

Research Article

The Effectiveness of Using the Telegram Application in Learning the Malay Culture Course at Universitas Riau

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of using the Telegram application as an innovative digital learning medium in the Malay Culture course at Universitas Riau. The integration of technology in education has become essential in enhancing learning outcomes and student engagement, particularly in cultural-based subjects that require active interaction and collaboration. This research employed a qualitative descriptive method, with data collected through questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. The results indicate that the Telegram application provides significant benefits in facilitating the learning process. It enables efficient distribution of learning materials, smooth communication between lecturers and students, and the creation of interactive discussion spaces. Moreover, Telegram's features—such as group chats, file sharing, and polls—encourage student participation, improve accessibility to resources, and foster collaborative learning. The study also found that students felt more motivated, independent, and responsible in managing their learning activities through this platform. Overall, the use of Telegram has proven to be effective, practical, and adaptable in supporting the teaching and learning process of the Malay Culture course. Therefore, it is recommended that Telegram be utilized not only in cultural studies but also across other academic disciplines to enhance the quality of online and blended learning environments.

Keywords: Telegram; Learning Media; Malay Culture; Effectiveness; University of Riau.

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1. Introduction

The development of digital technology in education has brought significant changes to the learning process in universities. Various applications and internet-based platforms are utilized as learning support tools, such as delivering materials, conducting discussions, and performing assessments. One frequently used application is Telegram. This instant messaging service offers features such as discussion groups, links, videos, document sharing, and bots that can facilitate the teaching and learning process. Telegram has evolved beyond being merely a communication tool into an interactive, accessible, and efficient learning medium that supports academic activities (Aladsani, 2021; Marda & Hendriana, 2023).

At Universitas Riau, particularly in the Malay Culture course, Telegram use becomes highly relevant. This course requires students not only to understand theoretical aspects but also to actively engage in discussions, access learning resources, and explore local culture more deeply. Through Telegram, students are expected to more easily obtain materials,

communicate with lecturers and peers, and enhance their active involvement and learning enthusiasm. Moreover, integrating technology into learning aligns with the demands of the Society 5.0 era and Indonesian education policies promoting digital utilization to improve learning quality. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of Telegram as a learning medium still needs further investigation, especially in terms of accessibility, quality enhancement, and its ability to achieve the objectives of the Malay Culture course.

Several previous studies have examined Telegram as a learning medium. Widiyono (2021) in *"Pengaruh Penggunaan LMS dan Aplikasi Telegram terhadap Aktivitas Belajar"* revealed that Telegram significantly and positively impacts student learning activities, though in certain contexts LMS proved more influential. Maulidiyah (2022) in *"Efektivitas aplikasi Telegram sebagai Media Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia"*, confirmed that Telegram's features were highly effective in delivering Indonesian learning content.

Similarly, Molina (2022) in *"The Effects of WhatsApp and Telegram on Student Engagement: An Analysis from the Mixed-Methods Approach"* showed that Telegram significantly increased postgraduate student engagement through chat groups, peer assessments, media sharing, and surveys. Alhabib et al. (2020) explored *"Pemanfaatan Media Telegram pada Pembelajaran Menulis Cerpen"* and demonstrated how the platform could be integrated into creative writing activities. Meanwhile, Barokah (2021) in *"Penerapan Penggunaan Telegram dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia Meningkatkan Kemampuan dan Hasil Belajar pada Teks Hikayat"*, found that while Telegram was less effective compared to face-to-face teaching due to internet data limitations, it still encouraged formerly passive students to be more active, provided flexibility in time and space, and enriched learning experiences.

Taking these findings into account, this study aims to explore the effectiveness of using Telegram in teaching the Malay Culture course at Universitas Riau, focusing on student engagement, accessibility of materials, and academic interactions in achieving learning objectives.

2. Literature Review

Digital Technology-Based Learning Media

According to Munir (2017), technology-based learning refers to the use of digital devices to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of education. This model enables more flexible, autonomous, and interactive learning. Mariyah et al. (2021) also emphasize that digital learning media often incorporate audiovisual elements, which significantly enhance students' enthusiasm across all education levels.

