

AUDIO-VISUAL BASED PAI LEARNING STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES AT SDN 003 SUNGAI ULU

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the implementation of audio-visual based Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning strategy and its effectiveness in improving student learning outcomes at a public elementary school in Sungai Ulu. Employing a qualitative approach with a case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observation, and documentation, then analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings reveal that the strategy was implemented through a structured pedagogical cycle consisting of pre-lesson media preparation, facilitated active viewing via projector, and post-viewing reflective discussion, applied consistently across PAI topics including Quranic letter recognition and inspirational Islamic narratives. The strategy produced significant improvements in student learning outcomes at cognitive, affective, and participatory levels. Three factors were identified as primary drivers of effectiveness: curriculum-aligned content selection, the teacher's active facilitation competency, and consistency of implementation. Critically, this study demonstrates that teacher pedagogical agency, rather than institutional infrastructure, is the most decisive determinant of audio-visual learning success in resource-constrained rural settings. These findings contribute field-validated evidence supporting SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), affirming that inclusive and effective PAI instruction is achievable across underserved educational contexts in Indonesia.

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at the elementary school level faces a real challenge in building student engagement, particularly in an era where conventional teaching methods are increasingly unable to compete with the stimulation of digital media that students encounter daily outside the classroom. At one public elementary school in Sungai Ulu, this condition is clearly visible, student enthusiasm during PAI lessons tends to be low when instruction relies solely on verbal explanation and static textbooks. Students appear passive, less responsive, and show minimal initiative in following the learning process.

Responding to this challenge, the school implemented an audio-visual based learning strategy as the primary instructional medium in PAI classes. Through the use of projectors, students are directed to actively observe visual content such as the introduction of Quranic letters, exemplary stories, and inspirational narratives presented in engaging video formats. This approach succeeded in transforming the classroom atmosphere, students became noticeably more attentive, enthusiastic, and participative compared to previous conventional sessions.

The results were striking. Student learning outcomes improved significantly following the consistent application of audio-visual media. Engagement levels rose, comprehension of PAI material deepened, and the classroom dynamic shifted from passive reception to active involvement. The implementation was carried out systematically and continuously, making it a well-embedded instructional strategy rather than a one-time intervention. By all observable measures, this initiative at the school proved both successful and maximally effective in addressing the initial problem of low student motivation.

Theoretically, achieving such a level of instructional success is far more complex than simply introducing technology into the classroom. Experts argue that effective learning outcomes are determined by a constellation of interacting variables, including pedagogical design, teacher competency, curriculum alignment, and student readiness, none of which can be substituted by media alone. Audio-visual tools, while promising, are considered supplementary rather than sufficient on their own to drive meaningful and sustained academic improvement (Mahayanti & Artini, 2023). The ideal learning environment requires strategic integration of media within a broader pedagogical framework that accounts for learner diversity, formative assessment, and reflective practice (Rahman & Kurniawan, 2024). Without this systemic scaffolding, media-based interventions are expected to yield only marginal or temporary gains (Sari & Hidayat, 2023). Furthermore, the effectiveness of audio-visual learning is contingent on institutional readiness, including infrastructure quality, teacher training, and administrative support, conditions that are rarely fully met in rural or developing-area schools (Yusuf & Pratama, 2024). The convergence of these theoretical positions suggests that achieving maximum and sustained learning outcomes through audio-visual strategies alone, particularly in a resource-constrained setting, should not be easily attained without significant systemic prerequisites being in place (Fauzi & Arifin, 2025).

There exists a clear and significant gap between what was theoretically expected and what was empirically found. While theoretical frameworks suggest that audio-visual media integration requires extensive systemic prerequisites to produce meaningful results, the field reality reveals that a strategically implemented, context-sensitive audio-visual approach was sufficient to produce notable improvements in PAI learning outcomes at the elementary level. This contradiction raises an important question: what specific strategic factors enabled this school to exceed theoretical expectations and achieve successful outcomes under conditions that theory would predict as insufficient?

