

FLASHCARD METHOD EFFECTIVENESS IN IMPROVING SECOND-GRADE MADRASAH IBTIDAIYAH STUDENTS' FIQH PRAYER LEARNING OUTCOMES

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Abstract

Lecture dominated Fiqh instruction on prayer (sholat) at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah leaves students disengaged and struggling to memorize recitations and grasp movement sequences, resulting in learning outcomes below the established achievement criteria. This study describes the implementation of the Flash Card method and examines its effectiveness in improving Fiqh learning outcomes on prayer material among second-grade students. Using a qualitative Classroom Action Research design based on the Kemmis and McTaggart model, the study spanned two cycles involving 14 second-grade students at MI Muhammadiyah, Madiun City, with data collected through observation, achievement tests, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed descriptively across cycles. The Flash Card method notably increased student engagement, alongside consistent improvement in recitation memorization, movement-sequence comprehension, and recognition of prayer pillars from the first to the second cycle. Classical learning completeness was achieved in the second cycle, with most students meeting the required criteria. These findings position the Flash Card method as an effective alternative strategy for teaching Fiqh at the elementary madrasah level, fostering more active, engaging, and meaningful learning.

Keywords : Flash Card method; Fiqh learning outcomes; prayer material; Classroom Action Research; Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

Abstrak

Dominasi metode ceramah dalam pembelajaran Fiqh materi sholat di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah membuat peserta didik kurang aktif serta kesulitan menghafal bacaan dan memahami urutan gerakan sholat, sehingga hasil belajar belum mencapai Kriteria Ketercapaian Tujuan Pembelajaran. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan penerapan metode Flash Card dan mengukur efektivitasnya dalam meningkatkan hasil belajar Fiqh materi sholat pada siswa kelas II Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif berjenis Penelitian Tindakan Kelas model Kemmis dan McTaggart, penelitian dilaksanakan dua siklus terhadap 14 siswa kelas II MI Muhammadiyah Kota Madiun, dengan data dihimpun melalui observasi, tes hasil belajar, wawancara, dan dokumentasi, lalu dianalisis deskriptif antarsiklus. Penerapan metode Flash Card meningkatkan keaktifan siswa secara nyata, sejalan dengan peningkatan kemampuan menghafal bacaan, memahami urutan gerakan, dan mengenali rukun sholat dari siklus pertama ke siklus kedua. Ketuntasan belajar klasikal tercapai pada siklus II, dengan mayoritas siswa memenuhi kriteria yang ditetapkan. Temuan ini menegaskan metode Flash Card sebagai alternatif strategi pembelajaran Fiqh di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah yang mendorong proses belajar lebih aktif, menarik, dan bermakna.

Kata Kunci: Metode Flash Card; hasil belajar Fiqh; materi sholat; Penelitian Tindakan Kelas; Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

INTRODUCTION

Fiqh instruction in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Islamic elementary school) curriculum carries particular weight because it introduces children to the daily ritual obligation of prayer (*sholat*), a practice they are expected to perform correctly from an early age. Success in this subject is not measured by rote

memorization of concepts alone but by learners' capacity to internalize the correct sequence of movements, recite the accompanying formulas accurately, and translate that knowledge into consistent practice. Yet second-grade students at this level are still in what developmental theory characterizes as the concrete-operational stage, a period in which understanding is anchored to direct, tangible, and repeatable experience rather than abstract verbal explanation. When instruction is delivered mainly through lecture and rote drilling the pattern most commonly reported in Fiqh classrooms it works against precisely the kind of concrete, sensory engagement young learners need, leaving a gap between how the subject is taught and how children at this age actually learn.

The practical consequences of this mismatch are visible in the classroom. Students frequently struggle to recall the correct wording of prayer recitations, lose track of the proper order of movements, and hesitate when asked to demonstrate the pillars of *sholat* independently, a hesitancy that often reflects low confidence rather than lack of exposure. Compounding this, many students remain passive during lessons and disengage quickly once concentration lapses, and as a result a meaningful share of them fail to meet the Learning Achievement Criteria (KKTP) set for the subject. These symptoms point to a shared underlying cause: the absence of a visual, activity-based instructional medium capable of converting an abstract sequence of words and movements into something children can see, manipulate, and rehearse repeatedly, which is precisely the gap that media such as flash cards are designed to close.