Digital learning media encompass devices, platforms, and digital materials designed to convey messages or learning content interactively to improve learning outcomes. Examples include LMS, messaging applications, virtual classrooms, and multimedia content. Recent studies in Indonesia highlight the need for standardization in digital learning practices to ensure technology integration positively impacts planning, implementation, and evaluation of higher education learning (Kristanto et al., 2024). Furthermore, digitalization is linked to enhanced learning motivation, with the effectiveness of digital media strongly depending on accessibility and platform suitability (Puniatmaja et al. (2025).

2.2. Telegram as Learning Medium

Telegram is a cloud-based instant messaging application launched in 2013. Its advantages include (1) file storage capacity of up to 2 GB per file, (2) channels for delivering materials to large audiences, (3) bots for quizzes and simple assessments, and (4) end-to-end encryption ensuring message security. In education, Telegram supports discussions, material distribution, and academic collaboration. Fitriansyah & Aryadillah (2020) describe Telegram as a highly accessible, efficient, and versatile medium for both teachers and students in online or offline contexts.

Malay Culture Course

Malay culture is a vital component of Riau's identity. This course is designed to provide students with not only knowledge of history and traditions but also the ability to internalize cultural values in daily life. Integrating digital technologies into cultural learning makes the subject more engaging and accessible for younger generations. At Universitas Riau, Malay Culture is a compulsory course aimed at strengthening the curriculum through local

values. Official documents affirm its importance in shaping students' regional cultural competencies (LPPMP UNRI, 2020).

3. Methods

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach, which aims to describe and analyze phenomena in depth without involving numerical calculations. Sugiyono (2017) states that a qualitative approach allows researchers to understand the meaning behind the actions, experiences, and social interactions of the subjects studied. Furthermore, this method emphasizes detailed and comprehensive explanations of the research object based on data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation (Moleong, 2018).

The data source in this study came from responses to distributed questionnaires. The data used is primary data, that is, data obtained directly related to the problem being studied and serving as a direct source of information through questions provided via Google Forms. The data was then analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing techniques (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The researchers created and distributed a questionnaire to determine the effectiveness of the Telegram application in several aspects of its use. The questionnaire was completed by 89 participants from various study programs across various faculties at the University of Riau. The answers to the questionnaire are then explained in the results and discussion section of the research to assess the level of effectiveness of using the Telegram application in learning the Malay Culture course at the University of Riau.

4. Results and Discussion

In this study, the effectiveness of the Telegram application in teaching Malay Culture courses at the University of Riau was assessed through several aspects, such as ease of access to materials, how to use Telegram features, efficiency of use, improvement in learning quality, student engagement and motivation, and Telegram's ability to support Malay Culture learning. The level of effectiveness was obtained from questionnaire responses administered by the researcher. These aspects are part of the teaching of Malay Culture courses at the University of Riau. The results of these responses are in the form of diagrams displaying data and will be further explained in the following results and discussion sections.

The Effectiveness of Telegram in Supporting Malay Cultural Learning



Figure 1. Telegram's Effectiveness in Supporting Malay Culture Course Learning.

Based on Figure 1, the diagram above shows the results of a survey of 89 respondents regarding the extent to which Telegram can support learning in the Malay Culture course. A total of 55.1% of respondents chose "Agree," meaning that the majority of students feel that using Telegram is quite effective as a learning support medium. Meanwhile, 34.8% of respondents chose "Strongly Agree," so overall, almost 90% of respondents gave a positive assessment. The remaining 10.1% of respondents chose "Undecided," and no respondents chose the "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" categories. These results indicate that Telegram is considered very helpful in the learning process. This application likely makes it easier to share materials, discuss discussions, and maintain communication between lecturers and students. Although a small number of students still have doubts, there is no rejection of the use of Telegram. Thus, it can be concluded that Telegram is an effective medium and is well received by students in supporting Malay Culture lecture.

