

VISUAL KINESTHETIC BASED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TO ENHANCE WORSHIP COMPREHENSION AMONG DEAF LEARNERS

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Abstract :

Islamic Religious Education for deaf students requires adaptive instructional strategies because auditory limitations make it difficult for them to fully understand religious material when it is delivered verbally. This study aims to develop and analyze a visual kinesthetic based learning strategy to enhance students' understanding of basic Islamic worship practices, particularly wudu and prayer. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design, data were collected through observations, in depth interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings show that the use of visual media (sequential images, demonstrative videos, and worship sign cards) combined with kinesthetic activities (prayer movement exercises, wudu simulations, and repeated demonstrations) significantly improves student engagement and strengthens procedural memory among deaf learners. This strategy also fosters greater confidence and independence in performing worship because learning is presented in a more concrete, structured, and meaningful manner. Therefore, visual kinesthetic based Islamic Religious Education instruction is proven to be an effective, inclusive, and responsive pedagogical approach that aligns with the unique learning needs of deaf students and offers practical recommendations for teachers in designing inclusive religious education.

Keywords: *Islamic Religious Education; Visual Kinesthetic Learning; Deaf Students; Worship Understanding; Inclusive Education.*

Abstrak :

Pendidikan Agama Islam bagi peserta didik tunarungu membutuhkan strategi pembelajaran yang adaptif karena keterbatasan auditori membuat mereka sulit memahami materi keagamaan apabila disampaikan secara verbal. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengembangkan dan menganalisis strategi pembelajaran berbasis visual kinestetik untuk meningkatkan pemahaman ibadah dasar, khususnya wudu dan salat, pada siswa tunarungu. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif desain studi kasus, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif yang mencakup reduksi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan media visual (gambar berurutan, video demonstratif, dan kartu isyarat ibadah) yang dipadukan dengan aktivitas kinestetik (latihan gerakan salat, simulasi wudu, dan demonstrasi berulang) mampu meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa dan memperkuat memori prosedural pada peserta didik tunarungu. Strategi ini juga menumbuhkan rasa percaya diri dan kemandirian dalam melaksanakan ibadah karena



proses belajar disajikan secara konkret, terstruktur, dan bermakna. Dengan demikian, pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam berbasis visual kinestetik terbukti efektif, inklusif, dan responsif terhadap kebutuhan belajar siswa tunarungu serta memberikan rekomendasi praktis bagi guru dalam merancang pembelajaran agama yang ramah kebutuhan khusus.

Kata kunci: Pendidikan Agama Islam; Pembelajaran Visual-Kinestetik; Siswa Tunarungu; Pemahaman Ibadah; Pendidikan Inklusif.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching children with special needs requires educators to possess specialized pedagogical skills and a heightened sensitivity to each learner's unique potentials, interests, and learning patterns rather than relying solely on conventional academic measures. (Muzaka, hidayat fahrul, 2023) In the context of deaf students, Islamic religious education plays a vital role in cultivating religious identity, moral awareness, and consistent worship habits. Yet, the auditory limitations of deaf learners make traditional religious instruction largely dependent on verbal explanation and auditory cues less effective. As a result, essential worship practices such as performing wudu, conducting prayer movements, or understanding ritual recitations may remain incomplete without appropriate instructional adjustments. (Sulastri & Jati, 2016) A visual kinesthetic learning approach offers a promising educational pathway. Deaf learners typically rely on visual perception and bodily movement to grasp abstract concepts; thus, providing information through images, demonstrative videos, movement modeling, and hands-on activities significantly enhances comprehension and retention. Empirical studies further indicate that the use of visual signals and kinesthetic prompts can strengthen motor learning and conceptual understanding in students with hearing impairments. (Pasetto et al., 2020)

