The findings of that study are indeed consistent with the results of the present research, as evidenced by the interviews conducted with students at UINSU.

Media According to PAI students at UINSU, the role of learning media is very important, because the presence of digital-based learning media influences students' attitudes in the classroom. "With the presence of digital-based learning media, students are not bored learning in class and are more enthusiastic." "According to my understanding of digital-based learning media, I learned about digital-based learning media when I was in college, although when I was in school, teachers who taught me also used learning media, but it was still rare and when I was in college, I gained a lot of understanding and knowledge about the importance of digital-based learning media." The informant stated.

Therefore, as students, they must understand and master digital technology to adapt to technological advancements. According to the informant, "digital-based learning media is a learning application or platform accessed using digital technology." The learning media to be presented to students must also be displayed as attractively as possible, such as learning through PPT, and so on, so that the uniqueness makes students interested in learning. That is the informant's understanding of digital-based learning media.

Therefore, Ghavifekr and Rosdy (2015) stated that readiness to use technology largely depends on factors such as infrastructure support and attitudes toward technology. They emphasized the importance of educational institutions in providing comprehensive support to ensure that educators are also prepared to effectively integrate technology. "Teachers' readiness to integrate ICT in teaching depends not only on access and skills but also on positive attitudes and institutional support."

2) Types of Digital-Based Learning Media Known by PAI Students at FITK UINSU

To prepare students who can face the digital era, students must first recognize the types of digital-based learning media they have tried. To determine how far students know about digital-based learning media, the researcher summarized some answers from the informants, namely PAI students at FITK UINSU. The informant stated, "The types of digital-based learning media that I know include video learning, learning applications, e-books, and PPT. Usually, the most frequently used is PowerPoint or PPT because the learning media is used according to the level of students being taught. Because currently, the students I teach are in high school, so the relevant learning media, in my opinion, is PowerPoint. Because high school students can think critically. Other learning media can also be added, such as learning applications when evaluating students using applications like Quizizz, Quipper, Moodle, School Media (SM), and others." Some informants also stated, "Types of Digital Learning Media: Some types of media that I know and use include video learning (YouTube), educational applications (Kahoot, Quizizz), e-books and online materials, and interactive presentations (Prezi, Google Slides)." The procedure for designing the use of one of the applications used by PAI students at FITK UINSU is as follows:

Here are the steps to use the Quizziz application:

- a. Download the Quizziz application on Android or laptop/PC.
- b. Log in with your email.
- c. Select the teacher option to indicate that you are an educator.
- d. Enter the homepage.
- e. Create a class and name it according to the grade level.

- f. Share the code or link so that students can join the class.
- g. Share tasks in the class that have been designed.
- h. You can also send tasks to the class using a link.
- i. You can take advantage of existing questions in the Quizziz application as exam questions by copying the link and sharing it in the class group.

PAI FITK UINSU students have also designed an application specifically for use in schools, called School Media (SM). This application is used to design tasks or take exams at school. A video tutorial on how to use the School Media (SM) application can be found at <https://youtu.be/8lwnlQbeMeg?si=dme5tZEPAC3ep8cf>.

From the opinions of the sources, it can be concluded that PAI students already know various types of digital-based learning media. With the basic knowledge they possess, they are almost ready to compete in the digital-based education world.

Here is the translation:

3) Experience of PAI FITK UINSU Students in Implementing Digital-Based Learning Media

The experience of PAI FITK UINSU students in implementing digital-based learning media varies. Some students have experience designing learning media, while others do not. Among the samples studied by the researcher, only a small portion have never used digital-based learning media before. The reasons are varied. Students who have never implemented digital-based learning media before were unable to do so due to limited technology available at their schools during their teaching practices.

Some students have experience implementing digital-based learning media. "I have experience designing digital-based learning media, such as creating interactive presentations using Google Slides and short videos to explain specific concepts." Others have designed classroom-based digital media, interactive learning videos, and PowerPoint presentations (PPT), tailored to the class level they teach. From the statements of several sources, it can be concluded that almost all of the interview samples have implemented digital-based learning media directly. Those who have not had the opportunity to implement it are only PAI ST 22 students and students who lack access to technology to support digital media design at school.

Because some students already understand and are familiar with digital media, PAI students stated, "I am ready to design digital-based learning media as a prospective educator because I believe that digital media can enhance students' learning experiences. I also want to innovate in teaching." Others expressed similar sentiments, highlighting the importance of innovative media in increasing students' enthusiasm for learning and avoiding monotonous teaching methods. In conclusion, PAI FITK UINSU students are expected to be prepared to design digital-based learning media to enhance their skills and abilities in managing the classroom.

