

Flashcard Learning Strategy Builds Understanding and Engagement in Islamic Law: Strategi Pembelajaran dengan Kartu Flash Meningkatkan Pemahaman dan Keterlibatan dalam Hukum Islam

Wardah Afifah
Umar Manshur

Universitas Nurul Jadid
Universitas Nurul Jadid

General Background: Education plays a central role in shaping knowledgeable and skilled generations, but traditional lecture-based methods often limit student engagement. **Specific Background:** In Islamic law (Fiqh) learning, students frequently face difficulties understanding abstract concepts, leading to boredom and low motivation. **Knowledge Gap:** While flashcards have been widely used in subjects such as vocabulary acquisition, their application in Fiqh learning, especially to enhance both understanding and engagement, remains underexplored. **Aims:** This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of flashcard learning media in improving cognitive understanding and active participation of Grade VII students in Fiqh at MTs Nurul Jadid Paiton and MTs Darul Falah Cermee. **Results:** Using a qualitative descriptive approach through observation, interviews, and documentation, the findings reveal that flashcards significantly enhance student activeness, motivation, and comprehension of Fiqh concepts, particularly in recalling and applying abstract terms. **Novelty:** Unlike prior studies that focused only on cognitive gains, this research highlights the dual impact of flashcards on both understanding and engagement, tested across two institutions with different contexts. **Implications:** The study suggests that flashcards are not merely supplementary tools but a transformative strategy for making Fiqh learning more interactive, participative, and effective, offering a model applicable to other abstract-oriented subjects.

Highlight :

- Flashcards help simplify abstract fiqh material.
- The strategy increases student activeness and motivation.
- Participation with flashcards improves comprehension and memory.

Keywords : Flash Card Learning Media, Student Understanding, Student Engagement, Fiqh Learning, Islamic Law

Introduction

Education is the main foundation for the progress of a nation.[1] Quality education will create a successor generation that not only possesses knowledge, but also the skills and innovations needed to face the challenges of the times.[2] With the existence of smart and skilled successors, the government should pay serious attention to the education sector, ensuring that every child in the

nation has access to quality and equitable education, and making improvements in education to produce quality individuals ready to contribute to the progress of the country.[3] By improving their lives, this is not just an addition of knowledge, but rather a fundamental process that is hoped to assist a new generation that can optimally manage their talents and abilities. Ultimately, education aims to help them discover a complete and strong personality, enabling them to grow into independent, empowered individuals who can contribute positively.[4]. Education is said to be effective not only when it relies on mastery of the material alone, but also on the extent to which students can actively engage in the learning process.[5] An effective learning process must involve two main aspects, namely the cognitive and affective aspects of students. Students' ability in the cognitive aspect relates to understanding and recalling information, while the affective aspect concerns emotional engagement and students' motivation in the learning process.[6] One of the challenges faced in education is how to create and ensure that students are not just passive recipients of information, but also active in processing and applying the knowledge they acquire.

At the MTs level, the subject of Fiqh is often considered as a subject that requires a deep understanding of Islamic religious concepts that are not only theoretical but also practical. The Fiqh material includes the procedures for worship, religious laws, and the etiquette of daily life. However, it is not uncommon for students to have difficulties in understanding Fiqh material, which can be abstract and hard to remember. In some cases, the normative and structured nature of Fiqh material makes students feel bored and less interested. Therefore, there is a need for creative and innovative approaches to help students understand the material in a more engaging, interactive, and enjoyable way. One of the solutions that can be implemented in this learning is the use of learning media that supports active student engagement, such as Flashcard media. Flashcards here are an effective tool for delivering material in a concise, compact, and easily understandable manner.[7] This media not only helps students to remember the material in a more visual way, but also stimulates active participation from students during the learning process.[8] By using flashcards, students find it easier to understand basic concepts in Fiqh, such as the methods of worship, Fiqh laws, and the ethics in Islam.[9]