Within Islamic Religious Education, these strategies can be implemented through adapted media such as step-by-step pictorial guides, interpretive videos of prayer movements, visual boards for hijaiyyah letters as well as through methods like repeated demonstrations, cooperative practice, and tactile drills (including clay based Arabic letter modeling). Supporting communication systems, such as religious sign language or total communication, also play an essential role in ensuring clarity and engagement. This integrative approach emphasizes not only knowledge transmission but also the cultivation of meaningful ritual habits that enable children to perform worship independently and confidently. The urgency of designing visual kinesthetic instructional frameworks for Islamic Religious Education has grown within inclusive schools and special schools, as this approach strengthens both the understanding of worship practices and the religious autonomy of deaf learners. Current field research and pedagogical models highlight that success is largely driven by the synergy of visual media, experiential movement-based activities, and consistent communication reinforcement. (Mutiarra et al., 2025)

Grounded in this context, the present article aims to: (1) outline a conceptual framework of visual kinesthetic strategies for teaching Islamic Religious Education to deaf students, (2) examine how these strategies enhance comprehension of fundamental worship practices, and (3) propose practical recommendations for Islamic education teachers and curriculum developers in inclusive and special education settings. Through this approach, religious learning is expected to become more accessible, meaningful, and sustainable in the everyday spiritual lives of deaf children.

Literature Review

a. Islamic Religious Education for Deaf Learners

Religious instruction for deaf students cannot be separated from the way they interpret the world through vision and bodily movement. Because their access to sound is limited, their learning experiences are shaped primarily by what they can see, touch, and practice directly. In the context of Islamic Religious Education especially in teaching worship practices such as ablution and prayer this reality carries profound implications. It is not sufficient for teachers to rely on theoretical explanations; instead, they must create learning experiences that are visually rich and supported by clear nonverbal communication. (Suparno, 2019) emphasizes that deaf children process educational messages largely through visual cues, bodily expression, and structured physical interaction. Consequently, a deep understanding of worship can only emerge when teachers are able to translate religious teachings into visual media and tangible actions that align with the learners' sensory world.

Aligned with this need, the visual kinesthetic approach offers a highly responsive pedagogical space for deaf students. Visual strategies help present worship concepts through images, sequential diagrams, videos, and symbolic aids that make each stage of a ritual easier to grasp. Meanwhile, kinesthetic engagement allows learners to internalize worship through repeated bodily movement, enabling comprehension not only at a cognitive level but also within their motor memory. (Arsyad, 2017) notes that visualization enhances memory retention and strengthens conceptual clarity, while (Gardner, 2018) highlights kinesthetic intelligence as the capacity to understand the world through action and hands-on experience. When combined within Islamic Religious Education, these approaches bring learning to life making it concrete, engaging, and emotionally affirming. (Wulandari, 2020) findings demonstrate that visual demonstrations of worship and movement modeling significantly improve the accuracy of deaf students' prayer performance because their learning depends heavily on strong visual imitation patterns. For this reason, visual kinesthetic instruction functions not merely as a method but as an essential bridge that connects deaf learners to a deeper understanding of religious practice.

This approach also resonates with the broader principles of humanistic and inclusive education. Humanistic education views learners as individuals with unique experiences, learning modes, and developmental rhythms. For deaf students, honoring this uniqueness means allowing them to learn in ways most compatible with their strengths through clear visual guidance and movement

they can physically experience. (Mulyasa, 2020) reminds us that inclusive education should facilitate the optimal development of each learner according to their personal characteristics. Similarly, (Al-Ghazali, 2017) asserts that worship is not only a formal ritual but also a bodily discipline that shapes the heart toward obedience. Through visual kinesthetic strategies, deaf students are not simply instructed in what worship entails; they are guided to experience it as a meaningful spiritual journey. In this sense, such strategies affirm a profound message: every child, including those with hearing impairments, deserves the opportunity to feel closeness to Allah SWT through learning processes that are humane, accessible, and grounded in their lived reality.

