

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The 21st-century learning community has taken the learning process to another level beyond the physical classroom environment (Bakar, 2016). The comic-aided learning concept has been widespread in the country and the growth center of the world of information technology (ICT) as it offers a new learning experience and helps students' motivation during learning sessions (Deligianni & Pouroutidi, 2016). Besides, the incorporation of digital comics and ICT in teaching nowadays has led to new learning methods and provided opportunities for innovative learning and assessment to be applied in the classroom (Farah *et al.*, 2016).

With the pandemic announced by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020, the new process of life adaptation started after radical changes in the world and new normal was revealed after it. The pandemic affected the whole world and all areas. However, it certainly played an active role in the movement and adaptation of the education that will lead the next generation. With the pandemic, distance education, which is a new educational inspiration for the 21st century, has become a part of the lives of students who have been receiving education all over the world (Ilhan, G. O., Kaba, G., & Sin, M. (2021).

The current digital era and the Covid-19 pandemic are the reasons for the need to develop teaching materials packaged in the form of interactive digital comics, especially

for elementary school students, because these conditions force all teachers to carry out learning activities online. Covid-19 first occurred in Wuhan, China, at the end of December 2019 (Shereen, Khan, Kazmi, Bashir, & Siddique, 2020). In a short time, Covid-19 has spread and become an epidemic globally (Secon, Woodward, & Mosher, 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact on the order of life of the people and nation of Malaysian, including in the field of education. The learning process that is usually carried out face-to-face in schools is forced to be done online.

The use of digital comic teaching materials developed during this pandemic year has the potential to make online independent learning more fun, interesting and provoke intense student involvement in learning. This is in line with the result of the study, which stated that competence obtained by students is influenced by their activities in surfing the internet continuously (Almarabeh, T., Majdalawi, Y. Kh., & Mohammad, H., 2016 cited in Husnul Khotimah¹, Yetti Supriyati², Asep Supena., 2021).

Educational comics are one of the materials designed in a digital environment and suitable for use in the learning environment. At the same time, they can be applied for different subjects and gains in the education field and can attract students' interest, increase motivation and make learning fun. According to the results of the researches prepared and applied in the digital environment, educational comic materials have educational competencies. It increases the permanence of learning, enables learning with fun, increases academic success, appeals to more than one sense organ because it is given with harmony of visual and text (Topkaya, 2014; İlhan, 2016; Mutlu, 2019; Kurt, 2019; Şentürk, Ö. Ç., 2020; Şentürk, M., 2020 cited in İlhan, G. O., Kaba, G., & Sin, M. (2021).

Comics are deeply layered with regards to their benefits in both the teaching and learning process. As one of the popular cultures, Comics is now becoming an emerging research area within education (Han & Ling, 2017). Jennifer & Tiffany (2017) said that the amount of scholastic consideration with integrated comics as teaching tools had been proven to possess a relationship between image and text, the reader and characters, the presentation of the content, and the arrangement of visual information, which can make readers understand and have feelings towards what they've read.

Comics play a significant role in educational development, likewise towards Islamic teachings. Thus, learning the Qur'an and Hadith with audio-visual media is very effective (Mukhrisah, 2011). Furthermore, the stories contained in the Qur'an are great when explored in comics; hence, along with the rapid science, it would be nice if we utilize the facilities comics provide in memorizing Al Quran (Dona, 2011). Moreover, the complex interplay of words and images in comics has the potential to go beyond the traditional textbook by weaving text and images into a story that can help generate coherence and context for the information (Hosler, 2011).

This study focused on the development of digital comic-based learning as an instructional media of Form 5 Ibnu Rusyd of SMA Al-Ihsan based on Al-Quran and Sunnah Education subjects that were integrated multimedia elements into this digital comic to provide a different experience for students. It was supported by a theoretical framework as a guideline to produce the digital comic based on the Al-Quran and Sunnah Education (PQS) textbook. It also focused on the topic of Pengajian *Hadith*. Besides that, this study

evaluated its usability to meet user needs by 24 Form 5 Ibnu Rusyd students, one teacher and one expert.

1.2 Research Background

Education in Malaysia is an ongoing learning process to build a balanced education in terms of physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and social. Muslims must reflect on Allah S.W.T's guidance through His Book and His Messenger in facing the current challenges. Through *Integrated Curriculum Secondary School (KBSM)*, one of the subjects that apply these lessons and should be mastered by students is the Form Five students whose taken Al- Quran and Sunnah Education subject. The failure to master this subject could lead to the weakness in understanding Al-Quran and Al-Hadith in Muslims' daily lives (Rabiatul Adawiyah, 2008).

