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Development of Canva-Based Digital Comics Integrated with Islamic Values to Improve Elementary Students' Reading Interest in Fable Learning

Muhammad Zuhri Abu Nawas^{1✉}, Salwangi², Nurul Aswar³

¹⁻³Universitas Islam Negeri Palopo, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aimed to develop and evaluate a Canva-based digital comic integrated with Islamic values for improving elementary school students' reading interest in fable learning. The research employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE model, which consists of analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation stages. The subjects of the study were 30 third-grade students of SD Negeri 24 Temmalebba Kota Palopo. Data were collected through observations, interviews, questionnaires, and reading interest tests. The data were analyzed using descriptive qualitative and quantitative techniques. The results of the needs analysis revealed that students' reading interest was still low and the learning process was dominated by conventional textbook-based instruction with limited visual media. Based on these findings, a Canva-based digital comic was designed and developed by integrating Islamic values such as honesty, responsibility, and cooperation into fable stories. The validation results showed that the developed media achieved a valid category in terms of media, material, and language aspects, with an average validity score of 83.87%. The practicality test indicated that the media was categorized as very practical, with teacher and student response scores of 92% and 88%, respectively. Furthermore, the effectiveness test demonstrated an increase in students' reading interest, as indicated by the improvement of the average score from 62 in the pretest to 84 in the posttest, with a gain score of 0.58 in the moderate category. The findings indicate that the Canva-based digital comic integrated with Islamic values is valid, practical, and effective in improving students' reading interest and supporting character education in elementary schools.

✉ Email Correspondent:
zuhriabunawas@iainpalopo.ac.id

Introduction

Literacy learning in elementary schools plays a crucial role in developing students' fundamental language competencies and supporting their academic success in subsequent educational levels. Literacy is not merely defined as the ability to read and write, but also encompasses the ability to understand, interpret, analyze, and communicate information critically in everyday life. In the context of elementary education, reading interest becomes an essential foundation for fostering students' literacy habits and improving their learning engagement. Therefore, Indonesian language learning should be designed in an interactive, contextual, and meaningful manner that aligns with students' developmental characteristics. However, various studies have indicated that elementary school students' reading interest in Indonesia remains relatively low, as reflected in students' limited enthusiasm for reading activities, low participation during literacy learning, and difficulties in comprehending reading materials (Rahmawati, 2021; Sari, 2023).

One of the major factors contributing to low reading interest is the limited use of innovative learning media in classroom instruction. Learning activities are still predominantly centered on conventional textbooks with minimal visual illustrations and limited interactivity. Such conditions often make students feel bored and less motivated to engage in reading activities. In contrast, elementary school students tend to prefer learning media that are visual, concrete, attractive, and closely related to their daily experiences. Consequently, teachers are required to implement innovative instructional media capable of creating more enjoyable and engaging learning experiences to stimulate students' reading motivation and participation (Lestari, 2022).

The rapid development of digital technology has provided broader opportunities for the integration of innovative media into educational practices. One of the digital media considered effective in improving students' reading interest is digital comics. Digital comics combine visual illustrations, dialogues, and narratives in an attractive format that facilitates students' comprehension of reading materials. The integration of images and simple storylines makes digital comics more suitable for elementary school students' learning characteristics. Previous studies have demonstrated that digital comics can improve students' motivation, reading comprehension, and learning engagement in language learning activities (Wulandari, 2023; Putri, 2022). Furthermore, digital-based media provide flexible accessibility and interactive learning experiences compared to conventional printed materials.

In Indonesian language learning, fable stories have significant potential to be developed through digital comic media. Fables present stories involving animal characters that symbolize human behaviors and moral values, making them highly relevant to children's cognitive and emotional development. Besides improving reading comprehension, fable materials can also serve as effective tools for character education. Nevertheless, the teaching of fable stories in elementary schools is still frequently delivered through text-based instruction without attractive supporting media, resulting in students' low interest in reading and limited understanding of moral messages embedded in the stories. This condition highlights the need for instructional media that can simultaneously integrate literacy development and character education in a more engaging and contextualized manner.

