

Implementation of Flash Cards as Visual Media in Akidah Akhlak Learning for Grade II Students at Cahaya Cendekia Excellent Elementary School

Nadiyahatus Sholihah¹, Ainur Rofiq Sofa²

^{1,2}Pascasarjana Universitas Islam Zainul Hasan Genggong, Probolinggo, Indonesia

Email : nadiyahatussholihah@gmail.com¹, bungaaklirik@gmail.com²

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ABSTRACT

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*Corresponding Author
Nadiyahatus
Sholihah@gmail.com

This study aims to explore the implementation of flash card media in Akidah Akhlak learning for Grade II students at Cahaya Cendekia Excellent Elementary School, to identify the challenges encountered, and to assess its influence on students' interest and understanding. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, and analyzed thematically using Braun and Clarke's Thematic Analysis model. The findings indicate that flash cards are implemented systematically and interactively, facilitating students' understanding of abstract moral concepts, while enhancing focus, engagement, and students' confidence to participate actively. The challenges identified include the time and effort required by teachers to prepare the media, limited printing facilities, and variations in teachers' abilities to design visual learning media. The use of flash cards is proven to be effective in increasing learning interest and strengthening students' understanding through a combination of visual and verbal stimulation, in line with Dual Coding theory. This study concludes that flash cards are a creative and effective learning medium that supports the internalization of moral values among elementary school students.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of educational practices in the twenty-first century has encouraged teachers to adopt innovative learning strategies that emphasize student-centered learning and meaningful engagement. Learning media play a vital role in facilitating effective instruction, particularly at the elementary school level, where students' cognitive development is still at the concrete operational stage. At this stage, students tend to understand learning materials more easily when they are presented through visual, tangible, and interactive forms rather than abstract verbal explanations (Parawansah & Sofa, 2025).

In the context of Islamic education, Akidah Akhlak is a fundamental subject aimed at instilling core values of faith (akidah) and moral behavior

(akhlak) in students from an early age. The learning objectives of Akidah Akhlak extend beyond cognitive understanding, encompassing affective and behavioral dimensions that shape students' character in daily life. However, teaching akidah and moral values to young learners often presents challenges, as these concepts are inherently abstract and may be difficult for students to comprehend if delivered through traditional lecture-based methods (Harifah & Sofa, 2025).

One of the major challenges faced by teachers in Akidah Akhlak learning is maintaining students' attention and motivation while ensuring that moral concepts are meaningfully internalized. Young learners tend to have short attention spans and require varied instructional approaches to remain engaged. Consequently, the use of appropriate learning media becomes essential to bridge the gap between abstract religious values and students' real-life experiences. Visual learning media are considered effective tools for achieving this goal, as they can attract students' interest, support comprehension, and stimulate active participation (Ramadani & Sofa, 2025).

Flash cards are a type of visual learning media that consist of cards displaying images, symbols, or short texts designed to convey specific concepts in a simple and concise manner. In classroom practice, flash cards can be used flexibly through games, question-and-answer sessions, group activities, and repetition-based learning. Their visual and practical nature makes them particularly suitable for lower-grade elementary students. Moreover, flash cards facilitate learning through the integration of visual and verbal information, which aligns with Dual Coding theory. According to this theory, learning becomes more effective when information is processed simultaneously through visual and verbal channels, leading to stronger memory retention and understanding (Sukandarman & Sofa, 2024).

Previous studies have demonstrated that the use of flash cards and other visual media can improve students' learning motivation, attention, and comprehension across various subjects. Nevertheless, research focusing specifically on the implementation of flash cards in Akidah Akhlak learning at the lower elementary level remains relatively limited. Most existing studies tend to focus on cognitive subjects or higher grade levels, leaving a gap in understanding how visual media can support the internalization of religious and moral values among younger students (Romli & Sofa, 2025).