In creating a generation that understands and knows the contents of Al-Quran and Sunnah, forming noble personalities and being responsible as the caliph of Allah, the Form Five Al-Quran and Sunnah Education subject should not be neglected as an indispensable subject in the educational curriculum (Rabiatul Adawiyah, 2008).

Unfortunately, the Pendidikan Al-Quran and Sunnah (PQS) subject has not used and benefitted the instructional media. This happens because teachers are less exposed to the new methods that can attract students to keep their interest in this subject (Rabiatul Adawiyah, 2008). Therefore, the use of instructional media will greatly assist the effectiveness of the learning process and the delivery of messages on learning materials (Huriyah, 2015).

Recognizing this fact, more teachers should be taking bigger steps in line with the boom of information technology by building software and instructional media to transform teaching and learning, likewise comic-based teaching. Nowadays, comics are considered a very popular culture in society. Therefore, educators are highly interested in using popular culture as pedagogy to enhance learning and teaching. Educating through popular culture is the most powerful educational force in contemporary culture (Jubas *et al.*, 2015).

Digital comics are referred to as comics created entirely on a computer (Azlin, 2016). Thus, the potential of digital comics is offered to be a vital tool in preparing students for a digital future by integrating imagery from photography, video, featuring audio soundtracks, animation, hyperlinks, and interactivity. Besides, comics can help students analyze, synthesize and absorb content that might be more difficult when presented in only one way due to human's natural attraction to pictures, where comics can capture and maintain the learner's interest (Marianthi *et al.*, 2007).

Furuhata (2013) stated that by incorporating popular culture as material in teaching and learning, as well as *anime* (comic) or digital comic which integrated the element of communication of ICT and multimedia features in which students are already interested, teachers could expect that students will enhance and improve their subject matter (Han & Ling, 2017).

Based on the observation before, the interview was also conducted among Form 5 Ibnu Rusyd students at SMA Al-Ihsan. Based on the result, the students have difficulties to understanding the materials (writing composition) from the textbook explained by the teacher. This affects the ability of students to memorize and understand the topic on

Pengajian Hadith. Moreover, most of these students have smartphones that connect to the internet, and during break time, they often use their phones. Based on the observation, most students like to read online comics on *Instagram* such as Tahilalats (@tahilalats), Komikin Ajah (@komikin_ajah), Si Juki (@jukihoki), Webtoon e-comic application, etc.

Based on the fact found in schools, the facilities provided by the school such as computers and projectors are only used for ICT (Information and Communication Technology) subject. Even though the facilities are complete, it is not utilized optimally by teachers. Even though the school has provided a computer, the tendency of teachers using textbooks to deliver materials cannot be avoided.

Based on conditions of the Form 5 Ibnu Rusyd students of SMA Al-Ihsan, there is a need for an appropriate solution to make students learn PQS subjects easily. Students are expected to learn by themselves in schools or at home. Developing media that is instantly and easily used is a good solution, and new interesting content must be made available to address this problem. Digital comics have become the medium that the researchers intend to develop because it is appropriate with the school's situation and condition. Based on the need analysis of the students, most of them like to access online graphic media.

Based on the description above, the researcher intends to develop a digital comic with the expectation that digital comics are an alternative to support the learning process, especially during this pandemic year.

1.3 Research Problem

As one of the elective subjects, the PQS subject is very important to produce basic knowledge from understanding the teaching of Al-Quran and Al-Sunnah. However, the percentage of these subjects still does not reach the level of excellence in almost all schools, including government schools, government religious schools, and state religious schools (Rabiatul Adawiyah, 2008).

According to Robiah (2001), school activities and reinforcement carried out by the school are more focused on science and Mathematics, lacking concentration towards subjects such as English and *Malay Languages*. Similarly, subjects related to religion and Arabic are also not regulated, which lead these students failed to excel in these subjects. Besides, Rabiatul Adawiyah (2008) stated that Arabic subjects such as Syariah Islamiyah Education (PSI) as well as Al-Quran and Sunnah Education (PQS) have less attention among students.

There are several problems faced in teaching and learning (PDP) of the PQS subject. Firstly, the availability of innovative learning media in schools is still limited, especially in the subject of PQS. The teaching and learning aid materials of this subject normally come in the form of print and the lack of computer-aided materials in this subject encourages a more comprehensive study to be carried out (Rabiatul Adawiyah, 2008). Furthermore, the Ministry of Education has provided basic materials, such as textbooks and handbooks, including teaching book guides and the syllabus in order to help the teachers plan and carry out teaching activities more interestingly and effectively. Hence, the handbook is available in print and not available in the form of digital software that has

an element of multimedia. Besides, teachers have a tendency to teach using textbooks and not maximally utilizing the existing technology.