The use of learning media, including flashcards, in the teaching and learning process has been proven to enhance students' memory and understanding of the subject matter. According to [10], The use of appropriate learning media can enhance student engagement actively in learning, reinforce the concepts being studied, and reduce boredom during the learning process.[11] Flashcards here can be a very effective tool for reviewing material, providing questions, or helping students understand definitions and concepts more visually. With the help of flashcards, students are not only provided with knowledge but also given the opportunity to test their understanding directly. According to [12], in his research, learning media in the form of images or writings can stimulate students to absorb material more succinctly and clearly, and it can also overcome time constraints by displaying images that cannot be seen directly during the learning process. According to [13], By using this media, students can experience a more enjoyable learning process, and the teaching and learning process will be easier and will accelerate students' understanding. The role of learning media in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is not just an addition, but a vital element that significantly supports both teachers and students. This media helps students to focus more on the material, improves their understanding of PAI concepts, particularly the subject of fiqh which can sometimes be abstract, and ensures that the message is received accurately, thus minimizing the risk of misunderstandings between what the teacher conveys and what the students receive. Therefore, learning media becomes an important bridge to create a more effective, interactive, and directed learning process.[14]

This study has several important aspects that have not been widely encountered in previous studies. First, the use of Flashcard learning media in the context of Fiqh learning is still very limited. Some researchers have used flashcards more to increase motivation or vocabulary acquisition in subjects such as Aqidah Akhlak. [15]. Meanwhile, the focus of this research is the subject of Fiqh, a subject that tends to be abstract and conceptual, so the use of flashcard media becomes an interesting new strategy for the concepts of Fiqh lessons for students.

Second, this study not only evaluates students' cognitive understanding, but also simultaneously assesses students' engagement in the learning process, which includes active participation, enthusiasm, and interaction during the activities. Previous studies focused more on the cognitive aspects alone, as shown in the research at MTs Al-Intisor Mataram, where flashcards were used to enhance Arabic vocabulary. [16]. By adding aspects of student involvement in this research, it can provide a more comprehensive approach to the effectiveness of learning media.

Third, this research was conducted in two madrasahs with different backgrounds, namely MTs Nurul Jadid Paiton and MTs Darul Falah Cermee. This approach allows the researcher to compare the effectiveness of the media in two different contexts, providing added value in terms of practicality and generalization of the results. This approach has not been found in previous studies, which generally only focus on one study site.

The researchers conducted a survey through initial field observations at MTs Nurul Jadid Paiton on December 22, 2024, and MTs Darul Falah Cermee on December 23, 2024, noting that the causes of the use of flashcard media here are the lecture method that is often used by teachers, making students feel bored in learning, the teachers' lack of creating a fun classroom atmosphere, resulting in students finding the subject matter less interesting, and the lack of student learning motivation. However, with the teachers' strategic assistance in using this flashcard media, it provides students with understanding and activity in the learning process. Flashcards have become one of the learning media for Islamic Jurisprudence that can present material concisely and visually appealing. The use of these cards helps students to focus more and quickly understand concepts, especially those that are abstract or complex. In addition, flashcards can be used in interactive activities such as question and answer sessions or educational games that engage students. This process not only strengthens memory but also makes learning more enjoyable and dynamic. [17].

Flashcards as a learning medium cannot be separated from the role of Glenn Doman, a neurosurgeon from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, who first introduced them. Through this approach, Doman developed a method of stimulating children's brains using picture or written cards as a means to enhance memory and cognitive abilities from an early age. As a learning medium, flashcards can be used to teach four language skills.[18] In addition, the use of flashcards can also help students interact more easily with the subject matter.[19] When students are directly involved with learning media, they will be more interested and focused on the learning process. Flashcards designed in an engaging way can enhance student engagement, which in turn can improve their understanding of Fiqh lessons. This media also allows students to work in groups, share knowledge, and discuss the material being taught.

The challenges faced by teachers in the process of learning Fiqh are how to maintain student engagement and effectively enhance students' understanding. Therefore, the researcher is interested in exploring the use of learning media that can facilitate this process, one of which is flashcards. This study aims to determine the extent to which the strategy of using flashcard learning media can improve students' understanding and engagement in the subject of Fiqh in grade VII at MTs Nurul Jadid Paiton Probolinggo and MTs Darul Falah Cermee Bondowoso.