The integration of Islamic values into learning media is considered essential in supporting students' moral and character development at the elementary school level. Values such as honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and mutual assistance are fundamental principles that should be instilled from an early age through educational activities. Integrating Islamic values into digital comic media can be achieved through storylines, character representations, and dialogues that reflect positive behaviors and ethical attitudes. Through this approach, students are not only encouraged to enjoy reading activities but are also exposed to contextual moral learning experiences through the stories they read (Hidayat, 2022). This approach is consistent with the broader objectives of elementary education, which emphasize not only cognitive achievement but also the development of students' character and morality.

Along with advancements in educational technology, digital design platforms such as Canva have increasingly been utilized in the development of instructional media. Canva offers various user-friendly design features that enable teachers to create visually appealing educational materials without requiring advanced graphic design skills. The use of Canva in developing digital comics is considered effective because it allows teachers to produce creative, practical, and accessible learning media that can be utilized through multiple digital devices (Husna, 2023). Despite its potential, studies examining the development of Canva-based digital comics integrated with Islamic values in fable learning at the elementary school level remain limited.

Several previous studies have explored the implementation of digital comics in language learning and reported positive impacts on students' reading motivation and learning outcomes. Rahmawati (2021) found that digital comic media significantly improved elementary school students' reading interest and classroom engagement. Similarly, Lestari (2022) reported that comic-based learning media enhanced students' motivation and reading comprehension through visually attractive presentations. Meanwhile, Husna (2023) emphasized that Canva-based instructional media facilitated teachers in developing innovative and interactive learning materials. However, these studies mainly focused on visual and technological aspects of learning media and did not specifically integrate Islamic values into fable learning as part of character education reinforcement in elementary schools.

Based on the previous studies, a research gap can be identified regarding the limited development of Canva-based digital comics that integrate literacy learning, digital technology, and Islamic values simultaneously in fable instruction for elementary school students. In addition, prior studies have predominantly emphasized students' learning achievement rather than specifically investigating the effectiveness of digital comic media in improving students' reading interest at the Phase B elementary education level. Therefore, this study offers novelty by developing a Canva-based digital comic integrated with Islamic values in fable learning to improve elementary school students' reading interest.

This study aims to develop a Canva-based digital comic integrated with Islamic values for fable learning and to examine its validity, practicality, and effectiveness in improving Phase B elementary school students' reading interest. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of innovative learning media that support

literacy enhancement, technology integration, and character education in elementary school learning environments.

Method

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE model, which consists of five stages: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The study aimed to develop a Canva-based digital comic integrated with Islamic values for fable learning and to examine its validity, practicality, and effectiveness in improving elementary school students' reading interest. The ADDIE model was selected because it provides systematic and flexible procedures for developing technology-based instructional media.

This research was conducted at SD Negeri 24 Temmalebba during the 2025/2026 academic year. The subjects of the study were 30 third-grade students, while the object of the study was a Canva-based digital comic integrated with Islamic values for fable learning in Indonesian language subjects. In addition, the study involved media experts, material experts, and language experts as validators to assess the quality and feasibility of the developed product.

The analysis stage was conducted to identify students' learning needs, classroom conditions, students' characteristics, and problems encountered in Indonesian language learning, particularly in fable materials. Data at this stage were collected through classroom observations and interviews with teachers and students. The findings revealed that students' reading interest remained low and the learning media used in the classroom were less attractive and insufficiently interactive to support students' engagement in reading activities.

The design stage focused on planning the digital comic product. At this stage, the researchers designed the fable storyline, determined characters and settings, and integrated Islamic values into the story content. The storyboard, visual layout, typography, color composition, and comic structure were also developed according to elementary school students' characteristics. Furthermore, the research instruments were prepared, including validation sheets for media experts, material experts, and language experts, practicality questionnaires for teachers and students, reading interest questionnaires, and interview guidelines.