Effectiveness of Ease of Access to Materials

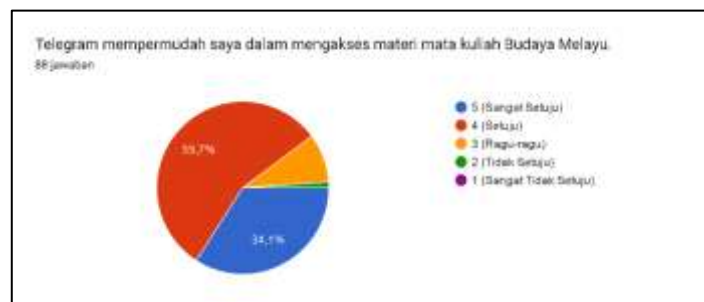


Figure 2. Effectiveness of Telegram in Accessing Malay Culture Course Materials.

Based on Figure 2, the diagram above displays the results of a survey conducted with 88 respondents regarding the extent to which Telegram assisted in accessing Malay Culture course materials. Fifty-five percent of respondents chose "Agree," indicating that more than half of students felt Telegram facilitated access to course materials. Furthermore, 34.1 percent of respondents chose "Strongly Agree," so combined with "Agree," the total reached 89.8 percent of respondents who gave a positive assessment. Meanwhile, 9.1 percent of respondents chose "Uncertain," likely because they were not yet familiar with using Telegram or were still comparing it with other learning applications. Finally, only 1.1 percent of respondents chose "Disagree," and none chose "Strongly Disagree." These survey results indicate that Telegram is considered very helpful for students in accessing Malay Culture course materials. This convenience is likely due to features like cloud file storage, easy sharing of large files, and access from a variety of devices. Thus, it can be concluded that Telegram can be an effective learning medium for accessing Malay Culture course materials.

Effectiveness of Telegram Features in Supporting Learning Needs

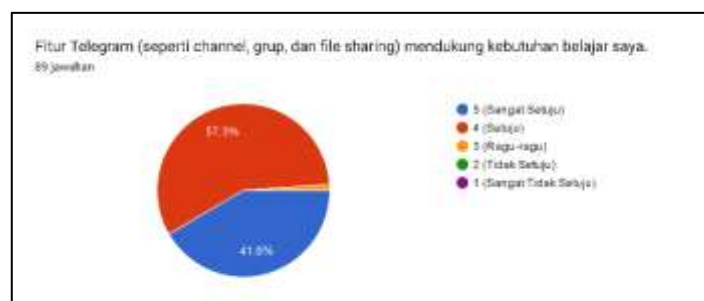


Figure 3. Effectiveness of Telegram Features in Supporting Student Learning Needs.

Based on Figure 3, the diagram above shows the results of a survey of 89 respondents regarding the effectiveness of Telegram features in assisting students' learning assignments. Of these, 57.3% of respondents chose "Agree," indicating that the majority of students felt that Telegram features were truly helpful in their learning activities. Meanwhile, 41.6% of respondents chose "Strongly Agree," so that when combined with "Agree," the total number of respondents who gave a positive assessment reached 98.9%. Only 1.1% of respondents chose "Undecided," and no respondents chose "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree." These results demonstrate that Telegram features are highly appropriate and useful for supporting students' learning processes. Features such as channels make it easier for lecturers to deliver materials to students, the group feature allows for discussion and interaction between colleagues, and the file sharing feature facilitates access to various types of materials, even large ones. With an acceptance rate of almost 100%, it can be concluded that Telegram is a very appropriate medium to support students' learning needs because of its comprehensive, flexible, and easy-to-use features.

Efficiency of Using Telegram Compared to Social Media or Other Apps



Figure 4. Efficiency of Telegram Compared to Social Media or Other Apps for Learning.

According to Figure 4, the diagram above shows the results of a survey of 89 students regarding whether Telegram is more efficient than social media or other apps for learning. Sixty-four percent answered "Agree," indicating that the majority of students consider Telegram more efficient than other platforms. Meanwhile, 30.3 percent answered "Strongly Agree," so combined with "Agree," the total reaches 94.3 percent. Only 5.6 percent chose "Undecided," and no one chose "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree." These results indicate that Telegram is considered a better learning medium than social media or other apps. This efficiency is likely due to the ease of sharing lecture materials in various formats, the large file storage capacity, and the fast and simple access without distractions from non-academic content. With a positive acceptance rate reaching more than 94%, it can be concluded that Telegram is not only effective, but is also considered more efficient than other platforms in supporting learning.

