



Optimization of Students' Learning Outcomes in Information and Communication Technology through Visual Media in Grade VII of Junior High School

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A B S T R A C T

Image-based learning media is a tool that teachers can use in the teaching process with the aim of creating meaningful learning experiences for students. Thus, the role of a teacher, who possesses expertise, determination, and the ability to use such media, significantly influences the development of students' interest in learning. This study aims to describe the use of image media in enhancing the learning interest of seventh-grade students at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah. This research is a qualitative study, where the researcher describes the use of image media to improve the learning interest of seventh-grade students at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah through in-depth interviews, supported by observations and documentation. The research subjects included the school principal, the seventh-grade teacher, three subject teachers, and all seventh-grade students, totaling 21 participants. The data analysis technique used was flow analysis, including data reduction, data presentation, and verification stages. The findings indicate that the teacher's strategy in utilizing image media to enhance student interest in learning at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah includes: adjusting the material to the images used considering media limitations, organizing steps in using image media, and aligning learning steps based on the lesson plan (RPP), references, and the previously established learning objectives.

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1. Introduction

Learning media is an essential component of education that significantly influences the success of the learning process. Therefore, educators must understand the appropriate use of learning media by aligning it with the content to be taught. Furthermore, learning becomes more meaningful when students actively engage in the learning process, not only being treated as objects of learning but also as subjects capable of determining the direction and process of their education. In this regard, educators need to design and implement teaching activities that allow students to actively construct their own knowledge. This approach aligns with the constructivist perspective, which suggests that learning success depends not only on the learning environment or conditions but also on the psychological aspects of the learners.

According to Sadiman, Arief S. (2003), image media refers to pictures related to the learning material that serve to convey messages from the teacher to the students. These images help students express information contained in problems, making the relationships between components in the problem clearer. Similarly, Hamalik Oemar (2004) defines image media as anything visualized in

various forms, such as paintings, photographs, slides, films, or projectors. From these definitions, it can be concluded that image media is one of the most commonly used tools in the learning process, as students tend to prefer images, especially colorful ones that are presented in accordance with the students' conditions and abilities. Such media can increase students' enthusiasm for engaging in the learning process.

As reported by Noviyanti, Yohana Budi, et al. (2016), media is an essential component of teaching tools that facilitate the teaching and learning process. The use of learning media is expected to improve the teaching process, ultimately impacting the quality of student learning outcomes. This is further emphasized in Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards, Article 42, which states that "Every educational unit must have facilities, including furniture, educational tools, media, books, and other materials, as well as necessary equipment to support an orderly and continuous learning process."

According to Safitri, Apriani, and Nurmayanti (2018), learning interest is a crucial foundation for effectively engaging in activities. Interest not only influences behavior but also motivates individuals to continue striving for and achieving goals. Therefore, the use of image media is a tool that can stimulate students' learning interest, which is expected to improve their learning outcomes and achievements.

A psychological aspect that plays a significant role in the learning process is learning interest, which is closely linked to feelings of enjoyment. Students who are interested in a subject will be more diligent in their studies. In contrast, students with low interest in learning tend to show little enthusiasm in the learning process. The use of learning media plays a major role in fostering students' interest during the teaching and learning process. The ability of students to grasp lessons can be influenced by selecting the appropriate learning media, ensuring that the established learning objectives are achieved. Various types of media can serve as alternatives for educators to make classroom learning more effective and optimal, one of which is the use of technology-based learning media.