The development stage involved producing the digital comic using the Canva platform. After the product had been developed, validation was conducted by media experts, material experts, and language experts to evaluate the feasibility of the product in terms of content, language, presentation, and visual appearance. Suggestions and feedback from validators were used as the basis for revising and improving the product before implementation.

The implementation stage was conducted by testing the developed media on 30 third-grade students of SD Negeri 24 Temmalebba. During this stage, the digital comic was implemented in Indonesian language learning on fable materials. Teachers were also involved in the learning process to support the use of the developed media. Data regarding practicality were collected through students' and teachers' response questionnaires, while effectiveness data were obtained through pretest and posttest activities to identify changes in students' reading interest after using the digital comic.

The evaluation stage was conducted formatively and summatively. Formative evaluation was carried out at each stage of development to improve the product continuously, while summative evaluation was conducted at the end of the study to determine the overall effectiveness of the developed media. The evaluation results were used to determine the quality and feasibility of the digital comic as an instructional medium for elementary school learning.

Data collection techniques in this study included observations, interviews, questionnaires, and tests. Qualitative data obtained from interviews, observations, validators' suggestions, and users' responses were analyzed descriptively through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Meanwhile, quantitative data obtained from questionnaires and tests were analyzed using percentage calculations to determine the validity, practicality, and effectiveness of the developed product.

The percentage score was calculated using the following formula::

$$P = \frac{\sum x}{N} \times 100\%$$

Meanwhile, the effectiveness of the media was analyzed using the normalized gain (N-Gain) formula:

$$N - Gain = \frac{Posttest - Pretest}{Maximum Score - Pretest}$$

The obtained scores were categorized into validity, practicality, and effectiveness criteria, such as very valid, valid, practical, and effective. To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, this study applied source triangulation by comparing information obtained from teachers, students, and validators, as well as technique triangulation through the use of interviews, questionnaires, and tests. The results of the data analysis were used as the basis for drawing conclusions regarding the feasibility, practicality, and effectiveness of the Canva-based digital comic integrated with Islamic values in improving elementary school students' reading interest.

Results

Learning Needs Analysis and Student Characteristics

The analysis stage was conducted to identify learning needs, student characteristics, and problems encountered in Indonesian language learning, particularly in fable text materials for third-grade students at SD Negeri 24 Temmalebba, Palopo City. Data were collected through classroom observations and interviews with teachers and students.

The findings revealed that the learning process was still dominated by the use of printed textbooks as the primary instructional resource. The textbooks contained limited illustrations and were unable to optimally attract students' attention. As a result, students demonstrated low reading interest, became easily bored during reading activities, and experienced difficulties in understanding the storyline and moral messages contained in fable texts.

Interview results further indicated that students were more interested in learning media containing visual elements such as images, colors, and stories closely related to

their daily experiences. Teachers also stated that visually attractive media could increase students' attention and participation during learning activities. However, interactive digital media had not been widely utilized in the classroom, causing the learning process to remain conventional.

Regarding student characteristics, third-grade students were found to understand concepts more effectively when learning materials were presented concretely and visually rather than through lengthy textual explanations. Students at this developmental stage also tended to enjoy imaginative stories, including fables featuring animal characters with human-like behaviors. In addition, the analysis showed that the integration of Islamic values in classroom learning had not yet been systematically implemented. Moral values such as honesty, responsibility, and cooperation had not been conveyed contextually through engaging learning media.

Based on these findings, the researcher concluded that an attractive and interactive learning medium suitable for elementary school students' characteristics was needed. Therefore, a Canva-based digital comic integrating fable materials with Islamic values was developed. The media was designed to improve students' reading interest through a combination of visual illustrations, concise text, and simple storylines.

Design Stage of the Canva-Based Digital Comic

The design stage focused on developing the initial framework of the Canva-based digital comic according to the results of the needs analysis. At this stage, the researcher formulated learning objectives, designed the storyline, developed storyboards, and determined the visual appearance of the media.

The learning objectives were directed toward improving students' reading interest and their ability to understand fable texts containing moral messages. In addition, the comic was designed to integrate Islamic values such as honesty, responsibility, and helping others.

