

Basic Concepts Of Islamic Religious Education (Pai) Instructional Media

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Abstract

Instructional media are strategic components of the learning system that function as intermediaries for delivering messages, information, and learning experiences from educators to students. In Islamic Religious Education (PAI), media do not merely assist students in acquiring religious knowledge; they also support the development of attitudes, values, moral character, worship skills, and the internalization of Islamic teachings. This article aims to analyze the basic concepts, roles, functions, selection strategies, and implementation of instructional media in PAI learning. This study employs a literature review approach by examining various concepts of instructional media, the characteristics of PAI materials, and students' learning needs. The findings indicate that instructional media in PAI should be positioned as an integral part of instructional design rather than merely as supplementary teaching aids. Their selection should be based on alignment with learning objectives, material characteristics, students' age and readiness, teaching methods, learning environment, available facilities, and teachers' competencies. The media may include teaching aids, images, murattal audio, videos, interactive multimedia, social environments, demonstrations, and real-life experiences. The integrated use of media through introductory activities, observation, discussion, practice, and evaluation can make abstract PAI materials more concrete, engaging, meaningful, and easier for students to internalize. Therefore, the effectiveness of PAI instructional media is not determined by technological sophistication, but by the appropriateness of its use in achieving comprehensive learning objectives.

Keywords: Instructional Media, Islamic Religious Education, Learning Strategies, Students, Value Internalization.

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays a fundamental role in shaping students' character, morality, and religious understanding. However, PAI learning is often confronted with a classic challenge: the perception that it is a subject that tends to be theoretical, monotonous, and oriented toward memorization. Conventional, teacher-centered teaching methods often make abstract religious materials difficult to understand and less relevant to the dynamics of students' lives today.

To bridge the abstract nature of religious materials, the presence of instructional media has become a crucial component. Instructional media does not merely function as a visual aid but also serves as a mediator that effectively conveys learning messages while stimulating students' thoughts, feelings, and attention. In the context of PAI, the appropriate use of media can help concretize students' understanding of Islamic law, religious practices, and the historical values of Islamic civilization, making them easier to comprehend and apply.

Along with the development of information technology and the digital transformation of education, educators need to understand the basic concepts of PAI instructional media in a comprehensive and integrated manner. A thorough understanding of the nature, functions, advantages, and principles of media selection can help prevent errors in integrating technology into the classroom. Therefore, this article aims to provide an in-depth discussion of the basic concepts of PAI instructional media, offering theoretical and practical foundations for developing communicative, innovative, and meaningful PAI learning. Through this article, it is hoped that PAI teachers will reflect more deeply on the importance of selecting appropriate instructional media during the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a literature review methodology, with data collected from various sources, including articles and books. The literature review was conducted using a documentation technique, in which the authors obtained data by reading, recording, and analyzing research materials related to Multidisciplinary Islamic Education System Policies. The research employed a qualitative approach, while the data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis. Qualitative research using a library research design is highly useful for understanding the



development of existing knowledge in a particular field, identifying knowledge gaps, and providing a strong theoretical foundation for further research.¹

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Definition and Functions of PAI Instructional Media

Instructional media consists of two terms: media and learning. The first term is media. The word media originates from the Greek word medium, which means middle, intermediary, or means of conveyance. Media is considered the “middle” because it lies between learners and the knowledge being studied. Knowledge is not absorbed directly but is conveyed through an intermediary in the form of media. The second term is learning. Linguistically, learning refers to the process of enabling or facilitating someone to learn. This means that learners who initially have not engaged in learning activities are given instructions by educators, resulting in the learning process. Learning also has a specific objective: to acquire knowledge that was previously unknown, which requires learners to engage in the learning process.²

The New Oxford American Dictionary notes that the word media originates from the Latin word medius, meaning “between.” Media can be defined as a means of communication and a source of information. This definition encompasses anything that conveys information between a source and a recipient, such as television, videos, diagrams, printed materials, applications, the internet, and similar resources. Media can be referred to as instructional media when it contains messages intended to support learning. The Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) defines media as all forms and channels used to convey messages and information.³

In the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), the concept of media has a broader scope. Instructional media is not only used to help students understand religious knowledge but can also serve as a means of providing experiences, role models, habituation, and the internalization of Islamic values. Studies on media from the perspective of PAI indicate that

¹ Salim and Haidir, *Penelitian Pendidikan: Metode, Pendekatan, Dan Jenis* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2019). 28.

² Agus Miftakus Surur, *Pengembangan Media Pembelajaran Teori, Aplikasi, Dan Publikasi* (Yogyakarta: K-Media, 2021), 16.