Based on these considerations, this study investigates the implementation of flash cards as visual learning media in Akidah Akhlak learning for Grade II students at Cahaya Cendekia Excellent Elementary School. The study aims to explore the strategies used by teachers in applying flash cards during instruction, identify the challenges encountered in their implementation, and analyze their impact on students' learning interest and understanding. By providing an in-depth qualitative analysis, this research is expected to contribute to the development of effective, creative, and contextually relevant learning media for Islamic education at the elementary school level, particularly in fostering students' moral and religious character (Firdausiyah & Sofa, 2025).

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, aiming to provide an in-depth depiction of the implementation of flash card media in Akidah Akhlak learning for Grade II students at Cahaya Cendekia Excellent Elementary School. The qualitative descriptive approach was chosen to understand learning practices, interactions, and experiences comprehensively within their natural classroom setting.

The research was conducted in Dusun Nyato, Glagah Village, Pakuniran District, Probolinggo Regency, East Java Province, Indonesia. The research site was selected purposively, as this school is one of the elementary education institutions that has begun to utilize visual learning media such as flash cards in the instructional process, particularly at the lower-grade level. This characteristic makes the school a relevant and appropriate setting for examining the implementation of visual media in Akidah Akhlak learning (Hasanah & Sofa, 2025).

Data were collected using three main techniques: classroom observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out to examine the teaching-learning process, the use of flash cards during instruction, and students' responses and participation. Interviews were conducted with the Akidah Akhlak teacher and selected participants to obtain deeper insights into instructional strategies, challenges faced, and perceived impacts of using flash cards. Documentation was used to support the data, including lesson plans, teaching materials, flash card designs, and photographs of learning activities (Shalawati & Sofa, 2025).

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis based on the model proposed by Braun and Clarke. This analysis involved several stages, including data familiarization, coding, theme identification, theme review, and interpretation. To ensure data validity, triangulation of data sources and techniques was applied, allowing the researcher to cross-check findings from observations, interviews, and documentation. The overall process of data collection and analysis is illustrated in the following diagram (Ilahi et al., 2025).

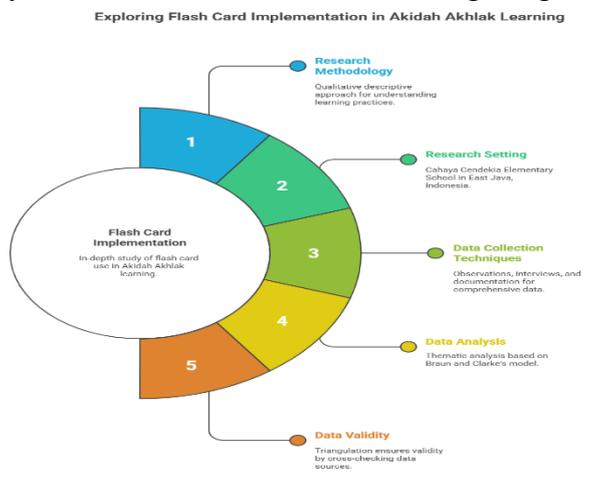


Figure 1: Flow of Data Collection Techniques

The diagram illustrates the data collection techniques used in this study, which include observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to directly examine how Akidah Akhlak learning was implemented using flash card media in the Grade II classroom. This included observing how the teacher presented the cards, explained the material through visual images, and how students responded and participated during the learning process.

Interviews were conducted with the Akidah Akhlak teacher, the school principal, and several Grade II students to obtain in-depth information regarding their experiences in using flash cards, the challenges encountered during implementation, and the influence of the media on students' learning interest and understanding. Documentation was used to collect supporting data in the form of photographs of learning activities, samples of the flash cards used, and records of students' learning outcomes.

Data analysis was carried out thematically using Braun and Clarke's Thematic Analysis model. The analysis process began with data familiarization, which involved reading and comprehensively understanding all observation notes, interview transcripts, and documentation. Subsequently, initial coding was conducted to identify relevant segments of data related to the research focus, such as the process of using flash cards, challenges encountered, and their impact on students. These codes were then organized and grouped to form initial themes that represented patterns of meaning within the data.

The identified themes were further reviewed to ensure their alignment with the field data. Each theme was then clearly defined and named according to its core meaning. The final stage involved compiling a thematic report in the form of a descriptive narrative based on the established themes.