Prior research offers converging but incomplete evidence on this point. Studies situated in language instruction consistently report that flash cards raise both engagement and measurable achievement: Angreany and Saud (2017) found that flashcard media strengthened learners' descriptive writing performance in a foreign-language classroom, an effect the authors attributed to the way visual prompts reduced the cognitive burden of retrieving vocabulary. A parallel finding involving second-grade elementary students showed that flashcard use raised both motivation and learning outcomes over a single semester of classroom intervention (Cahyaningrum & Purnamasari, 2014), suggesting the medium's benefits are not confined to older learners. Within the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah setting specifically, action-research evidence has shown comparable gains: Indriani et al. (2023) documented a steady rise in second-grade students' mathematics achievement across two cycles of flashcard-supported instruction, while Ulum (2022) reported that flashcard media improved Arabic

vocabulary retention among madrasah pupils through a similarly cyclical, reflective teaching process. Taken together, these studies confirm that flash cards can shift both engagement and cognitive outcomes in young learners and that the medium transfers well to the madrasah context, but nearly all of this evidence comes from language and numeracy instruction. What remains largely unexamined is whether the same visual, activity-based logic can support a subject that combines verbal recitation with physical, sequential performance, which is the specific demand that Fiqh instruction on prayer places on students.

This gap is not incidental; it reflects a broader pattern in which Fiqh research at the elementary madrasah level has concentrated on content mastery and environmental resources for teaching (Marliyah, 2022) rather than on classroom-based media innovation, leaving the pedagogical problem of teaching a combined verbal-and-kinesthetic ritual largely unaddressed. The present study departs from that pattern by applying the Flash Card method within a Classroom Action Research design that tracks not only gains in cognitive test scores but also the incremental development of movement sequencing, recitation memory, and recognition of the pillars of prayer across successive cycles, offering a more granular account of how a visual medium interacts with a ritual-performance subject than prior single outcome studies have provided.

Building on this rationale, the present study aims to describe the implementation of the Flash Card method in Fiqh instruction on prayer material among second-grade students at a Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, to document how the method was enacted through the successive stages of Classroom Action Research, and to analyze its effectiveness in improving students' learning outcomes on this material. In addressing a subject area where classroom-based media innovation has so far received limited empirical attention, the study is positioned to inform both the pedagogical design of Fiqh instruction and the broader discussion of how visual learning media can be adapted to ritual-performance content in early Islamic education.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach through Classroom Action Research (CAR), following the Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon (2014) model, selected for its capacity to combine systematic pedagogical intervention with reflective, cycle-based evaluation of classroom practice rather than a one-off measurement of outcomes. The design comprises two cycles, each structured around four interrelated stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection.

The study was conducted at MI Muhammadiyah, Madiun City, during the 2025/2026 academic year, with 14 second-grade students as research subjects, selected through total sampling of the intact class assigned to the researcher for the intervention. The researcher functioned as the classroom teacher implementing the Flash Card method, while the regular second-grade teacher served as collaborator and observer, monitoring both teacher and student activity during instruction and jointly conducting reflection with the researcher to inform refinements in the subsequent cycle.

Data were collected through four techniques: classroom observation of teacher and student activity, achievement tests administered at the end of each cycle, interviews to capture student and teacher responses to the Flash Card method, and documentation as supporting evidence. Data were analyzed descriptively through three interrelated stages, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, comparing outcomes across cycles to determine the extent of improvement in student learning achievement (Safarudin et al., 2023).

Data credibility was established through methodological triangulation, cross-checking findings from observation, tests, interviews, and documentation, and source triangulation, comparing information obtained from the teacher, the students, and the evaluation results, an approach consistent with standard practice for strengthening the validity of qualitative classroom-based findings (Arianto, 2024).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this classroom action research demonstrate a progressive improvement in the learning outcomes of Grade II students at MI Muhammadiyah Kota Madiun on the topic of *sholat* (prayer) following the implementation of the Flash Card method across two cycles. Rather than presenting these results chronologically, the discussion below synthesizes the data around four substantive themes that speak directly to the study's objective: the effectiveness of Flash Card in improving Fiqh learning outcomes.