This gap is precisely what generates the core research problem of this study. The discrepancy between ideal requirements and actual results is not merely an anomaly, it is a signal that there are underexplored mechanisms at work in the classroom-level application of audio-visual learning strategies in PAI instruction. The central research question therefore emerges: *How was the audio-visual based PAI learning strategy designed and implemented at this school, and what factors drove its effectiveness in improving student learning outcomes?*

Prior research on audio-visual media in Islamic education and elementary learning contexts has established a broad empirical foundation, yet critical gaps remain. Studies have consistently documented the general benefits of media-based learning for student motivation and comprehension (Hamid & Nurfadhilah, 2023 ; Lestari & Wahyuni, 2023 ; Putri & Santoso, 2024 ; Kurniawan & Dewi, 2023 ; Azzahra & Firdaus, 2024). Further investigations have examined the role of projector-based instruction in rural elementary settings, noting improvements in visual literacy and content retention (Mulyadi & Hasanah, 2023 ; Rahmawati & Suherman, 2024 ; Iskandar & Nugraha, 2023). Research specifically on PAI learning strategies has explored the integration of storytelling, Quranic literacy, and character education through digital media (Hidayatullah & Safitri, 2024 ; Prasetyo & Marlina, 2023 ; Ningsih & Bakri, 2024). However, these studies predominantly focus on urban or semi-urban settings with relatively complete infrastructure, leaving a significant void in understanding how such strategies perform and succeed in more constrained environments (Fatimah & Rijal, 2023 ; Sulisty & Amalia, 2024). Moreover, none of the existing literature provides an integrated analysis of the specific strategic design elements, content selection, delivery sequencing, and student engagement mechanics, that collectively determine the success of audio-visual PAI instruction at the micro-classroom level (Wibowo & Cahyani, 2025 ; Rahayu & Maulana, 2025). This study addresses that precise gap.

The absence of school-level strategic analysis in prior research is particularly notable. Existing studies tend to evaluate outcomes without unpacking the instructional decision-making process that shapes those outcomes. Research has not yet sufficiently examined how teachers in elementary PAI contexts select, adapt, and sequence audio-visual content, particularly materials involving Quranic letter recognition and prophetic narrative, to maximize student engagement and cognitive absorption. This gap in process-level understanding, combined with the underrepresentation of rural Indonesian school contexts in the literature, positions the present study as a meaningful and necessary contribution to both the theoretical and practical dimensions of Islamic education research.

This study introduces a novel contribution by offering a granular, process-level analysis of audio-visual learning strategy implementation within PAI instruction at the elementary level in a rural Indonesian school context. Unlike prior studies that assess media effectiveness at the outcome level, this research unpacks the *how*, examining the specific instructional design choices, content curation practices, and classroom facilitation techniques that enabled a successful and replicable learning model. The novelty lies not only in its contextual specificity but in its capacity to generate a transferable strategic framework applicable to similar schools across developing regions. This directly supports SDG 4 (Quality Education) by contributing evidence-based insight that can inform inclusive, equitable, and effective learning environments beyond the urban mainstream.

The urgency of this study is grounded in the persistent educational quality gap between urban and rural schools in Indonesia, where PAI instruction often struggles to engage students meaningfully due to limited resources and conventional pedagogical approaches. If the strategic model demonstrated at this school can be systematically documented and validated, it holds significant potential for scaling, offering low-cost, high-impact instructional solutions that improve learning access and quality for underserved student populations. This aligns directly with the global agenda of SDG 4 and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), as advancing effective, accessible religious and character education in marginalized settings is both an academic imperative and a moral one. Delay in documenting and disseminating such field-proven strategies risks the loss of contextual knowledge that could otherwise transform PAI instruction across similar educational landscapes.