As demonstrated in the research conducted by Roshita, using image media significantly enhances students' interest in learning Fiqh in Grade VII at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah. The study revealed that the application of image media in improving students' learning interest involved steps outlined in the lesson plan, explaining the material, preparing reinforcement materials, and conducting evaluations. The teacher's activities in using image media were very effective, indicating that image media could increase students' interest in learning Fiqh. Furthermore, research by Sri Pratiwi on using image media to improve storytelling skills in Grade VII students at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah showed that during Cycle I, the use of image media improved learning activities, such as asking questions (61.54%), answering questions (38.46%), discussion (53.85%), and collaboration (46.15%). In Cycle II, these figures increased to 84.61%, 69.23%, 88.46%, and 76.92%, respectively, with storytelling skills improving in areas such as image accuracy (70.01%), story clarity (69.23%), bravery (73.07%), sentence accuracy (42.31%), and storytelling fluency (50%). These findings suggest that the desired intervention outcomes were achieved. Therefore, teaching with media as a conduit for delivering content can be an effective alternative for successful teaching and learning processes, as active learning can enhance learning effectiveness. Teaching with appropriate media fosters collaboration among students to achieve learning objectives. Additionally, the use of learning media can shift the role of educators from being the central figure in teaching to facilitating the active management of students. One such tool is image media, which provides a stimulus to enhance students' learning interest. Images can transform abstract content into concrete concepts that are more easily understood.

Based on observations at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah, it was found that the learning process carried out by some teachers was not optimally executed. A fundamental issue observed was the low student interest in learning, which was evident from the learning process where students quickly became

bored, disengaged, and struggled to grasp the material being presented by the teacher. Students who are bored experience a sense of fatigue, eventually losing focus during the learning process. If teachers continue to use outdated learning paradigms, where communication tends to flow in one direction, from teacher to student, and fail to incorporate media as an aid in delivering the material, the learning process becomes monotonous, causing students to feel disengaged and uninterested.

Using image media in teaching has significant benefits, especially for elementary school students, as it provides opportunities for students to develop their abilities and explore each learning object presented. In the learning process, students are required to be more active by directly engaging in the learning activities, which helps enhance their overall learning experience.

2. Research Methods

This research was conducted at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah. The type of research used is qualitative research with a descriptive approach. According to Sukardi (2003), qualitative research with a descriptive approach is a method that aims to describe and interpret phenomena as they exist. Using this approach, the researcher can analyze and provide an accurate description of the research object according to the actual conditions. The purpose of this study is to obtain an accurate depiction of the alignment between theory and practice regarding the use of image media in enhancing the learning interest of Grade VII students at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah.

The data collection techniques used in this study include observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis technique used in this research, according to Sugiyono (2014), follows a process that includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and verification or conclusion drawing.

3. Results and Discussion

The use of image media in the learning process for Grade VII students at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah is one method used by teachers to transform learning material into something engaging and easy for students to understand. Through image media, the messages conveyed by the teacher are more easily absorbed by students. Based on observations in Grade VII at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah, it was found that the learning process conducted by the teacher in the classroom had not fully utilized learning media optimally to deliver the material. This is due to the limited availability of learning media at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah. In general, teachers used flat image media such as the human body parts created by students in science lessons, cubes in mathematics lessons, maps, the solar system, and globes in social studies lessons available in the classroom. Technology-based image media, which are more interactive and can assist in more effective learning, have not been fully utilized by teachers due to limitations such as the lack of LCD projectors and electricity in some classrooms.

Interviews with the principal, teachers, and students revealed that the use of image media to enhance students' learning interest in Grade VII at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah has not been optimally implemented. This is due to the limited availability of image media, which is still limited to flat image media. Projected image media has not been used by teachers in teaching due to the unavailability of LCDs and projectors and the lack of electricity in all classrooms. The image media available in the classroom is the result of the creativity of the teachers and students, which can be used daily to stimulate students to be active and creative in the learning process.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the use of image media as a vehicle for delivering material with the aim of increasing students' learning interest in Grade VII at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah has not been fully implemented. The image media used by teachers aims to help teachers convert learning materials into something tangible so that students do not merely imagine, but directly see the material being studied. Therefore, image media is a fundamental need for teachers in carrying out the learning process. The existence of image media in learning is very important for both

teachers and students, so schools and relevant agencies should pay attention to the need for learning media that can help stimulate students' interest in learning, which will have an impact on improving their academic achievement.