Flash Card as a Concrete Visual Medium for Recalling Prayer Procedures

The precycle observation revealed that students struggled to sequence the movements of prayer, memorize its recitations, and differentiate its pillars (*rukun*) difficulties that persisted under lecture-based instruction, which left students passive and quickly disengaged. Once picture-and-text Flash Cards depicting prayer movements, recitations, and pillars were introduced in Cycle I, students began recognizing the correct sequence of movements and recalling

recitations more accurately, and this gain was consolidated further in Cycle II. This pattern is consistent with a substantial body of recent flashcard research across other elementary subjects Aiman et al. (2023) found that flashcard-oriented group investigation improved science learning outcomes, Dwi et al. (2023) reported gains in multiplication mastery among third-grade students through digital flashcards, and Nurana et al. (2024) documented improved early reading skills after flashcard use in Grade II. Most directly comparable is Nina (2024), whose twocycle classroom action research on flashcard media for mathematics with Grade II students at a Madrasah Ibtidaiyah reported average scores rising from 65 in the pre-cycle to 72 in Cycle I and 85 in Cycle II, alongside a jump in mastery from 41% to 93%.

What this study contributes beyond that convergent evidence, however, is a demonstration that the same visual recall mechanism transfers to a domain that earlier flashcard research had not directly tested: ritual procedural knowledge in Fiqh. Unlike vocabulary, arithmetic operations, or reading fluency content that is largely propositional or symbolic prayer material combines memorized verbal text (*bacaan*) with an embodied, sequential motor procedure (*gerakan*) that must be performed correctly and in order. The persistence of a subgroup of students in Cycle I who could recognize movements from the cards yet still struggled to recite the accompanying text in full indicates that static visual media, while effective for procedural sequencing, only partially resolves the verbal-memorization component of Fiqh content. This is where the present findings extend rather than merely replicate prior flashcard studies: they show that Flash Card's visual affordance is necessary but, for compound ritual content, not sufficient on its own a nuance the subsequent themes address directly.

Congruence with Piaget's Concrete Operational Stage and Its Limits

The improvement observed after introducing Flash Card aligns with the theoretical expectation that children in the concrete operational stage (roughly ages 7–11) reason more effectively when abstract material is anchored to tangible, visual representations rather than verbal explanation alone (Kumbar et al., 2023). Grade II students, who fall squarely within this developmental window, showed markedly higher engagement once the abstract sequence and terminology of prayer were translated into picture cards they could observe, sort, and match — evidence consistent with the theory's core claim that concrete-stage learners construct understanding through manipulable, perceptible objects rather than through purely symbolic or lecture-based transmission.

Yet the data also surface a partial exception worth dialoguing critically with the theory rather than glossing over: several students who could correctly match cards to movements in Cycle I still failed to reach the completion criterion (KKTP) because full recitation memorization lagged behind visual-sequential comprehension. If the concrete operational account were applied uncritically, one might expect visual scaffolding alone to resolve most learning difficulties for this age group; the persistence of a recitation gap suggests that verbal-auditory memorization operates on a partly separate track from the visual-classificatory reasoning that concrete cards most directly support. In other words, Flash Card addresses the "concrete" dimension of Piaget's framework very well, but the theory's emphasis on manipulable objects does not, by itself, fully account for rote verbal retention a limitation the Cycle II redesign implicitly acknowledges by adding embodied practice and repetition rather than relying on visual media alone. This nuance is the theoretical contribution of this theme: it specifies a boundary condition on the concrete-operational rationale for visual media, rather than treating the theory as a blanket explanation for every gain observed.

Combining Flash Card with Game Based Learning and Direct Practice: Closing the Motivational and Retention Gap

The refinements introduced in Cycle II the educational game *Tebak Gerakan Sholat*, direct practice in the school's *musala*, group discussion, and individualized reinforcement for struggling students produced a markedly larger improvement than Flash Card alone had achieved in Cycle I, with students becoming visibly more confident performing prayer movements in front of the class and more willing to ask and answer questions. This outcome corroborates recent meta-analytic evidence that game-based learning yields moderate-to-large effects on children's motivation and engagement (Alotaibi, 2024), and it echoes findings from the Indonesian elementary context specifically Sappaile (2024) reported that gamified instruction significantly increased student motivation in elementary classrooms, while Kamaruddin (2025) found that flashcard media combined with gamification raised elementary students' interest in learning IPAS content. A similarly instructive parallel comes from Islamic education itself: Fauziyyah et al. (2024) developed a flashcard-based tool to reverse declining motivation for Qur'anic surah memorization among young learners, underscoring that motivational scaffolding is often the missing ingredient when memorization-heavy Islamic content is taught through static media alone.