Through the application of this method, the study is expected to provide a comprehensive and factual depiction of the effectiveness of using flash cards as learning media in Akidah Akhlak instruction for Grade II students at Cahaya Cendekia Excellent Elementary School, Glagah Pakuniran, Probolinggo. In addition, the study aims to identify various challenges and impacts related to students' motivation and understanding.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This section presents the research findings regarding the implementation of flash card media in Akidah Akhlak learning for Grade II students at Cahaya Cendekia Excellent Elementary School. The data were obtained through classroom observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving the school principal, the vice principal for curriculum affairs, the Islamic Education (PAI) teacher, and a Grade II student. All findings were analyzed using a descriptive qualitative approach and were enriched by Dual Coding theory to explain how visual media influence students' cognitive processes and understanding. The discussion in this section focuses on three main aspects: the

implementation of flash cards, the challenges encountered, and the impact of the media on students' learning interest and understanding.

Implementation of Flash Card Media in Akidah Akhlak Learning for Grade II Students at Cahaya Cendekia Excellent Elementary School

Based on classroom observations in Grade II, the use of flash cards in Akidah Akhlak learning was implemented in a structured manner and involved active interaction between the teacher and students. The Islamic Education teacher, Ustadz Yudi Mas'udi, personally designed the flash cards used in the learning process to ensure alignment with the targeted competencies. As he stated in the interview: *"I made these flash cards myself so that the images match the material and are easy for the children to understand."*

Each flash card contained illustrations depicting examples of commendable behavior, such as helping parents, as well as reprehensible behavior, such as lying or being undisciplined. During the implementation stage, the teacher presented the cards one by one while asking guiding questions such as, *"What do you see in this picture?"* or *"Do you think this behavior represents good or bad morals?"* This approach made the learning process interactive and positioned students as active participants. Observation results indicated that students responded quickly to each card displayed. They made guesses, identified the behaviors shown in the images, and even explained their reasons.

The school principal, Moh. Samsul Bahri, M.Pd, emphasized that visual media such as flash cards greatly assist elementary school students in understanding moral concepts. In the interview, he stated: *"When children see examples in the form of pictures, they understand much faster. Moral concepts are abstract, so images are very helpful."* Thus, flash cards function as a bridge that connects abstract moral concepts with visual experiences that are easier for students to comprehend.

Similarly, the vice principal for curriculum affairs, Mrs. Feby Angelina P., S.Kom, highlighted that flash cards help increase students' focus. She explained: *"When flash cards are used, the children become more focused. The learning process is no longer monotonous, and they appear enthusiastic."* This perspective reinforces the idea that visual elements can sustain students' attention for a longer period.

A Grade II student, Al Habsy, also expressed that learning through images made it easier for him to understand the material. He stated:



Figure 1 : Documentation of the Use of Flash Card Media in Akidah Akhlak Learning

The findings of this study are consistent with Dual Coding theory, which explains that learning becomes more optimal when information is delivered through two cognitive channels simultaneously, namely the visual channel in the form of images and the verbal channel through the teacher's oral explanations (Hanif et al., 2025). In the context of Akidah Akhlak learning for Grade II students, flash card media provide concrete visualizations that help students understand abstract moral concepts.

Flash cards function as visual representations that facilitate students in forming mental images of the learning material. The presence of images on the cards not only attracts students' attention but also accelerates the information processing process in memory. On the other hand, the teacher's oral explanations serve as verbal representations that reinforce and give meaning to the visual information presented (Muarrafah & Sofa, 2024). The relationship between what students see and what they hear enables them to more easily connect concepts with real-life examples.

The integration of visual and verbal representations creates a more meaningful learning experience, as information is processed through multiple cognitive pathways. Consequently, students do not merely receive the material passively but are able to understand and retain it more effectively. This condition aligns well with the cognitive developmental characteristics of elementary school students, who require concrete media support to strengthen comprehension. Therefore, the use of flash cards proves to be an effective strategy in Akidah Akhlak learning (Sita & Sofa, 2025).