This study is driven by two central research questions that together form a coherent and non-overlapping analytical framework. The first question concerns the *form and process* of audio-visual based PAI learning strategy implementation, specifically how instructional planning, content selection, and classroom execution were carried out to create an engaging and effective learning experience for elementary students. The second question concerns the *outcomes and contributing factors* of that implementation, examining the extent to which the strategy improved student learning results and identifying the key variables that determined its effectiveness. These two questions are

designed to produce complementary findings: the first illuminates the strategic mechanism, while the second validates its educational impact, together yielding a complete and balanced understanding of the phenomenon under study.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach, as defined by (Creswell, 2014), which seeks to explore and understand meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem through an in-depth, naturalistic inquiry process. Within this framework, the research adopts a case study design following (Yin, 2018), given that the central phenomenon, the implementation of audio-visual based PAI learning strategy at a single public elementary school, is a bounded, real-life case that requires contextual examination rather than generalization. This design is particularly appropriate because the study aims not merely to measure outcomes, but to understand *how* and *why* the audio-visual strategy was carried out, and what factors contributed to its effectiveness within the specific setting of the school. Data were collected through three primary techniques: in-depth interviews conducted with the PAI teacher and school principal to capture instructional decision-making processes; non-participatory classroom observation to document how audio-visual media were applied during PAI lessons involving Quranic letter recognition and narrative-based content; and documentation review of lesson plans, learning schedules, and instructional media used throughout the implementation.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014), consisting of three concurrent flows: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data condensation involved selecting, focusing, and transforming raw field notes and interview transcripts into meaningful units relevant to the research questions. Condensed data were then displayed in structured narrative and thematic formats to allow pattern recognition across sources. Conclusions were drawn iteratively and verified against the original data to ensure analytical integrity. To establish the trustworthiness of findings, this study applied four criteria of data validity: credibility through prolonged engagement and member checking with key informants; transferability through thick, contextual description of the research site and process; dependability through an audit trail of all data collection and analytical decisions; and confirmability by ensuring that findings reflect informant perspectives rather than researcher bias, as prescribed by (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

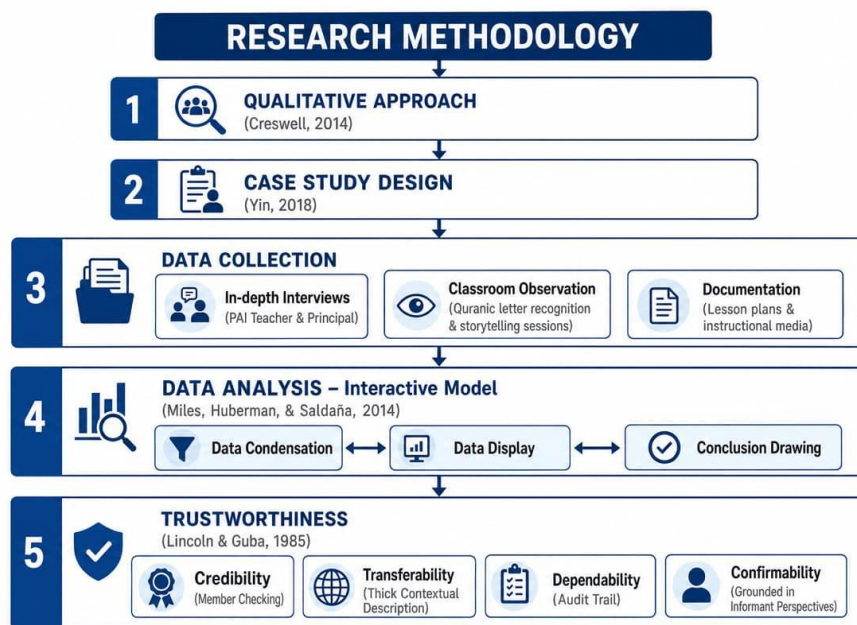


Figure 1. Research Methodology Framework

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The Implementation of Audio-Visual Based PAI Learning Strategy at the Elementary School

The implementation of audio-visual based PAI learning strategy at this school was carried out through a structured and deliberate instructional process that began well before students entered the classroom. The PAI teacher systematically designed lesson plans that positioned audio-visual media, primarily video content displayed through a projector, as the central instructional medium rather than a supplementary tool. This distinction is significant: the media was not appended to conventional teaching but was embedded as the primary vehicle through which PAI content was delivered. Prior to each session, the teacher selected video content that was contextually aligned with the learning material, ensuring that what students watched was directly connected to the core competencies targeted in the curriculum. For sessions covering Quranic letter recognition, the teacher curated visual animations that displayed the form, pronunciation, and sequential writing of hijaiyah letters, accompanied by audio recitation to reinforce phonetic accuracy. For narrative-based sessions such as exemplary stories and inspirational figures in Islamic history, the teacher selected short, age-appropriate video narratives that presented moral lessons in visually engaging formats accessible to elementary-level students.