³ Ani Cahyadi, *Pengembangan Media Dan Sumber Belajar: Teori Dan Prosedur* (Serang: Laksita Indonesia, 2019). 2.



media can support the delivery of instructional materials while also contributing to the development of students' religious attitudes and values.⁴

Thus, PAI instructional media can be defined as any means, tool, environment, technology, person, or form of communication that is intentionally used to convey messages and learning experiences derived from Islamic teachings. Its purpose is to ensure that PAI learning objectives related to knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills can be achieved effectively.

The objectives of instructional media include the following: Facilitating students' understanding of specific concepts, principles, attitudes, and skills. Through instructional media, teachers can make abstract concepts, principles, and attitudes more concrete by providing examples. Media can also demonstrate the specific steps and practical examples of the skills that students are expected to develop.

Providing diverse and varied learning experiences that can stimulate students' interest in learning. Through instructional media, teachers do not rely solely on verbal explanations but can also incorporate images, videos, text, and audio. In addition, media can be used by students for independent learning, both at school and outside the classroom.

Developing particular attitudes and technological skills. Media can present concrete examples of the attitudes or skills that teachers intend to instill in students. Furthermore, students' interest in using or operating instructional media can indirectly encourage positive attitudes toward technological development while improving their ability to use technology.

Creating memorable learning experiences. Because media can engage several senses simultaneously or sequentially, the resulting learning outcomes may last longer than those achieved through the use of only one or a few senses. This is particularly true of interactive multimedia, which gives students the opportunity to operate the media independently and learn through direct interaction with it. As a result, students' retention of the material they have studied can also be enhanced.⁵

A function is a group of activities classified as belonging to the same type based on their characteristics or implementation. Characteristics can be observed through the sense of sight, while implementation can be perceived through the sense of touch. These are

⁴ Siti Aisyah, 'Media Pembelajaran Perspektif Pendidikan Agama Islam', *Journal of Islamic Education*, 2. No. 2 (2022), 9–29.

⁵ Husni Fikri and Ade Sri Madona, *Pengembangan Media Pembelajaran Berbasis Multimedia Interaktif* (Yogyakarta: Samudra Biru, 2018). 12.



considered activities because they involve several tasks that must be carried out in accordance with established guidelines. Instructional media undoubtedly serves specific functions in its use.

The functions of instructional media can be divided into four categories. The following are the functions of media used in the learning process:

1. **Attention Function:** This function aims to attract students' attention and stimulate their curiosity about using the media. Once students' attention is directed toward the media, their interest in using it can increase. To attract attention effectively, media should be designed creatively or combined with existing media according to new and appropriate guidelines.
2. **Affective Function:** The affective function aims to elicit students' attitudinal responses to the media being used. The desired response is for students to enjoy using the media during the learning process. This can be observed when students use the media without feeling bored or complaining. Students may not always express happiness immediately. However, with the teacher serving as a facilitator and providing guidance appropriate to the media, the learning experience can become more enjoyable. Through this function, learning time can pass more pleasantly, allowing students to engage with the media while receiving the information being conveyed.
3. **Cognitive Function:** The cognitive function aims to encourage students to remain actively engaged while using the media. This function is influenced by the rules established by the teacher regarding how the media should be used. Accordingly, the prepared media includes specific instructions that students must follow. If these instructions are not followed, the media cannot be used optimally. To clarify the teacher's instructions, the teacher should use language that is easy for students to understand. The instructions should also be concise and uncomplicated. By engaging students in activities, instructional media can help prevent boredom during the learning process.
4. **Compensatory Function:** This function aims to provide students with learning support and access to knowledge when using instructional media. For example, when students learn from a book, they acquire knowledge by reading it. However, when learning uses instructional media without relying on a textbook, the information can still be conveyed



effectively to students. This function enables students to gain knowledge even when they do not learn through conventional textbooks.⁶

B. Basic Concepts and Position of PAI Instructional Media

Learning is essentially a system. As a system, learning consists of several interconnected components, including objectives, students, educators, materials, methods, media, learning resources, the learning environment, and assessment. A change in one component can influence the others. Within this framework, media cannot be regarded as an additional component used only when the teacher has access to the necessary facilities. Media is a component with a strategic function, connecting learning objectives, materials, methods, and students' characteristics. Studies of the concept of media from the perspective of the Qur'an also position media as an important component of the learning system because learning is fundamentally a communication process.⁷

In simple terms, this relationship can be illustrated as follows: Learning Objectives → PAI Materials → Strategies/Methods → Media → Student Activities → Assessment → Learning Outcomes. This relationship demonstrates that media does not function independently. The selection of media must be aligned with the learning objectives and the characteristics of the material, while also taking students' conditions into consideration.