Research Method

The approach used in this research is descriptive qualitative research, which aims to deeply describe the phenomenon of using flashcard learning media in enhancing students' understanding and engagement in the subject of fiqh. This research was conducted through field research methods in two madrasahs with different characteristics, namely MTs Nurul Jadid Paiton Probolinggo and MTs Darul Falah Cermee Bondowoso, in order to obtain more diverse and contextual data. To collect relevant and comprehensive data, the researcher employed several data collection techniques, namely direct observation of the learning process, in-depth interviews with teachers and students to explore their perceptions and experiences, as well as documentation in the form of photos of learning activities and research activities in the field. All collected data was

analyzed using the Miles and Huberman data analysis technique, which includes three main stages: data reduction (filtering and summarizing important data), data presentation (displaying data) in the form of descriptive narratives and visuals, and data verification to draw valid and accurate conclusions. This approach allows researchers to gain a deep understanding of the effectiveness of flashcard use strategies in the context of fiqh learning at the junior high school level.

Result and Discussion

This discussion aims to provide practical and theoretical input for the development of more innovative and effective learning strategies in the future, not only for the subject of fiqh but also for other subjects that have similar characteristics, such as the presence of abstract terms and complex concepts.

Strategy for Using Flashcard Learning Media to Improve Student Understanding and Engagement

Based on the results of in-depth observations and direct interviews with teachers and students in the field, the application of flashcard media in both madrasahs MTs Nurul Jadid Paiton Probolinggo and MTs Darul Falah Cermee Bondowoso shows a strategy that is not only systematic but also very innovative. Both institutions have successfully integrated simple media into the fiqh learning curriculum in a creative way, transforming the classroom atmosphere from passive to dynamic and interactive.

At MTs Nurul Jadid, the fiqh teacher develops two different types of cards: one set contains questions and the other set contains answers. This strategy began after the teacher provided a brief explanation of the basic concepts of a subject, for instance, about the procedures for prayer or zakat. After the theoretical explanation, the cards are distributed randomly to the students. Some students receive question cards, while others receive answer cards. Their task is to match the cards, both individually and in groups.

This approach not only challenges students' theoretical understanding but also forces them to apply the concepts practically. The card matching process triggers spontaneous discussions among them. For example, when a student holds the question card 'What are the mandatory requirements for zakat?' and another student has the answer card containing 'Muslim, of mature age, and sane,' they must interact and confirm the correctness of the answers. The teacher also acts as a facilitator who moves around to provide guidance and corrections if needed.

This approach is strongly supported by the theory of Glenn Doman, a child neurologist who stated that the use of illustrated and written cards can effectively stimulate the development of a child's brain.[20] Doman argues that intense visual and verbal stimulation at an early age can enhance their memory and cognitive abilities. In this context, flashcards not only serve as visual aids but also as instruments for training students' working memory and associative thinking skills, where they must connect questions with relevant answers.[21]

In addition, at MTs Nurul Jadid, the use of flashcards has also become an effective solution to overcome the boredom that often arises from monotonous lecturing methods, especially in subjects that tend to be dense with memorization material. The teacher emphasizes that this media is very effective in the process of material repetition and significantly increases interaction in the classroom. This increase in interaction directly impacts the students' activity level. Positive responses from students, as reported by the teacher, confirm that this media has successfully created a more enjoyable and interactive learning atmosphere. This aligns with the view. [22] which states that visual media such as flashcards can strengthen students' memory through the association between images and text, as well as increase their active engagement in the learning process.

Meanwhile, at MTs Darul Falah, the strategy implemented has a slightly different nuance, focusing

more on the aspects of communication and deep understanding of concepts. The teacher introduces cards that contain illustrative images, fiqh terms, and their complete definitions. After distributing these cards, the teacher invites students to discuss and explain the material alternately. For example, a student might receive a card with an image of "someone performing wudhu" and the text "Definition of Wudhu: cleansing oneself with water to remove minor impurities." The teacher then asks that student to explain the concept of wudhu to their classmates using the card as a visual guide.