Effectiveness of the Visual Kinesthetic Approach in Deaf Students' Understanding of Worship

The visual kinesthetic approach is highly suited to the learning characteristics of deaf students, who depend more on visual perception and bodily movement than on auditory input. In the context of worship instruction where rituals involve both conceptual understanding and sequential physical actions visual media, demonstrations, and structured movement activities help students form a more complete grasp of the material. (Suparno, 2018) notes that combining visual cues with motor engagement enhances retention because information is stored through both visual and kinesthetic memory. In practice, this approach allows deaf learners to understand worship through direct experience rather than verbal explanation alone. For example, when learning ablution, students reinforce comprehension by repeatedly performing each step while guided by visual sequences. (Wijayanti, 2019) found that ritual mastery improves significantly when students receive visual prompts, such as step-by-step cards, along with structured kinesthetic practice.

The approach also supports the internalization of spiritual meaning. Visual narratives such as simple illustrations, short videos, or symbolic models help students connect ritual actions with underlying moral values. (Hidayat, 2020) shows that deaf learners better understand religious messages when teachers use narrative visual media like worship comics or movement simulations, which bridge symbolic meaning with lived experience. Beyond procedural comprehension, visual kinesthetic strategies foster emotional engagement. Active bodily involvement enables students to feel present in the learning process, strengthening their confidence and attachment to religious activities. (Pratiwi, 2021) reports that motor-based learning not only improves accuracy but also deepens students' emotional connection to worship.

The approach further enhances long-term recall. Rituals practiced through repeated movement form muscle memory, enabling students to recall sequences even when they forget verbal cues. (Arifianto, 2022) highlights kinesthetic memory as a key learning asset for deaf students, particularly in sequential tasks like prayer and ablution. Overall, the visual kinesthetic approach serves as more than a technical instructional method it is a pedagogical bridge that harmonizes the challenges and strengths of deaf learners. By experiencing worship through sight and movement, students gain cognitive clarity, emotional involvement, and

stable motor proficiency, allowing them to participate fully and meaningfully in daily religious practice.

Relevance of Humanistic and Inclusive Approaches in Islamic Religious Education for Deaf Learners

A humanistic approach is essential in teaching Islamic Religious Education to deaf students because it prioritizes dignity, empathy, and recognition of each learner's unique way of understanding the world. Deaf children rely heavily on visual language and bodily expression, making it necessary for teachers to adjust their methods to match the students' natural learning rhythm. (Hamdani, 2018) affirms that humanistic education positions learners as active subjects, with teachers acting as compassionate facilitators rather than dominant authorities. The inclusive approach strengthens these principles by ensuring that every learner including those with hearing impairments has equitable access to religious instruction. In Islamic Religious Education, inclusivity involves using visual supports, sign language, demonstrations, and alternative communication methods. (Sapon-Shevin, 2020) argues that an inclusive classroom values diversity as a collective strength, not a barrier, affirming the presence of deaf students within the learning community.

In practice, these approaches align closely with the core values of Islam, which emphasize compassion, respect, and fairness. When teachers respond sensitively to the non-verbal expressions of deaf learners, religious instruction becomes more meaningful and less intimidating. (Daradjat, 2019) highlights that effective religious education depends not only on accurate content but also on the teacher's warmth and emotional guidance. Humanistic and inclusive strategies also address communication barriers common in Islamic Religious Education classrooms. By integrating visual media, sign-supported explanations, and guided movement, teachers help students grasp ritual concepts more concretely. (Lestari, 2021) shows that visual worship cards, videos, and movement simulations delivered in an emotionally supportive environment significantly enhance deaf students' understanding of religious practices.