For example, if the objective of PAI learning is for students to perform the correct procedures of ablution, pictures alone may not be sufficient. The teacher may use a live demonstration, video, teaching aids, or practical activities using the available facilities. Conversely, if the learning objective is to understand the meaning of a Qur'anic verse, text, audio recitations, digital interpretations, or multimedia may be more relevant. This means that effective media is not necessarily the most advanced technology but rather the media that best suits the learning objectives, students' characteristics, instructional materials, teaching methods, and learning conditions. This principle is also emphasized in studies on the criteria for PAI media, which stress alignment with learning objectives, the teacher's ability to use the media, its usefulness, and its capacity to attract students' attention..⁸

⁶ Agus Miftakus Surur, *Pengembangan Media Pembelajaran Teori, Aplikasi, Dan Publikasi*. 27-35.

⁷ Rahimi, 'Konsep Media Pembelajaran Dalam Perspektif Alquran', *Jurnal Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 3. No. 2 (2021), 87–101.

⁸ Ani Cahyadi and Ahmad Riyadh Maulidi, 'Legitimasi Al-Qur'an Terhadap Kriteria Media Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam', *Jurnal Kependidikan Islam*, 8. No. 2 (2022), 225–37.



Media as a Curriculum Component Supporting the Implementation of PAI Objectives A curriculum essentially consists of more than just a list of learning materials. It is an educational design that includes objectives, content, learning processes, learning experiences, and assessment. Therefore, when the curriculum is translated into classroom practice, media becomes one of the instruments that helps operationalize this design.

In PAI, educational objectives are not limited to the mastery of religious knowledge (the cognitive domain) but also involve the development of attitudes, values, morals, and religious skills. Therefore, media holds an important position because it can help transform abstract subject matter into more concrete learning experiences.

For example, belief in the Hereafter is an abstract concept. Teachers can use illustrations, concept maps, educational videos, Qur'anic verses, hadith, and reflective activities to help students understand it. Similarly, in moral education, media should not be limited to textbooks. Teachers can use stories, videos presenting exemplary behavior, simulations, the school environment, and real-life experiences to connect moral concepts with students' lives. Thus, media functions as a bridge between the written curriculum and students' authentic learning experiences.

The position of media within the PAI curriculum system can be understood through its function as a link between several core components of learning.

Components	Relationship with Media
Objectives	Media is selected based on the competencies to be achieved.
Materials	Media helps present materials in a concrete and systematic manner.
Learners	Media is adapted to the learners' age, characteristics, needs, and abilities.
Methods	Media supports lectures, demonstrations, discussions, practical activities, projects, and other methods.
Teacher	Media assists teachers in delivering instructional messages.
Environment	The environment can serve as both a learning resource and instructional media.
Assessment	Media can be used in assessment activities and competency demonstrations.



Thus, the position of media is integrative rather than merely instrumental. Media is part of the instructional design and should be planned from the initial planning stage. Research on the use of media within the Merdeka Curriculum for PAI learning indicates that media utilization is related to planning, media selection, teachers' competencies, and the availability of facilities and infrastructure.

One important characteristic of PAI is that it includes both abstract and practical subject matter. Students study concepts related to Allah, faith, worship, morals, the Qur'an, hadith, and Islamic history. Some of these topics are difficult to understand through verbal explanations alone.

Media enables teachers to transform abstract subject matter into more concrete learning experiences. For example:

1. Qur'an and Hadith: Murattal audio recordings, digital copies of the Qur'an, instructional videos, and verse cards.
2. Islamic Creed (Aqidah): Images, illustrations, concept maps, and multimedia.
3. Islamic Morals (Akhlak): Stories, videos presenting exemplary behavior, simulations, and the social environment.
4. Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh): Teaching aids, demonstrations, instructional videos, and real-life settings.

Islamic Cultural History: Maps, timelines, historical images, documentary videos, and infographics. Recent studies on PAI instructional media also indicate that various types of media, ranging from printed materials to audiovisual resources, can be adapted to the characteristics of PAI subject matter.⁹

C. Strategies and Implementation of PAI Instructional Media

The selection of instructional media is a systematic process of determining the most appropriate tools to help students achieve learning objectives. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), media selection should not be based solely on whether the media is attractive or uses the latest technology. Media must be selected based on the relationship

⁹ Rony Hamdani Siregar, 'Media Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam', *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusi*, 9. No. 2 (2025), 690–94.



among learning objectives, PAI materials, students' characteristics, instructional methods, the learning environment, available resources, and the teacher's ability to use it.¹⁰

Thus, the fundamental principle is that media does not determine the learning process; rather, the learning objectives and students' characteristics determine the choice of media. This is important because each student has different characteristics. Some students understand materials more easily through images, others through oral explanations, some through direct practice, while others require a combination of several forms of learning experience.

In PAI learning, these differences become even more important because PAI materials cover various domains, ranging from religious knowledge and the understanding of Qur'anic verses and hadith to worship skills and the development of moral character and religious attitudes.