This approach effectively enhances students' communication skills, where they learn to articulate their own understanding while reinforcing their grasp of complex concepts. Teachers state that this media is very effective in increasing student motivation and engagement, as well as helping them understand difficult and abstract terms in Islamic jurisprudence. Student involvement in the card-making process (if possible) and discussions also increases their sense of ownership and interest in learning. They are no longer just passive recipients of information, but active subjects participating in knowledge construction.

In general, theories about learning media consistently mention that media that presents visuals and is interactive can strengthen the learning process and increase student engagement. The use of flashcards as a visual and interactive learning medium, as explained by Glenn Doman and Bitu, shows that this media can enhance attention, memory, and student motivation. Research findings in the field also confirm that the strategy of using flashcards can significantly improve student activity, motivation, and understanding, as well as create a more interesting and enjoyable classroom atmosphere.

The Impact of the Flashcard Learning Media Usage Strategy on Students' Understanding and Engagement

The results of observations and interviews at both madrasas clearly show that the implementation of flashcard media has a positive and significant impact on students' understanding and engagement in the subject of fiqh. This impact is observed not only in the improvement of academic learning outcomes but also in changes in students' behavior and attitudes in the classroom.

At MTs Nurul Jadid, an increase in student engagement is observed through their incredible enthusiasm in matching cards and discussing with peers. Teachers report that the classroom atmosphere has become more lively and interactive, far from being tense and monotonous. Students also show a better understanding of the material, as seen from their speed in answering questions and the depth of their understanding during discussions. Positive feedback from students, as conveyed by the teachers, confirms that this media is capable of reducing boredom and significantly increasing their motivation to learn. They feel that studying fiqh is no longer a burden, but rather an interesting and challenging activity.

At MTs Darul Falah, the impact is also very significant. Students show a high level of participation, and the classroom atmosphere has turned into a more enjoyable and enthusiastic one. Teachers added that this media greatly facilitates them in remembering abstract terms and concepts of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh). Flashcards also reinforce the process of repetition visually and interactively, helping students to retain information in long-term memory. Other relevant research also supports these findings, stating that the use of flashcards can significantly improve learning outcomes and student interest, especially in subjects that require memorization and structured conceptual understanding, such as fiqh.

From a theoretical perspective, high student engagement both behaviorally (active participation), emotionally (interest and motivation), and cognitively (deep understanding) directly contributes to the success of the learning process. According to Glenn Doman, the use of picture and written cards can optimally stimulate a child's brain and enhance memory. Meanwhile, Bitu and colleagues emphasize that visual media such as flashcards can strengthen long-term memory and increase

active student participation. Data from both madrasahs indicate that this media successfully stimulates all three aspects of engagement synergistically, making the learning process of fiqh more effective and enjoyable.

Although there are several challenges faced, such as limited resources and time to prepare materials, the teachers in both madrasahs show high innovation and spirit to overcome these obstacles for the success of student learning. They create the cards themselves, even involving students in the creation process, demonstrating a strong commitment to developing effective learning strategies.

Overall, the implementation of flashcard learning media in both madrasahs has an extraordinary positive impact on the improvement of understanding, motivation, and engagement of seventh-grade students. This approach enables them to build knowledge independently and develop a stronger understanding compared to passive learning methods. [23]. This proves that this simple media is not just a mere tool, but rather a main strategy that deserves to be implemented in the study of fiqh. This media has proven effective in simplifying complex and abstract material, and has successfully increased active student participation in the learning process, transforming the study of fiqh from a theoretical approach to a practical, interactive, and meaningful one.

Conclusion

The results of this research provide a strong conclusion to the entire discussion, summarizing that flashcard media is not merely an aid, but a transformative learning strategy. The success at MTs Nurul Jadid and MTs Darul Falah demonstrates that with the right approach, fiqh material, which is often considered difficult and boring, can be presented in a visual, interactive, and enjoyable manner. The positive impact is not only seen in the increased understanding and motivation to learn but also in the active participation of students, which makes the classroom atmosphere more vibrant. Therefore, flashcard media deserves to be an integral part of modern learning strategies, not just in the subject of fiqh but also as an inspiration for the development of other educational innovations. This success is clear evidence that a creative approach can pave the way towards better educational quality.

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