Image media is a simple medium used by teachers because it does not require projectors and screens. This media is not transparent and cannot be reflected on a screen, but it is chosen by teachers because it is practical. Along with technological advancements, image media can now be projected in visual forms, as explained by Hamalik (2004), who states that image media is something that is visualized into various dimensional forms, such as paintings, portraits, slides, films, and projectors.

According to Haryanti, Ade Siti (2018), images or photos are part of visual media that function to convey messages from the source to the receiver. The messages conveyed in the form of visual communication symbols need to be understood correctly so that the message delivery process can succeed without causing misunderstandings. Intansari, Rini (2017) also states that the benefits of images as visual media include:

1. Attracting students' attention. Images with various colors are more appealing and can stimulate interest and attention.
2. Facilitating students' understanding. An abstract explanation can be supported by images so that students can more easily understand what is meant.
3. Clarifying important parts. Through images, important or small parts can also be enlarged.

Additionally, when planning image media, teachers need to consider the content of the material, the images to be used, and the method of presenting the media to make the learning process more active and enjoyable for students.

Sudjana, Nana, and Rivai, A. (2013) state that there are several principles for using media that teachers need to follow in the teaching-learning process, including: a. Alignment with learning objectives, meaning that learning media is chosen based on the instructional goals that are set. b. Support for the content of the learning material, meaning that materials that are factual or principle-based require media support to make them easier to understand. c. Ease of obtaining media, meaning that the media needed is easy to obtain, or at least can be made by the teacher while teaching or is already available at the school.

Teachers' ability to use media, in whatever form, is a prerequisite for it to be effective in the learning process. Teachers must be able to use the media effectively at the right time to ensure that students can comprehend the material.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the use of image media makes it easier for teachers to deliver material in the learning process. Additionally, students are more interested in participating in lessons because they can see images directly related to the topics or themes being discussed. Learning becomes more dynamic and less boring because students do not merely listen to lectures but can see the material being studied. Therefore, image media can increase students' enthusiasm for learning.

3.1. Teachers' Strategy in Using Image Media to Enhance Students' Learning Interest

The use of image media by teachers is one strategy used to help students better understand the material being taught. Based on the observations conducted in Grade VII at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah, the teachers' strategy in using image media to enhance students' learning interest includes the following:

1. Aligning the material with the images to be used.
2. Designing the image media to be used.
3. Organizing steps for using the image media.

4. Adjusting the steps to the lesson plan, references, and learning objectives that have been prepared beforehand.

The use of image media in the learning process in the classroom is carried out as follows: a. The teacher presents the material and gives students a problem, which they then solve in groups. b. The teacher shows an image related to the material, and students describe the image. c. The teacher directs students to draw based on the theme or learning material.

The students' responses to the presentation of lessons using image media show high enthusiasm. Students feel more interested in participating in lessons when the teacher uses images to convey the material. In contrast, students tend to become bored if they only listen to the teacher's lecture or copy the material given by the teacher.

Although the image media used by teachers at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah is still simple, teachers make every effort to provide image media to capture students' learning interest. Students' comfort in learning is also influenced by the seating arrangement in the classroom, which allows the teacher to monitor the overall learning development of the students.

Based on interviews with the principal, teachers, and students, it can be concluded that the use of image media in teaching is a good alternative for increasing students' learning interest. This is evident from the increased activity of students in the classroom and the frequency of interaction with the teacher during each learning process that uses image media. The use of image media can make it easier for students to understand the material and enhance their learning interest, making the learning process more effective and enjoyable.

4. Conclusion

Based on the research conducted at SMP MTs Al-Hidayah, it can be concluded that the use of image media to enhance learning interest among Grade VII students has not yet reached its full potential. Teachers primarily use simple, flat image media that are inexpensive and easy to create, involving students in the process, but they have not yet utilized projected image media due to limitations in equipment and supporting media. The strategies applied by the teachers include aligning the material with the images, designing image media based on available resources, and adjusting the learning steps according to the lesson plan and objectives. Through these strategies, the use of image media has successfully increased students' learning interest, as evidenced by their heightened enthusiasm in class, active participation in discussions, and improved understanding of the material.

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