Secondly, the students have difficulties to understanding and memorizing the materials of PQS in the form of a textbook. A teacher has underlined that one of the major issues in learning PQS subject is the difficulties for students to memorize the interpretation of hadith., history, facts, events, years and peoples. However, the information contained in digital comic is easier to understand because it's attractive and combines various elements of images, narration, and animation (Hidayah, 2017; Wahyudin et al., 2020).

Thirdly, many students own smartphones but tend to use them for entertainment only such as social media and watching films instead of utilizing them for learning. Furthermore, students are interested to learn by using visual media, and based on the first field interview, most of them love to read comics on their smartphones, such as *Webtoon* and *Mangatoon*. The effectiveness of digital comics is also supported by some previous researchers, which is the development of digital comic is suitable to use in learning because it has visual element to attract the attention of students (Mulenga, 2020).

Lastly, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the teaching and learning have shifted and adapted to online. The digital comics developed are expected to attract students to participate in their online learning and focus on the subject taught. Students will not bore in reading the learning materials which available in the form of a digital comic because digital comic can motivate them to participate in learning and attract them to learn in a more fun and relaxing environment, read excitingly, enjoyable and expect them to become active learners. Moreover, the use of digital comic in online learning can increase the

success of learning process and helps to develop positive behavior of students (Ilhan et al., 2021).

Therefore, this study has developed digital comics as an instructional media to facilitate the teaching and learning of the Form 5 Ibnu Rusyd students of SMA Al-Ihsan based on the PQS curriculum textbook.

1.4 Research Questions

The objectives of this study are to answer the following research questions:

- What is a suitable framework for developing digital comics of Form 5 Al-Quran and Sunnah Education subject?
- How to develop the digital comic of Form 5 Al-Quran and Sunnah Education subject?
- How to validate the digital comic of Form 5 Al-Quran and Sunnah Education subject?

1.5 Research Objectives

Based on the problem statement, this research will be conducted with the following objectives:

- To identify a suitable framework for developing digital comics for Form 5 Al-Quran and Sunnah Education subject.
- To develop the digital comic of Form 5 Al-Quran and Sunnah Education subject.

- To validate of the digital comic of Form 5 Al-Quran and Sunnah Education subject.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The use of digital comic-based teaching and learning materials as instructional media in the teaching and learning of PQS subjects was expected to create a new experience and atmosphere for the students. It is also expected to engage students in the covered topic, motivate them to read and help them remember content. This digital comic offers independent learning and a more enjoyable learning process. The students are given the freedom to learn by the time required, where the process is repeated indefinitely anytime and anywhere. The students also were able to interact directly with the computer during their studies.

The use of digital comics as teaching and learning aids can help teachers diversify in teaching and learning methods in the classroom and the existing methods. In addition, systematic planning before and during teaching lessons to ensure good and proper can make the teaching more exciting and compelling when students are directly involved.

It is expected that this study was beneficial to the MOE, especially for the Islamic and Moral Education Department (JAPIM), Ministry of Education Malaysia, Pahang State Education Department, State Islamic Education Department, and Kuantan District Education Office to intensify an effort to increase the software on teaching and learning of Al-Quran and Al-Sunnah Education subject, to hold courses by developing software or comic education to the teachers. The courses will be focused on learning theories,

instructional design models, and others related to the digital comic software built to higher quality and suitable for use.

The results of this study were expected to help the school administration and teachers grading. Teachers can identify media learning tools to be used to Form Five students who will be sitting for Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM). Besides, it was expected to enlighten researchers and parents about the need to be exposed to an effective learning tool to encourage students to improve their academic achievement. Lastly, this study was expected to be the driver of other studies, where this research can be used as a cultural resource in helping to increase and the effectiveness of education in the country.