These approaches also foster spiritual and emotional growth. Deaf learners often struggle with abstract theological ideas, making empathetic explanation crucial. When teachers create a warm, inclusive climate, students are better able to experience worship as a meaningful inner process rather than a series of mechanical actions. (Mahfud, 2022) found that such environments enhance religious motivation among deaf students. Moreover, humanistic and inclusive practices support moral and social development. Limited verbal communication can leave deaf learners feeling isolated or less confident, but providing space for expression through sign language, writing, or drawing helps strengthen their sense of belonging. (UNESCO, 2020) notes that inclusive education promotes self-esteem and spiritual well-being by affirming each learner's identity. Overall, humanistic and inclusive approaches are not merely relevant they are essential for ensuring that deaf learners experience Islamic teachings fully and equitably. Through respect for individuality, visually supportive instruction, and emotionally warm communication, these approaches

enable deaf students to engage in religious life with confidence, understanding, and dignity.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore how visual kinesthetic strategies in Islamic Religious Education are implemented to enhance worship understanding among deaf learners. A qualitative design is appropriate because the study examines experiences, learning processes, and the meanings constructed by teachers and students with hearing impairments. This aligns with (Creswell & Poth, 2018) view that qualitative research seeks to uncover social realities through deep, field-based engagement. Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews with Islamic Education teachers and deaf students, and documentation of visual media, kinesthetic activity sheets, and lesson plans. As suggested by (Sugiyono, 2019), qualitative data must be gathered through techniques that allow direct interaction with participants to produce a holistic understanding. Data analysis followed the interactive model of (Miles et al., 2020), which includes iterative cycles of data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing to capture the complete meaning of visual kinesthetic instructional practices. Data validity was strengthened through source and technique triangulation, ensuring that the interpretations genuinely reflect the authentic learning experiences of deaf students engaging with worship through visual and kinesthetic methods.

Result And Discussion

The findings of this study show that the implementation of visual kinesthetic Islamic Education strategies significantly improves deaf students' understanding of worship practices. Prior to the intervention, most students struggled to grasp abstract concepts such as the sequence of prayer movements, symbolic meanings, and the connection between ritual acts and spiritual values. Once teachers introduced visual supports, such as step-by-step movement cards, sequential illustrations, and silent videos focused on gestures students responded more positively and were able to follow worship procedures more easily because concrete visuals compensated for their limited access to verbal explanations. The kinesthetic component further strengthened their comprehension. Through hands-on activities, including wudu simulations and guided prayer movements, students learned not only by observing but by experiencing the actions repeatedly and purposefully. Teacher interviews revealed that this approach boosted students' confidence, focus, and motivation, as the kinesthetic tasks created an engaging and cognitively manageable learning environment. Documentation analysis confirmed these results, showing increased consistency and accuracy in performing worship sequences, as well as improved interpretation of visual religious symbols. This progress reflects not only technical skills but also a deeper internalization of worship meaning,

supported by sensory-based instructional methods aligned with the communication characteristics of deaf learners.

a. Research Findings Analysis Table

Analytical Aspect	Key Findings	Interpretation / Analytical Meaning
Initial Understanding of Worship	Students struggled to grasp prayer sequences, meanings of worship, and ritual symbols.	Indicates that abstract religious concepts cannot be understood through verbal methods due to limited access to auditory language.
Effectiveness of Visual Media	Picture cards, sequential illustrations, and silent videos helped students grasp the material more quickly.	Concrete visualizations reduce communication barriers and provide representations suited to the dominant sensory channels of deaf learners.
Effectiveness of Kinesthetic Activities	Students were more focused and remembered better when directly practicing wudu, prayer, and ritual movements.	Kinesthetic engagement enhances learning through bodily experience, strengthening motor memory and aiding the internalization of worship meaning.
Emotional Response and Motivation	Students became more enthusiastic, confident, and actively involved.	This approach fosters an inclusive, enjoyable, and safe learning environment that boosts personal engagement.
Final Competency Changes	Students showed improved movement accuracy, greater independence in worship, and better interpretation of visual symbols.	Demonstrates that visual kinesthetic integration effectively builds holistic understanding technical, cognitive, and spiritual.
Pedagogical Contribution	Teachers found the teaching process more effective, interactive, and aligned with the needs of students with disabilities.	Suggests that this model is a sustainable pedagogical option for Islamic Education tailored to deaf learners' characteristics.