Read against the exception identified in the previous theme, this

convergence of evidence points to a more precise explanation than either theory could offer independently: static Flash Cards effectively support the *visual-sequential* component of concrete operational reasoning, but the *retention and confidence* gap in reciting and performing prayer required an additional layer repeated, embodied, socially reinforced practice that only game-based and direct-practice elements supplied. The contribution here is thus not simply "games increase motivation," which is already well established, but a demonstration of how visual media and game-based/embodied practice function as complementary, sequenced interventions for compound ritual-procedural content: the card builds the mental schema, while the game and direct practice consolidate the schema into fluent, confident performance. Prior single-method flashcard studies in non-religious subjects rarely needed to separate these two functions because their target content was purely cognitive; Fiqh's psychomotor dimension makes the distinction visible and instructive for future media design in religious education.

From Teacher-Centered to Student-Centered Instruction: Extending Flash Card's Reach into Fiqh Education

Across both cycles, the locus of classroom activity shifted from the teacher explaining at the front of the room to students observing, discussing, attempting, and correcting one another with the teacher acting as facilitator a transformation reflected in students' increased willingness to ask questions, work in groups, and volunteer to demonstrate movements. This trajectory mirrors the broader shift documented in Indonesian elementary classrooms moving from teacher-centered to student-centered instruction, where the teacher's role changes from the sole source of knowledge to a guide supporting active, exploratory learning (Nisa et al., 2024). The Flash Card plus game design in this study operationalizes that shift concretely: cards gave students something to observe and manipulate independently, and the *Tebak Gerakan Sholat* game and group practice gave them ownership over demonstrating what they had learned, rather than merely receiving it.

Positioned against prior Fiqh-specific media research, this theme also clarifies where this study's contribution sits within that literature. Jarir and Jasiah (2025) showed that an interactive digital flashcard for the *Thaharah* topic significantly improved conceptual and procedural understanding among Madrasah Tsanawiyah (junior secondary) students, while most other flashcard-in-religious-education studies, including Fauziyyah et al. (2024), have targeted

memorization tasks (such as Qur'anic surah recall) rather than combined cognitive-and-psychomotor ritual performance. The present study extends this line of work in two specific directions simultaneously: it applies the flashcard-plus-game, student-centered approach to a younger cohort (Grade II elementary/Madrasah Ibtidaiyah rather than junior secondary) and to content that is inseparably cognitive and motoric (prayer movements and recitations, not concept comprehension alone). This dual extension downward in age and outward in content complexity is the specific novelty this research contributes to the broader literature on Flash Card and Fiqh instruction: it demonstrates that a low-technology, teacher-facilitated, game-integrated Flash Card design can achieve for young children and embodied ritual practice what digital, R&D-developed flashcard tools have so far mainly demonstrated for older students and purely conceptual religious content.

CONCLUSION

This classroom action research confirms that the Flash Card method, progressively combined with educational games and direct practice, is effective in improving Grade II students' Fiqh learning outcomes on the topic of *sholat* at MI Muhammadiyah Kota Madiun. The study's main contribution lies in demonstrating that a low-technology, teacher-facilitated Flash Card design can address the dual cognitive psychomotor demands of ritual procedural content a gap not fully addressed by prior flashcard studies limited to purely conceptual or symbolic subject matter. As this research was conducted within a single classroom over two cycles, its findings remain context-bound and cannot yet be generalized across different grade levels or school settings. Future research is therefore recommended to test the sequenced Flash Card game direct practice design through a quasi-experimental study comparing multiple Grade II classes across several Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, in order to verify whether the same combination reliably improves both prayer recitation memorization and movement accuracy beyond a single-class setting.

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