The storyline was developed using simple and engaging plots appropriate to the developmental level of Phase B elementary school students. Animal characters representing different human behaviors, such as honesty, arrogance, and helpfulness, were incorporated into the story. Conflicts and resolutions were designed to clearly convey moral messages while maintaining students' interest.

A storyboard was also created to illustrate the sequence of scenes, dialogues, and placement of images and text on each comic page. The storyboard functioned as a guideline for the media development process to ensure that the storyline remained coherent and systematic.

From the visual perspective, the comic employed bright colors, appealing illustrations, and readable fonts appropriate for elementary school students. The layout was designed simply to help students follow the storyline easily. Islamic values were integrated through character behaviors, dialogues, and conflict resolutions within the story.

In addition, research instruments were developed during this stage, including validation sheets for media, material, and language experts, practicality questionnaires for teachers and students, and pretest-posttest instruments to measure students' reading interest.

Product Development and Expert Validation Results

The development stage involved transforming the comic design into a real product using the Canva platform. The comic was developed according to the storyboard designed in the previous stage. Various Canva features, including templates, illustrations, graphic elements, and layout settings, were utilized to produce an engaging learning medium appropriate for elementary school students.

The digital comic combined visual illustrations and text proportionally. Dialogues between characters were written using simple and communicative language to facilitate students' understanding. Islamic values were integrated into the storyline through character behaviors and moral messages presented throughout the comic.

After the product was completed, validation was conducted by media, material, and language experts to determine the feasibility of the comic before implementation.

Table 1. Expert Validation Results

Evaluated Aspect	Percentage (%)	Category
Media Expert	96.4	Very Valid
Material Expert	83.33	Valid
Language Expert	71.9	Fairly Valid
Average	83.87	Valid

The table indicates that the overall validity score reached 83.87%, categorized as valid. Media experts stated that the comic possessed an attractive visual design, appropriate layout, and suitability for elementary school students. Material experts assessed that the comic content aligned with learning objectives and successfully integrated Islamic values contextually. Meanwhile, language experts suggested revisions related to sentence simplification and word selection to improve communicative clarity.

Based on the validators' suggestions, revisions were made, particularly regarding language use and visual consistency. After revision, the digital comic was declared feasible for classroom implementation.

Media Implementation and Practicality Test Results

The implementation stage involved testing the Canva-based digital comic with 30 third-grade students at SD Negeri 24 Temmalebba, Palopo City. The implementation was conducted during Indonesian language learning activities on fable materials.

At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher introduced the digital comic and explained how to use it. Students then read the comic individually and collaboratively under teacher guidance. During the learning process, students appeared more enthusiastic compared to previous lessons that relied solely on textbooks.

Students demonstrated greater focus during reading activities and actively responded to questions related to the story content. Furthermore, they showed strong interest in the illustrations and storyline presented in the comic. The integration of Islamic values within the story also helped students understand moral values such as honesty, responsibility, and cooperation.

To determine the practicality of the media, practicality questionnaires were distributed to teachers and students after the implementation process.

Table 2. Practicality Test Results

Respondent	Percentage (%)	Category
Teacher	92	Very Practical
Students	88	Very Practical
Average	90	Very Practical

The results show that the average practicality score reached 90%, categorized as very practical. Teachers stated that the media was easy to use, assisted in delivering learning materials, and increased students' attention during classroom activities. Students also reported that the comic was interesting, easy to understand, and made reading activities more enjoyable.

Classroom observations further indicated that students became more active during discussions and more motivated to engage in reading activities. Some students even showed initiative to reread the comic independently.

Evaluation of Media Effectiveness on Students' Reading Interest

The evaluation stage was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the Canva-based digital comic in improving students' reading interest. Evaluation was carried out through pretest and posttest assessments administered before and after the use of the media.

The pretest results indicated that students' reading interest was relatively low. Most students lacked enthusiasm toward reading activities, became easily bored when reading texts, and demonstrated limited participation during classroom learning.