4) Challenges Faced by Students in Designing Digital-Based Learning Media

Becoming a professional educator, especially in preparing technology to be developed into learning media, is certainly not easy. There are various challenges that must be faced by students. Several sources stated that the challenges faced by students include:

"The challenges are limited technological capabilities, lack of understanding of the material when creating media, and lack of creativity in designing media."

Another source further stated, "The challenge is technology itself. When designing learning media for students, we must fully master the digital media we will present." Other challenges mentioned include:

- a) Technical limitations, such as difficulties in mastering software or accessing adequate devices
- b) Limited skills in designing digital-based learning media, requiring further learning and practice

Sources noted that some students still lack the necessary technological skills, leading to a reluctance to design learning media. Additionally, a lack of understanding of the material when creating media can lead to failure if one cannot master the media itself. Furthermore, a lack of creativity in designing media can result in monotonous digital-based learning media, leading to student boredom and disengagement.

5) Overcoming Technological Limitations and Lack of Skills in Prospective Teachers in the Process of Designing Learning Media

such as those who have been analyzed the above statement, students have obstacles in achieving adequate technology and also skills in mastering the technology. So, to find out how ready students face the challenge, researchers take information from several speakers. Among them stated: "How to overcome the limitations of technology or skills in the teaching and learning process, namely as a teacher must have creative ideas, so that if it is not able or not inhabit in using digital-based learning media can be covered by other creative innovations from other media other than digital media". "To overcome limitations, I will look for online training or tutorial, join the design community, and learn from other people's experiences". "If you want to design digital learning media but it doesn't support, so for the level of junior or high school I plan to be supported by using each student's cellphone because almost all students now have cellphones. For skills, there is technology training in schools such as digital seminars, digital literacy that aims to give birth to advanced digital teachers".

PAI students stated that if there was a limited constraint of technology that was provided from school, it could conduct innovative media that did not really need digital involvement provided the educator fully control the media he wanted to use. And the resource person afterwards argue that if there is a limitations of technology, students must be able to use existing technology around our lives. For example with the use of HP in the classroom. When it has finished using a cellphone for learning, the teacher governs the HP students and returned when they go home from school.

6) The Role Of The Curriculum And Lecturer At The UINSU FITK PAI In Supporting The Development Of Student Skills Designing Digital Media

The role of the campus is very much needed to form a painstaking student in using this digital teaching material. Being a question whether on the campus there are curriculum to support the development of students in designing this digital media? The researcher applied the Oinstruman this question to students to support further the results of this study.

From the resource person, "Yes, the PAI curriculum supports digital development by including source and e-learning source and learning media. "It's very supportive, with the existence of e learning classes for 1 semester". ". In my personal person as a PAI student in the UINSU FITK the curriculum used in the scope of Fitko UIInSu, especially the PAI Study Program in the development of digital skills, it was quite supportive because in the courses of the PAI study program there were courses that studied the innovation and education technology, which at which in In this course it must have discussed how to develop educational innovations in all fields ". "Potentially support. However, the implementation needs to be optimized to be more structured and applicative ". "Yes, but it hasn't run thoroughly".

These statements from students who are taking stambuk 21 (final stambuk) and also from Stambuk students 22. Steadlinking students 21 argues very supportively caused in the 7th semester of yesterday there was a course entitled E-Learning Development PAI. This course itself leads to the development of the teaching media for PAI students using digital 7 which is focused on the development of the application. So if for the final student it is definitely ready to deal with this digital, in contrast to their stambuk 22 students not focused on the development of application and digital, but there are several courses that use digital. So that the maturation of using digital media is found in PAI students in the 7th semester later. However, for digital development in the PAI department it is not too comprehensive, because the location of the focus is only in the 7th semester.

After learning about the extent to which the PAI curriculum supports this digital development, researchers are interested in knowing how students think about the role of lecturers in this digital development. Students argue "There are several lecturers who put forward learning using digital media but there are still many lecturers who are just a presentation without a media used. So in my opinion it is not too supportive, especially the lack of facilities from the campus in providing tools and media for the learning process ". "Lecturers are very supportive, many courses provide opportunities for students to practice digital media making in tasks, and provide guidance and input so that the media made is more quality". "Alhamdulillah, so far the lecturer in the course supports me in understanding digital learning media". "In my opinion, the lecturers and courses are very supportive in understanding and developing digital learning media because lecturers who teach about courses about digital learning media are mostly the lecturers who are indeed qualified in their field so that the material delivered can be well understood by his students and can applied according to the science obtained". "I think personally is only a few lecturers who apply digital-based teaching media. And some other lecturers still use the percentage of the percentage papers that seem monotonous. And also the limitations of the infokus from the faculty which caused a percentage that should expose using Digital Akhoir to be monotoned again ".