Challenges Faced by Teachers and Students in the Use of Flash Card Media

Although the implementation of flash card media demonstrated positive effectiveness, several challenges emerged during the learning process. From the teachers' perspective, the primary challenge was the time and effort required to prepare the media. Ustadz Yudi Mas'udi stated, *"Preparing these flash cards takes considerable time. I have to search for images, edit them, print, and laminate them. When my teaching schedule is busy, it becomes difficult to find the time."* The production process, which requires basic design skills and specific equipment, made the preparation of the media more demanding.

Limited school facilities also posed a significant obstacle. The vice principal for curriculum affairs, Mrs. Feby Angelina P., S.Kom, explained, *"Not all teachers have access to color printers and thick paper. So when we want to make flash cards, we have to wait in line or find external printing services."* The lack of adequate printing facilities meant that the preparation of learning media could not be carried out spontaneously.

Challenges also arose from classroom dynamics. Some students showed excessive enthusiasm by wanting to hold or take the flash cards directly. A Grade II student, Al Habsy, commented, *"Sometimes I want to hold the cards, but I have to*

wait because there aren't many cards." This situation occasionally caused the classroom to become slightly noisy. The school principal, Moh. Samsul Bahri, M.Pd, added that teachers' abilities to design visual learning media vary. He stated, *"Not all teachers have the same level of creativity. Some can develop visual media quickly, while others still need guidance."*

When examined through the lens of Dual Coding theory, the challenges identified in the use of flash card media indicate that the presentation of visual media requires specific competencies from teachers. Teachers are not only expected to present images, but also to select relevant visuals, align them with learning objectives, and organize the sequence of material delivery to ensure integration between images and oral explanations (Rusby et al., 2017). Managing the interaction between visual and verbal elements is a crucial factor in determining the success of learning (Yunus et al., 2025).

In practice, if the visual media used are inappropriate or the teacher's explanations are not well integrated, the function of the media as a learning aid becomes less effective (Sholeha & Sofa, 2025). An imbalance between visual presentation and verbal explanation may cause students to struggle to connect visual information with its intended meaning, thereby hindering optimal comprehension (Muzdalifah & Sofa, 2025).

Furthermore, limitations in learning support, such as insufficient teacher preparation time, limited facilities, and classroom conditions, may affect the visual information processing process (Wijaya & Sofa, 2025). When one or more of these elements are not optimally fulfilled, the encoding of information through both visual and verbal pathways can be disrupted (Isabillah & Sofa, 2025). This finding indicates that the successful implementation of visual media based on Dual Coding theory is strongly influenced by teacher readiness, the quality of the media used, and a learning environment that holistically supports students' learning processes.

The Impact of Flash Card Use on Students' Interest and Understanding

The results of this study indicate that flash cards have a significant positive impact on students' learning interest and understanding in Akidah Akhlak learning. Based on the researcher's observations, students appeared more focused, enthusiastic, and actively involved when the media were used. Ustadz Yudi Mas'udi stated, *"As soon as I take out the cards, the children immediately focus. They compete to answer."* This indicates that flash cards function as a highly effective trigger for students' attention.

In addition to increasing learning interest, flash cards also strengthen students' understanding of the material. The teacher explained, *"The children understand very quickly when there are supporting images. My explanations are easier for them to grasp."* The images help students connect real-life behaviors with the moral values being studied.

Mrs. Feby Angelina P., S.Kom, noted that the use of this media encourages students to express their opinions more confidently. She stated, *"The children become more confident in speaking up, and even those who are usually passive get*

involved when there are picture cards." Students also experienced the direct benefits of this media. Al Habsy admitted, *"When I see the picture, I immediately remember the lesson."* This statement suggests that flash cards support long-term memory formation by combining visual and verbal stimuli. The school principal added that visual media support the internalization of moral values. He stated, *"Flash cards make abstract moral material more concrete. Children can clearly see examples of good and bad behavior."*

These positive impacts are consistent with Dual Coding theory, which emphasizes that images in learning play an important role in strengthening students' cognitive activities (Fitria & Sofa, 2025). Visualization helps students form mental representations of the learning material, enabling information to be understood not only conceptually but also in the form of concrete imagery (Sofa & Erviana, 2025). In this way, students gain alternative cognitive pathways for receiving and processing information.