Effectiveness of Aspects of Improving the Quality of Malay Culture Learning



Figure 5. Effectiveness of Telegram in Improving the Quality of Malay Culture Learning.

Based on Figure 5, the diagram above shows the results of a survey of 89 students who answered a question about how effective Telegram was in improving the quality of learning Malay Culture. Of these, 58.4% answered "Agree," indicating that the majority of students felt there had been an improvement in the quality of learning after using Telegram. Meanwhile, 29.2% answered "Strongly Agree," so when combined with those who "Agree," the total reached 87.6%. On the other hand, 12.4% answered "Undecided," which may indicate that a small number of students did not feel any real change in the learning process. No one answered "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree." These results indicate that the use of Telegram has made a significant and tangible contribution to improving the quality of learning in Malay Culture courses. This application is considered capable of supporting learning by providing easy access to materials, smooth communication, and features tailored to learning needs. With a high level of positive response, it can be concluded that Telegram is not only a traditional communication medium but also an effective tool for improving the quality of student learning.

Effectiveness of Telegram Group Discussion Enhancement in Increasing Student Engagement



Figure 6. Telegram's Effectiveness in Increasing Student Engagement in Telegram Group Discussions.

Figure 6 displays the results of a survey of 89 respondents regarding the extent to which Telegram helps increase student engagement through Telegram group discussions. Of these, 44.9% of respondents chose "Agree," indicating that nearly half of students feel that Telegram group discussions can improve their learning participation. Meanwhile, 40.4% of respondents chose "Strongly Agree," resulting in a total of 85.3% of respondents giving a positive assessment. Meanwhile, 12.4% of respondents chose "Undecided," indicating that some students may still be passive or unfamiliar with using Telegram groups for discussions. Meanwhile, only 2.2% of respondents chose "Disagree," indicating that some students are uncomfortable using Telegram groups and prefer face-to-face discussions. No respondents chose "Strongly Disagree." These results indicate that discussions via Telegram groups have a significant impact on student participation. This group feature makes it easier for students to share opinions, ask questions, and build academic interactions more flexibly than face-to-face discussions. With a positive response rate of over 85%, it can be concluded that Telegram is effective in increasing student engagement during the Malay Culture learning process, although a small number of students have not yet directly experienced its benefits.

Effectiveness of Aspects of Increasing Student Learning Motivation



Figure 7. Effectiveness of Telegram in Increasing Student Learning Motivation in the Malay Culture Course.

According to Figure 7, the diagram above displays the results of a survey of 89 respondents regarding the extent to which Telegram helps increase student learning motivation in the Malay Culture course. Of these, 64% of respondents answered "Agree," indicating that most students feel Telegram helps increase their learning motivation. Furthermore, 27% of respondents chose "Strongly Agree," bringing the total number of respondents with a positive assessment to 91%. Meanwhile, 9% of respondents chose "Undecided," indicating that a small number of students are still not fully convinced that using Telegram truly increases learning motivation. No respondents chose "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree." These results demonstrate that Telegram can be used not only as a learning medium but also has the ability to influence students' psychological aspects, namely learning motivation. This is likely due to the ease of access to materials, more active discussion interactions, and flexibility in learning using this platform. With more than 90% of respondents rating it positively, it can be concluded that Telegram is an effective medium in increasing student learning motivation, especially in the Malay Culture course.

5. Conclusions

Overall, the results of this study show that the number of student responses with an average percentage of 57.05% agree, 33.91% strongly agree, 8.52% undecided, and 0.47% disagree. The total percentage of positive values in the responses above is 90.96%. These results indicate that Telegram is an effective, efficient, and relevant platform in supporting the student learning process, especially in the learning of Malay Culture courses. This application not only facilitates the sharing of materials and communication, but also helps improve the quality of learning, encourages active student participation, and strengthens their enthusiasm for learning. Because all aspects measured received a positive response, it can be concluded that Telegram is worthy of being recommended as the main supporting media in Malay Culture courses and has the potential to be used in other courses in the academic environment.

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