1.7 Scope of Study

The major purpose of this study was to developed a digital comic based on Form 5 Al-Quran and Sunnah Education subject (PQS) as a learning media focused on the subtopic of *Pengajian Hadith* as an instructional media. This study was conducted during online learning on PQS for Form 5 Ibnu Rusyd students of SMA Al-Ihsan, Kuantan Pahang. This study was conducted in May 2022. This study used primary data such as questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed among 33 Form 5 Ibnu Rusyd students during their online learning class, one teacher and one expert. The content of the digital comic of the PQS subject and has used the Malay Language as a selected language.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

1.8.1 Comic

A comic is an art form; art sequencing, picture or juxtaposed images that create a storyline in a specific order which aims to provide information and achieve aesthetic responses from readers (McCloud, 1994; Eisner, 2010; Krusemark 2015; Ekram & Zaffwan, 2016; Muzumdar, 2016; Silva *et al.*, 2017; Monnin, 2017).

1.8.2 Digital Comic

Digital comics are comics that are created entirely on a computer and not by manual drawing and coloring process (Deligianni & Pouroutidi, 2016), in which applications that contain colorful moving images, short texts or even can be download onto smartphones, computers, or tablets (Amendano & Medina, 2016), also be accompanied by audio tracks or animation or even are narrative in true multimedia such as utilize an interdependency of media to tell a story (Jakob, 2012).

1.8.3 Educational comic

An educational comic medium through contemporary and digital technologies like computers and the Internet with new media affordances like images, text, audio, animation, and hyperlinking as pedagogy tools make new experiences and enhance teaching and learning (Duffy, 2016).

1.8.4 Al-Quran and Al-Sunnah Education Textbook

A curriculum or syllabus is used to study the PQS subject and one of the elective subjects set in an open certification for *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM)*. This subject was taken by form 4 and form 5 students (Rabiatul Adawiyah, 2008).

1.8.5 Form 5 Ibnu Rusyd students

Form Five 5 Ibnu Rusyd students master a year of the PQS subject during Form 4 at Islamic secondary school (Rabiatul Adawiyah, 2008).

1.8.6 SMA Al-Ihsan Kuantan Pahang

Sekolah Menengah Agama Al-Ihsan, also known as SMA Al-Ihsan, is a religious secondary school located in Kuantan, Pahang. Sekolah Menengah Agama Al-Ihsan is a high-performing secondary religious school in Kuantan (Wikipedia, 2018).

1.8.7 Covid-19 Pandemic

Covid-19 first occurred in Wuhan, China, at the end of December 2019 (Shereen, Khan, Kazmi, Bashir, & Siddique, 2020).

1.8.8 Online Learning

Online learning is a new way of learning that uses internet networks with accessibility, connectivity, flexibility, and the ability to generate various learning interactions (Rigianti, 2020; Sadikin & Hamidah, 2020).

1.8.9 EFL

EFL is regarded as English as a Foreign Language, and ESL is called English as a Second Language. Before distinguishing EFL from ESL, it is important that there are differences between "foreign language" and "second language" (Peng, 2019).

1.8.10 The Development

Development is a process that creates growth, progress, positive change in economic, environmental, social and demographic component without damaging the resources of the environment (Sakalasooriya, 2020).

1.9 Research Outline

This thesis was divided into five chapters, including the introduction. Each chapter represents a subject to certain scopes, which formulates the thesis contents. Below are the chapter numbers, titles, and summaries of each chapter in this research.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1 contains the research background, research problem, research questions, research objectives, the significance of the research, limitations of the research, the definition of terms, and research outline.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In Chapter 2, the researcher highlighted the key terms of research, algorithms, and techniques related to this research. It was divided into three parts that covered the theoretical framework of digital comics, the development of digital comics, and the usability of digital comics.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Chapter 3 provided a brief description and explanation of the research methodology that was used in this research. It was divided into three phases. Firstly, the methodology is identified and analyzed on a suitable framework to develop digital comics. The second phase discussed the methodology used to develop digital comics of the Form Five Al-Quran and Sunnah Education subject. Finally, the third phase discussed the methodology used to evaluate the usability of digital comics to meet users' needs.

Chapter 4: Result & Analysis

Chapter 4 provided research findings and analysis contained in a digital comic. Moreover, this chapter also included an assessment sheet by expert validations and the questionnaires from students' responses to evaluate the usability of a digital comic.

Chapter 5: Conclusion, Discussion, and Suggestion

Lastly, Chapter 5 summarized the work accomplished and discussed the possibilities and recommendations in the future, analysis, and discussion of the result

obtained after the training and testing procedures executed from the system that already developed and evaluated the overall system's performance.

1.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter explains the background of the study, research problem, research objectives, research questions, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, limitations of the study, operational definition, and research outline. This chapter generally provides an idea on the field of study, which focuses on developing digital comics as an instructional media for Form Five Al-Quran and Sunnah Education (POS) subject.