After the implementation of the digital comic, significant improvements in students' reading interest were observed. Students became more focused, active, and enthusiastic during reading activities. They were also able to understand the story content and identify the moral messages presented in the fables more effectively.

Table 3. Pretest and Posttest Results of Students' Reading Interest

Indicator	Average Score	Category
Pretest	62	Low
Posttest	84	High
Gain Score	0.58	Moderate

The table demonstrates that the average score of students' reading interest increased from 62 in the pretest to 84 in the posttest. The gain score of 0.58 falls within the moderate category, indicating that the Canva-based digital comic was effective in improving elementary school students' reading interest.

In addition to quantitative improvement, observational data also showed positive changes in students' attitudes toward reading activities. Students became more interested in reading, more actively engaged during classroom learning, and better able to understand the content of reading materials. The integration of Islamic values in the comic also assisted students in understanding positive behaviors applicable to their daily lives.

Overall, the findings indicate that the developed Canva-based digital comic fulfilled the criteria of validity, practicality, and effectiveness as a learning medium for Indonesian language instruction on fable materials at the elementary school level.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the Canva-based digital comic integrated with Islamic values is a feasible, practical, and effective learning medium for improving elementary students' reading interest in fable learning. The discussion of the findings is organized into three major aspects, namely the validity and practicality of the developed media, the effectiveness of the digital comic in enhancing students' reading interest, and the implications of the media for literacy development and character education in elementary schools.

Validity and Practicality of the Canva-Based Digital Comic

The validation results indicate that the developed digital comic fulfilled the criteria of an appropriate instructional medium in terms of media design, content, and language aspects. The high score obtained from media experts suggests that the visual appearance, color composition, layout organization, and illustration quality successfully supported students' reading activities and learning engagement. Elementary school students generally prefer visual and concrete learning experiences; therefore, the use of colorful illustrations and attractive story presentations contributed positively to the feasibility of the developed media.

The material validation results also showed that the comic content was aligned with the learning objectives and the characteristics of fable materials taught in elementary schools. The integration of Islamic values into the storyline strengthened the educational function of the media by combining literacy learning with character formation. Through the presentation of moral messages such as honesty, responsibility, and cooperation, students were not only encouraged to understand the storyline but also guided to internalize positive behaviors reflected by the characters in the comic.

Although the language aspect obtained a relatively lower score compared to media and material aspects, it still met the valid category. Several revisions related to sentence simplification and word selection were necessary to ensure that the language matched students' developmental levels. This finding highlights the importance of using communicative and age-appropriate language in elementary learning media, particularly for students in the early reading stage.

In addition to validity, the practicality test results revealed that the digital comic was categorized as very practical based on teacher and student responses. Teachers considered the media easy to operate and applicable in classroom instruction without requiring complicated preparation. Meanwhile, students responded positively to the media because the comic was visually attractive, easy to understand, and more enjoyable than conventional textbook-based learning. The high practicality level indicates that the developed media can be implemented effectively in real classroom settings and has the potential to support teachers in creating more engaging learning experiences.

The practicality of the media was further strengthened by the flexibility of Canva as a development platform. The digital comic could be accessed through various devices and used both online and offline, which increased its usability in different learning environments. This flexibility is particularly important in elementary education contexts where technological facilities may vary among schools.

Effectiveness of the Digital Comic in Improving Students' Reading Interest

The findings also reveal that the Canva-based digital comic effectively improved students' reading interest. Before the implementation of the media, students showed low motivation toward reading activities. They tended to lose focus easily, showed limited participation during reading sessions, and experienced difficulties in understanding story content and moral messages presented in conventional text materials.

After the implementation of the digital comic, students demonstrated more positive learning behaviors. They became more enthusiastic during reading activities, participated actively in classroom discussions, and showed greater curiosity toward the stories presented in the comic. The increase in the posttest score compared to the pretest score confirms that the developed media contributed positively to improving students' reading interest.

Several factors may explain the effectiveness of the developed media. First, the combination of visual illustrations and narrative storytelling made the reading materials more attractive and accessible for students. Visual elements such as colorful characters, expressive illustrations, and organized layouts helped students maintain concentration and understand the storyline more easily. This finding supports the view that visual learning media can enhance students' engagement and reduce reading boredom in elementary classrooms.