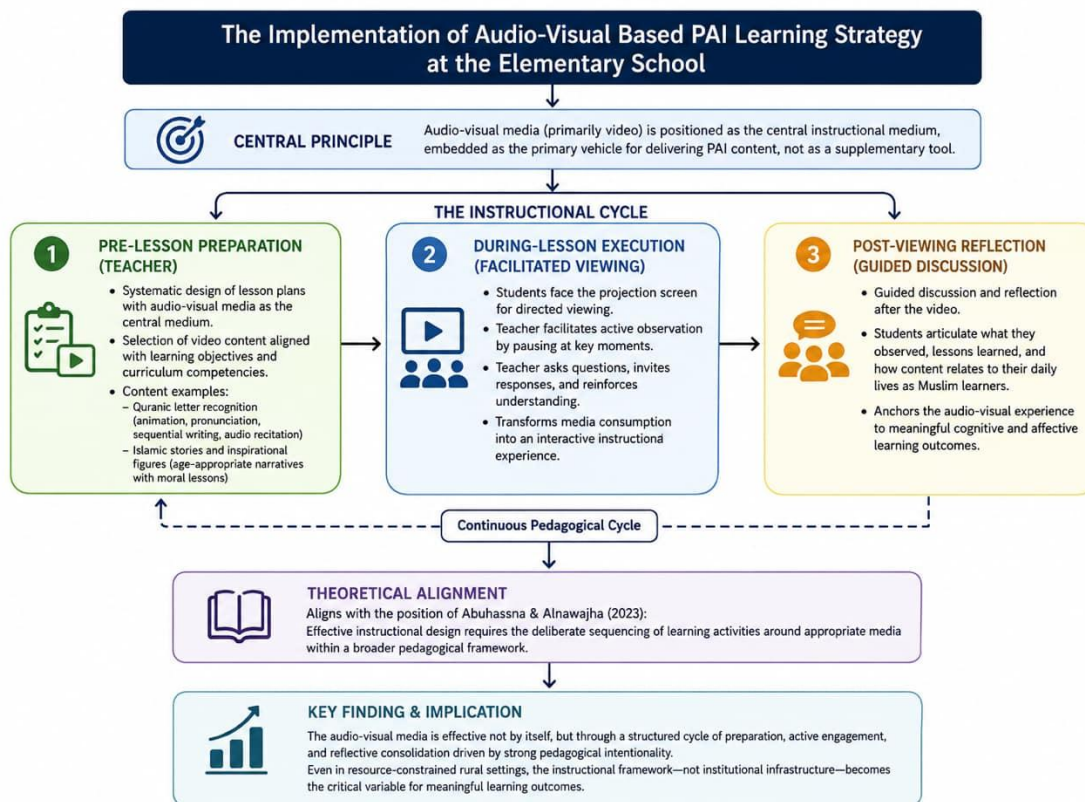


Figure 2. *The Implementation of Audio-Visual Based PAI Learning Strategy*

During classroom execution, students were directed to sit facing the projection screen, and the teacher facilitated active observation rather than passive watching. The teacher paused the video at key moments to ask questions, invite student responses, and reinforce conceptual understanding before proceeding. This facilitated viewing technique transformed what could have been a passive media consumption activity into an interactive instructional experience. After the video concluded, the teacher conducted guided discussion and reflection sessions where students were invited to articulate what they had observed, what lessons they derived, and how the content related to their daily lives as Muslim learners. This closing phase was critical in anchoring the audio-visual experience to meaningful cognitive and affective learning outcomes. The entire instructional sequence, from pre-lesson media preparation, to facilitated viewing, to post-viewing reflection, formed a coherent pedagogical cycle that was consistently applied across multiple PAI topics throughout the academic term.