The analysis highlights that visual kinesthetic strategies significantly enhance the worship understanding of deaf students by addressing their unique communication and sensory needs. Visual aids offer clear and accessible representations of abstract religious concepts, while kinesthetic activities strengthen learning through direct bodily experience. These combined

approaches not only improve students' technical accuracy and independence in performing worship but also foster greater confidence, motivation, and engagement. Furthermore, teachers report that this method creates a more inclusive and effective learning environment, indicating its strong potential as a sustainable pedagogical model in Islamic Education for learners with hearing impairments. The findings show that integrating visual kinesthetic strategies in Islamic Education is not only effective for delivering material but also enables deaf students to develop spiritual understanding in a more inclusive and developmentally appropriate way. By presenting information through the channels they access most visual cues and body movement this approach helps create stronger mental representations of worship practices. Thus, the visual kinesthetic model functions not merely as an alternative method, but as a transformative pedagogical strategy that allows deaf students to grasp and internalize religious practices more authentically and meaningfully.

Discussion

The study demonstrates that a visual kinesthetic approach in Islamic Education is highly relevant and effective for deaf students. Visual supports enable them to grasp abstract religious concepts by providing concrete representations of worship practices, functioning as an essential visual language that compensates for limited verbal access. Kinesthetic activities such as practicing the movements of prayer and ablution further strengthen learning through direct physical experience, reinforcing procedural memory and deepening understanding. Together, these strategies create a multisensory and meaningful learning environment that aligns with the natural learning pathways of deaf students. Pedagogically, the findings highlight the need for Islamic Education to adopt more multimodal and responsive methods that accommodate diverse learners. This approach offers a sustainable and applicable model for both inclusive schools and special education settings.

a. Summary of Key Findings and Pedagogical Implications

Analytical Aspect	Main Findings	Interpretation / Analytical Meaning
Initial Understanding of Worship	Students struggled to grasp prayer sequences, symbolic meanings, and abstract ritual concepts.	Indicates that abstract religious concepts cannot be effectively understood through verbal instruction alone due to limited auditory linguistic access.
Effectiveness of Visual Media	Sequential images, illustrated steps, and silent videos improved comprehension.	Concrete visual representations help overcome communication barriers and align with the dominant sensory channels of deaf learners.

Effectiveness of Kinesthetic Activities	Students became more focused and retained information better when directly practicing wudu and prayer movements.	Kinesthetic engagement reinforces learning through bodily experience, strengthening motor memory and aiding internalization of worship practices.
Emotional Response and Motivation	Students showed greater enthusiasm, confidence, and participation.	The approach fosters an inclusive, supportive learning environment that enhances emotional safety and personal engagement.
Final Competence Development	Improved accuracy of movements, increased independence in performing worship, and better interpretation of visual symbols.	Demonstrates successful integration of visual kinesthetic strategies in developing holistic understanding technical, cognitive, and spiritual.
Pedagogical Contribution	Teachers found the method more effective, interactive, and aligned with special-needs learning characteristics.	Suggests the approach as a sustainable pedagogical model for Islamic Education in inclusive or special-education settings.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that a visual kinesthetic instructional approach in Islamic Religious Education significantly enhances the worship understanding of deaf students. By integrating images, symbols, demonstrations, and structured physical activities, the strategy aligns with the sensory strengths of learners who rely primarily on visual perception and motor responses to grasp religious concepts. This approach also enables teachers to create a more inclusive and sensory-responsive learning environment, allowing interactions with worship materials to occur more naturally and meaningfully. When information is presented through visual media and reinforced through bodily movement, deaf students not only learn the procedural steps of worship but also internalize their spiritual meaning through direct, embodied experiences. Consequently, the visual kinesthetic model can be recommended as an effective, practical, and contextually relevant pedagogical strategy for Islamic Religious Education in both inclusive schools and special education settings.

Declaration of conflicting interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the research, authorship, or publication of this article. All processes in this study, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation, were conducted

independently and without any financial, institutional, or personal influence that could affect the objectivity of the findings.

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