Therefore, the selection of PAI instructional media should ideally be guided by the following questions::

1. What is the learning objective?
2. Who are the learners?
3. What are the characteristics of the subject matter?
4. What learning experiences do the learners need?
5. Which media can best provide those experiences?
6. How will the media be used and evaluated?

Before selecting the media, teachers need to analyze students' characteristics. In differentiated learning, student diversity can be identified through factors such as learning readiness, interests, and learning profiles.¹¹

1. Age and Developmental Stage

Students' age influences their ability to understand instructional messages. Elementary school students generally still require concrete experiences. Therefore, media such as pictures, real objects, cards, teaching aids, short videos, demonstrations, and educational games can help them understand concepts more easily. By contrast, students at higher educational levels can be guided to use more complex media, such as

¹⁰ Azhar Arsyad, *Media Pembelajaran* (Depok: Rajawali Pers, 2019). 22.

¹¹ Carol Ann Tomlinson, *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2014). 65.



infographics, interactive presentations, analytical videos, digital resources, articles, simulations, and digital projects. Thus, students' cognitive development must be considered when determining the appropriate level of abstraction of the media.

2. Learning Readiness

Learning readiness refers to students' initial condition before participating in the learning process. In a PAI class, for example, students may have different levels of Qur'an-reading ability. Some may read fluently, while others may still read haltingly and require more intensive guidance. Therefore, it is inappropriate for teachers to use a single medium with the same level of difficulty for all students.

3. Considering Students' Interests

Interest is an important factor because media that aligns with students' interests can increase their attention and engagement. For example, when teaching material on commendable morals, teachers can offer several options, such as story videos, educational comics, picture stories, role-playing activities, case studies, posters, or simple projects. Students can be given the opportunity to choose the type of media or activity that best suits their interests. However, teachers need to distinguish between accommodating students' interests and merely providing entertainment. The media must still have a clear connection to the learning objectives.

For the purposes of PAI learning, teachers can use the following six strategic steps:

1. Step 1: Determine the Learning Objectives First, the teacher determines what students are expected to achieve. For example: "Students are able to perform the ablution procedure correctly." Since the objective involves practical skills, the media must enable students to observe and carry out the practice.
2. Step 2: Analyze Students' Characteristics The teacher identifies students' age, prior abilities, learning needs, interests, reading skills, digital literacy, learning difficulties, and classroom conditions. This stage is important to ensure that the media is suitable not only for the subject matter but also for the learners.
3. Step 3: Analyze the Characteristics of the Material The teacher determines whether the material is conceptual, factual, procedural, related to values or attitudes, or skill-based. Procedural material requires different media from conceptual material.
4. Step 4: Determine Media Alternatives Teachers do not have to immediately select only one type of media. Several alternatives should be considered. For example, for prayer-



related material, the options may include pictures showing prayer movements, demonstration videos, movement-sequence cards, teacher demonstrations, and direct practice. The teacher then selects the most appropriate combination.

5. Step 5: Apply Media in an Integrated Manner Media should not merely be “played” for students. A common mistake is for teachers to show a video and then ask students to watch it without any follow-up activity. A better approach is to provide guiding questions before using the media; ask students to observe specific aspects while the media is being used; and, afterward, engage them in discussions, practical activities, explanations in their own words, or assignments. In this way, media becomes part of the instructional strategy rather than mere entertainment..

Media selection does not end once the media has been used. Teachers need to evaluate whether the media has genuinely helped students. This evaluation can be conducted through the following questions:

1. Do the students understand the material?
2. Are the students more active?
3. Is the media appropriate for their abilities?
4. Does the media facilitate the achievement of the learning objectives?
5. Are there any students who experience difficulties as a result?
6. Is the media effective in terms of time and available facilities?
7. Is the media consistent with PAI values?

This leads to an important principle: Good media is media that produces a better learning experience, not merely media that appears more modern.

CONCLUSION

PAI instructional media can be defined as any means, tool, environment, technology, person, or form of communication that is intentionally used to convey messages and learning experiences derived from Islamic teachings. Its purpose is to ensure that PAI learning objectives related to knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills can be achieved effectively. The functions of instructional media can be divided into four categories: attentional, affective, cognitive, and compensatory functions.

Media serves as a curriculum component that supports the implementation of PAI objectives. A curriculum essentially consists of more than just a list of learning materials; it is an



educational design that includes objectives, content, the learning process, learning experiences, and assessment. Therefore, when the curriculum is translated into classroom practice, media becomes one of the instruments that helps operationalize the design.

Before selecting instructional media, teachers need to analyze students' characteristics. In differentiated learning, student diversity can be identified through factors such as learning readiness, interests, and learning profiles.

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