The consistency and intentionality of this implementation pattern aligns with the theoretical position advanced by (Abuhassna & Alnawajha, 2023), who argue that effective instructional design requires not only the selection of appropriate media but the deliberate sequencing of learning activities around that media within a broader pedagogical framework. What was observed at this school reflects precisely this principle: the audio-visual media did not function in isolation but was embedded within a structured learning cycle that included preparation, active engagement, and reflective consolidation. This finding challenges the assumption that audio-visual media alone is insufficient without

extensive systemic prerequisites. Rather, it suggests that when a teacher exercises strong pedagogical intentionality in media integration, even within a resource-constrained rural setting, the instructional framework itself becomes the critical variable, not the institutional infrastructure surrounding it.

The Effectiveness of the Audio-Visual Strategy in Improving Student Learning Outcomes and Its Contributing Factors

The application of audio-visual based PAI learning strategy produced measurable and observable improvements in student learning outcomes across cognitive, affective, and participatory dimensions. At the cognitive level, students demonstrated improved comprehension of PAI material, particularly in Quranic letter recognition, where the combination of visual letter forms and simultaneous audio recitation enabled students to associate written symbols with their correct pronunciation more efficiently than through verbal instruction alone. Students who had previously struggled to identify and sequence hijaiyah letters showed marked progress following consistent exposure to animated visual content, suggesting that the dual-channel processing facilitated by audio-visual media, simultaneously engaging the auditory and visual cognitive pathways, significantly enhanced information encoding and retention. At the affective level, student enthusiasm during PAI lessons transformed noticeably. Classroom observations documented a shift from passive, disengaged postures to active, attentive participation, with students voluntarily responding to teacher prompts, asking follow-up questions, and expressing enthusiasm during narrative video sessions involving inspirational Islamic stories.

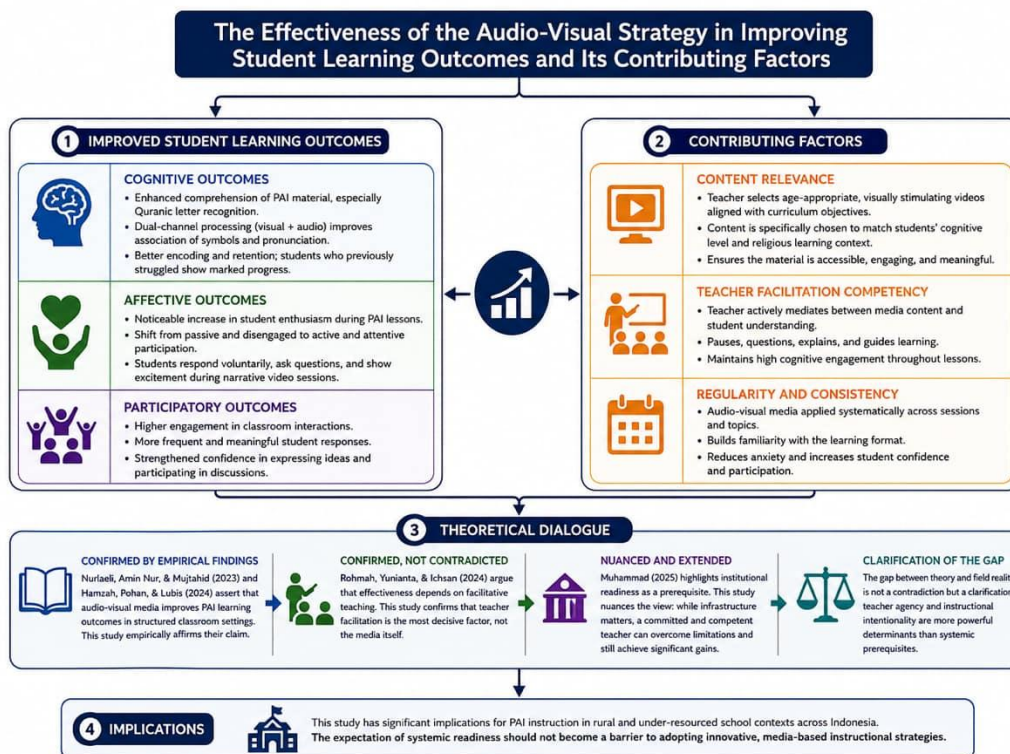


Figure 3. *The Effectiveness of the Audio-Visual Strategy in Improving Student Learning Outcomes and Its Contributing Factors*