Dual Coding theory further highlights that images add an additional information-processing channel beyond verbal language (Nafila & Sofa, 2025). When teachers' explanations are accompanied by relevant visuals, information is processed simultaneously through both visual and verbal systems (Mardiyah & Sofa, 2025). The integration of these two channels facilitates students in connecting what they hear with what they see, allowing the learning process to occur more quickly and deeply (Salsabela & Sofa, 2025).

In Akidah Akhlak learning, the presentation of moral values – which tend to be abstract – becomes easier to understand when supported by visual media. Therefore, the use of image-based media such as flash cards not only contributes to increased student attention but also strengthens memory retention and helps students internalize moral values more effectively.

Discussion

This study demonstrates that the implementation of flash cards as visual learning media has a meaningful impact on Akidah Akhlak learning for Grade II students at Cahaya Cendekia Excellent Elementary School. The findings indicate that flash cards effectively support students' interest, focus, and understanding by transforming abstract moral concepts into concrete and visually accessible representations. This result reinforces the importance of selecting learning media that align with the cognitive characteristics of lower-grade elementary students (Safitri, 2025).

The effectiveness of flash cards in this study can be explained through the lens of Dual Coding theory. The simultaneous presentation of visual stimuli (images on flash cards) and verbal explanations from the teacher enabled students to process information through two cognitive channels. This dual processing facilitated stronger mental representations, enhanced memory retention, and improved comprehension of moral values. The students' ability to quickly identify behaviors, express opinions, and recall lessons indicates that visual-verbal integration plays a critical role in meaningful learning (Hasyim,

2025).

Furthermore, the use of flash cards contributed to increased student engagement and active participation. Visual media attracted students' attention and reduced classroom monotony, encouraging even passive students to become involved in discussions. This finding is consistent with previous research suggesting that visual learning media enhance motivation and participation, which are essential components in value-based subjects such as Akidah Akhlak that emphasize affective and behavioral learning outcomes (Fajriyah & Aolia, 2025).

Despite these positive impacts, the study also identified several challenges in implementing flash card media. Teachers faced constraints related to preparation time, access to printing facilities, and variations in skills for designing visual materials. Classroom management issues, such as students' excessive enthusiasm, also emerged. These challenges highlight that the effectiveness of visual media depends not only on the media itself but also on teacher readiness, institutional support, and classroom conditions (Dursun & Aykan, 2025).

Overall, the discussion suggests that flash cards are not merely instructional tools but also serve as mediators for the internalization of moral values. By presenting real-life moral situations visually, flash cards help students connect religious teachings with everyday experiences. Therefore, the integration of flash cards within Akidah Akhlak learning represents a pedagogically sound and theoretically grounded approach that supports character education at the elementary school level. To maximize their effectiveness, sustained support in terms of teacher training, resource availability, and instructional planning is essential (Sterling & Xerri, 2025).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of flash cards as visual learning media is effective in supporting Akidah Akhlak learning for Grade II students at Cahaya Cendekia Excellent Elementary School. Flash cards facilitate the transformation of abstract moral concepts into concrete visual representations, thereby enhancing students' learning interest, focus, and comprehension. The structured and interactive use of flash cards encourages active student participation and supports the internalization of moral values at the elementary school level.

The findings further confirm the relevance of Dual Coding theory, as the integration of visual images and verbal explanations enables information to be processed through multiple cognitive pathways, resulting in stronger understanding and memory retention. Despite their effectiveness, the use of flash cards also presents challenges related to teacher preparation time, limited facilities, and variations in teachers' skills in designing visual media. These constraints indicate the need for institutional support, including adequate resources and professional development for teachers.

Overall, this study highlights that flash cards are a creative and pedagogically sound learning medium that can be effectively applied in value-based subjects such as Akidah Akhlak. Future research may explore the use of digital flash cards or examine their long-term impact on students' moral behavior to further enrich the development of innovative learning media in Islamic education.

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