These students disagree, there are some express satisfaction with digital use in guidance directly by the lecturer. And there are students who declare dissatisfied because they are still lacking in a teaching strategy in classes that do not always use digital media.

The last question option, the researcher asked students with what the campus was doing in preparing students who literate technology. Then some students stated "that the campus can be able to prepare students into educators who care about this technology by providing facilities and infrastructure that support student learning in the classroom. So that students who will later become an educator can give or channel the knowledge they have in honor because the facilities and infrastructure obtained during the lecture are quite supportive of learning. " "Campus can better prepare students by providing more training in the latest technology, holding seminars, and providing access to the required devices and software". "Providing training. Campus can hold routine training, providing adequate facilities, and integrating digital media development into a more intensive curriculum ". "Not too monotonous learning from books but must be more explorous with things that smell digital, when learning must also use digital media so that learning becomes more modern and the most importantly the campus provides technology technology for learning in class".

Although learning in class is not all lecturers implementing this digital-based learning media, but outside the campus class teaching activities provide digital training and adequate infrastructure facilities. And also the provision of digital seminars and webinars both offline and online. Although there are several students who complained about teaching and learning activities in the monotonous class, but with other students saying satisfied with the service of the campus with the digital. It can be concluded that UINSU PAI FITK students are fully supported to master digital as well as possible.

B. The perception of the lecturer in assessing the readiness of the UINSU FITK PAI Students As A Candidate For Educators Who Used Digitally As A Medium Of Teaching Materials

Mr. Prof. Dr. Mardianto, M.Pd, as one of the lecturers who guide UInSu FITK PAI students in learning to master digital media, there are some things that can be concluded from the results of researchers' interviews to him, including how far the development of the UINSU FITK PAI students in mastering this digital Because this digital is very exists among the modern era, especially in the world of education. As for the summary results of interviews to Mr. Prof. Dr. Mardianto, M.Pd as follows:

Results of Interviews:

- 1) Assessment in terms of student readiness levels in using digital. In assessing the level of readiness of students of FITK UInSu, he argues in general the readiness is possible from the media course, or the task of the task given by the lecturer so far.
- 2) Indicators Refuse Measure Student Assessment in using digital. This opinion must be based on the benchmark indicator of the assessment. Refusing the assessment is based when students are asked to do assignments, for the percentage, or submit research reports. Some students have used digital media. Also from the social media they have had so far.
- 3) The contents of the curriculum that support the development of digital teaching at the UINSU FITK PAI. The curriculum provided by the department has not yet supported the development of digital teaching media, such as the conveyor toe "in general yet, but

the media course is also literacy technology, information and communication is expected to be the beginning of the support."

- 4) The role of the course in serving digital development. The role of the course in supporting the development of this digital media is stated that all courses have supported the development of digital media, all the courses support, the main edges of the media, computer courses, learning resource courses, and other courses.
- 5) The role of creativity and innovation in designing digital learning media. It's amazing, today's media are very important even support from students' creativity and lecturers need this content of creator, unfortunately this course does not yet exist.
- 6) The main challenge in digital-based learning media design by students. Sometimes a rigid curriculum, rules or regulations are very strict, making the motion or creativity of the study programs difficult. Likewise lecturers who still have not updated on technology.
- 7) Strategic recommendations or approaches in overcoming these challenges. The faculty and study programs must give a Content Creator course, every lecturer must provide assignments and challenges to be related to digital media. Even the thesis or final assignment should research R & D regarding the development of digital media for Islamic religious education.
- 8) The role of lecturer Prof. Dr. Mardianto M.Pd in developing digital competencies. I've done it, just look at <http://semahtarbiyah.com> Also at <https://www.mutiastitut.com/> or also DiTTTPS: [//wartagaruda.id](http://wartagaruda.id).
- 9) Experience in accompanying students in a digital learning project. Please look at <http://erepository.uinsu.ac.id> atau Guidance of my Doctoral Program for his dissertation about ewakaf with Android in Man 1 Medan. He got award at the graduation of the UIN doctoral program two years ago.
- 10) The application of digital learning media can prepare students to become innovative educators in the future. More than 10 years of teachers and lecturers are almost not needed, but the media and technology are still needed. Then the technology will not replace the teacher, but the teacher who does not use technology will be immediately replaced.
- 11) The strategic role that must be run by the University to better support the development of digital competencies. Complete the curriculum with digital-based competencies.