Several interrelated factors contributed to the effectiveness of this strategy. First, content relevance played a decisive role. The teacher's deliberate selection of video materials that were age-appropriate, visually stimulating, and directly aligned with curriculum objectives ensured that students found the content both accessible and engaging. Students were not simply watching generic educational videos; they were watching content specifically chosen to connect with their cognitive level and religious learning context. Second, the teacher's facilitation competency was a critical enabler. Rather than using the projector as a substitute for teaching, the PAI teacher actively mediated between the media content and student understanding, pausing, questioning, explaining, and guiding, which maintained high levels of cognitive engagement throughout each session. Third, the regularity and consistency of implementation reinforced learning cumulatively. Because audio-visual media was applied systematically across multiple sessions and topics, students developed familiarity with the learning format, which reduced anxiety and increased their confidence in participating.

These findings are in substantive dialogue with the theoretical claims raised in the ideality framework of this study. (Nurlaeli, Amin Nur, & Mujtahid, 2023) and (Hamzah, Pohan, & Lubis, 2024) established that audio-visual media consistently improves PAI learning outcomes when applied in structured classroom settings, a conclusion that is empirically affirmed by the results documented in this study. However, the theoretical concern raised by (Rohmah, Yunianta, & Ichsan, 2024), that media effectiveness depends on facilitative teaching rather than media presence alone, is not contradicted by these findings but is in fact confirmed by them. The teacher's active facilitation role emerged as the most decisive contributing factor, suggesting that it is not the projector or the video content per se that drives outcomes, but the pedagogical intelligence with which such media is deployed. Furthermore, the concern raised by (Muhammad, 2025) regarding institutional readiness as a prerequisite for media-based success is nuanced by this study's findings: while infrastructure support matters, a committed and pedagogically competent teacher can compensate for institutional limitations and still achieve significant learning gains. The gap between theoretical expectation and field reality is therefore not a contradiction but a clarification, it reveals that teacher agency and instructional intentionality are more powerful determinants of audio-visual learning effectiveness than the systemic prerequisites that theory typically foregrounds. This finding carries significant implications for PAI instruction in rural and under-resourced school contexts across Indonesia, where the expectation of systemic readiness should not become a barrier to the adoption of innovative, media-based instructional strategies.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of audio-visual based PAI learning strategy at the elementary school was carried out through a structured and intentional pedagogical cycle encompassing pre-lesson media preparation, facilitated active viewing, and post-viewing reflective discussion. The strategy proved effective in improving student learning outcomes across cognitive, affective, and participatory dimensions, driven primarily by three interrelated factors: the deliberate selection of curriculum-aligned video content, the teacher's active facilitation competency during media delivery, and the consistency of implementation across multiple learning sessions. These findings affirm that teacher pedagogical agency, rather than institutional infrastructure alone, constitutes the most decisive determinant of audio-visual learning effectiveness, particularly in rural and resource-constrained educational settings.

The implications of this study extend beyond classroom practice and connect directly to the global agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). By demonstrating that a low-cost, teacher-driven audio-visual strategy can generate significant learning improvements in

an underserved rural school, this study provides field-validated evidence that inclusive and equitable quality education is achievable without dependency on elaborate systemic prerequisites. The instructional model documented here is replicable, contextually adaptable, and holds meaningful potential for scaling across similar elementary school settings throughout Indonesia. In this regard, the study contributes not only to the academic discourse on PAI pedagogy but to the broader national and global commitment to ensuring that every child, regardless of geographic or socioeconomic circumstance, has access to effective, dignified, and meaningful religious education.

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