Second, the use of short dialogues and simple language facilitated reading comprehension among students. Elementary students often experience difficulties when reading long and complex texts; therefore, the simplified narrative structure of the comic helped them process information more effectively. As a result, students not only enjoyed reading activities but also demonstrated improved understanding of story plots, characters, and moral lessons.

Third, the integration of Islamic values within the fable stories contributed to meaningful learning experiences. Students were able to identify positive behaviors demonstrated by the characters and relate them to their daily lives. Moral values presented contextually through stories enabled students to understand character education more naturally compared to direct theoretical instruction. Consequently, the digital comic functioned not only as a literacy medium but also as a medium for moral and character development.

The moderate gain score obtained from the effectiveness test indicates that the developed media produced a meaningful improvement in reading interest, although there is still room for further enhancement. Additional interactive features, story variations, or multimedia integration may further strengthen students' motivation and learning experiences in future developments.

Implications for Literacy Development and Character Education

The use of Canva-based digital comics has important implications for literacy learning in elementary schools. The findings suggest that attractive digital learning media can transform reading activities into enjoyable and meaningful experiences for students. By presenting stories visually and contextually, the media encouraged students to participate more actively in reading activities and helped develop reading comprehension skills more effectively.

The developed media also supports the creation of literacy-oriented learning environments. Students were encouraged not only to read during classroom instruction but also to revisit the digital comic independently. This indicates that digital comics can contribute to fostering reading habits and promoting sustainable literacy practices among elementary school students.

In addition to literacy improvement, the integration of Islamic values in the comic provided meaningful contributions to character education. The stories presented moral lessons through concrete examples demonstrated by the characters, enabling students to understand ethical values contextually. This approach aligns with the broader educational objective of integrating cognitive, affective, and moral dimensions in elementary learning.

The findings further imply that digital comics can become an alternative instructional medium that supports innovative and student-centered learning practices. Teachers can adapt the content according to students' needs and integrate various educational values into the stories. The flexibility and accessibility of Canva also provide opportunities for teachers to develop creative digital learning materials independently.

Overall, this study confirms that Canva-based digital comics integrated with Islamic values have strong potential to support literacy development, increase reading interest, and strengthen character education in elementary schools. Therefore, the use of digital comics can be considered an innovative educational strategy for improving the quality of language learning and creating more engaging learning experiences for young learners.

Conclusion

This study aimed to develop and evaluate a Canva-based digital comic integrated with Islamic values for fable learning in elementary school students. The development process employed the ADDIE model, consisting of analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation stages. The findings indicate that the developed media successfully addressed the learning needs identified during the preliminary analysis, particularly the low reading interest of students and the limited use of attractive and interactive learning media in Bahasa Indonesia instruction.

The results demonstrated that the digital comic achieved a high level of validity based on expert evaluations in media, material, and language aspects. The product was considered appropriate for classroom implementation after several minor revisions. In addition, the practicality test revealed that both teachers and students responded positively to the media. The comic was regarded as easy to use, visually appealing, and capable of supporting a more engaging learning atmosphere.

Furthermore, the effectiveness evaluation showed that the use of the Canva-based digital comic contributed to an increase in students' reading interest. Students became more active, focused, and enthusiastic during reading activities. The visual and narrative presentation of the comic facilitated comprehension of fable stories and moral messages, while the integration of Islamic values supported character development through contextual learning experiences. The improvement in students' reading interest scores indicates that the developed media was effective in promoting literacy engagement among elementary school students.

Overall, the study concludes that Canva-based digital comics integrated with Islamic values can serve as an innovative, practical, and effective learning medium for Bahasa

Indonesia instruction, particularly in fable learning. The media not only supports literacy development but also contributes to character education by embedding positive moral values within meaningful and enjoyable reading activities. Therefore, the developed product has the potential to be implemented more broadly as an alternative instructional medium in elementary education.

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