In relation to the interview results, one of the most influential factors in the implementation of technology, as stated by Kay (2006), is that the use of technology in instructional materials is not solely determined by technical proficiency, but also by students' positive attitudes, creativity, and their ability to adapt technology to meet diverse learning needs.

Prestridge (2012) also emphasized the role of lecturers in guiding students not only to become proficient in using technology, but also to be able to select and apply it pedagogically. Lecturers' perceptions of students' readiness are also shaped by how actively and reflectively students relate technology to the teaching context. "*Teachers' capacity to*

reflect on their own practice and make informed choices about digital tools is central to effective integration, and this begins in teacher education." Therefore, a balanced relationship between students and lecturers is essential in order to effectively implement the available educational technologies.

4. CONCLUSION

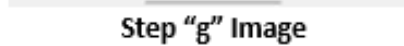
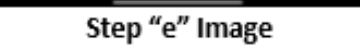
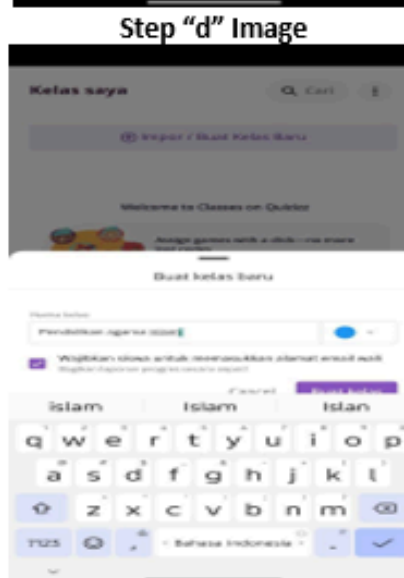
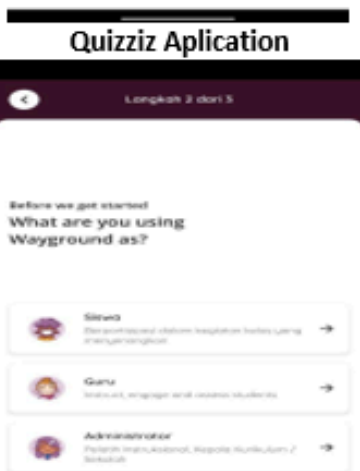
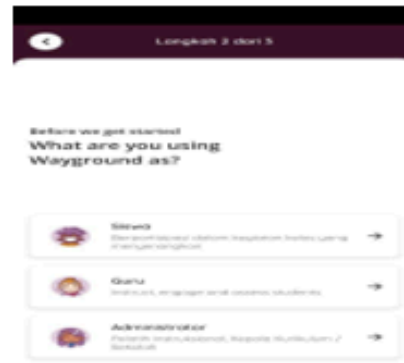
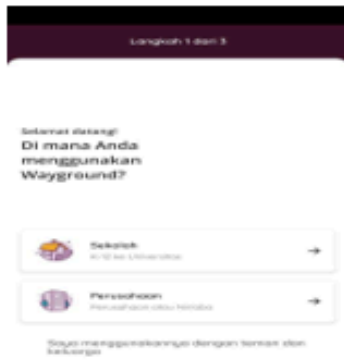
Based on the results of research that has been carried out, it can be concluded that UINSU FITK students show a fairly good level of readiness as a prospective educator in designing digital-based learning media. This readiness can be seen from conceptual understanding, basic technical skills, and a positive attitude towards the use of technology in education. Nevertheless, there are still several aspects that need to be improved, especially in terms of mastery of more complex media design applications and the application of digital media effectively in the context of learning. Therefore, sustainable support and training is needed to optimize the potential of students as professional educators in the digital era. It is also prioritized to meet the curriculum that provides digital development so that UINSU FITK PAI students become professional educators in the modern era that is able to utilize digital sophistication properly.

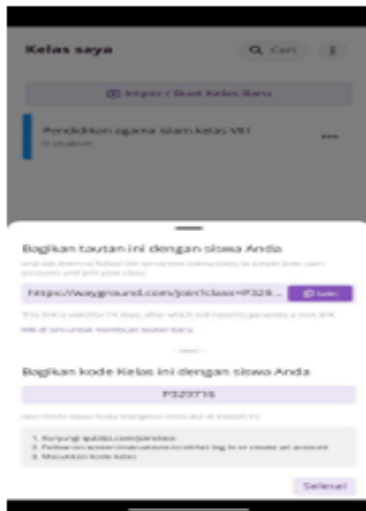
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6. APPENDIX





Step "h" Image