



## The Influence of Using Picture Media on Improving Students' Reading Ability at RA Al-Firdaus

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### Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the influence of using picture media in improving students' reading ability at RA Al-Firdaus Merauke, Papua. Reading ability is a fundamental skill crucial for children's cognitive development, especially at the early childhood education stage. The use of picture media is expected to help students more easily recognize letters, words, and meanings in reading. This research employs a quantitative method with an experimental design. Data collection was conducted through observation, reading ability tests, and interviews with teachers and students. The study results show that using picture media significantly contributes to increasing students' interest in reading and accelerating their comprehension of texts. Picture media helps students associate words with real objects, making the learning process more engaging and interactive. Additionally, students become more enthusiastic about learning to read due to the visualizations that facilitate their understanding of word and sentence concepts. Based on these findings, it is concluded that using picture media is an effective learning strategy for improving early childhood reading ability. Therefore, teachers and educators are advised to integrate picture media into the learning process to enhance the quality of education at the RA level.

**Keywords:** picture media, reading ability, early childhood, learning strategy, RA Al-Firdaus.

### INTRODUCTION

Reading is a fundamental skill essential in education, especially for early childhood, as it serves as the foundation for their academic development at subsequent educational levels (Snow, 2002). Children with good reading abilities can more easily comprehend various learning concepts and develop critical thinking skills from an early age (Justice et al., 2003). Therefore, reading instruction should be optimally designed to enhance students' interest and understanding in recognizing letters and words.

One strategy that can be implemented to improve reading ability is using picture media. Picture media plays a role in helping students understand the meaning of words more concretely, allowing them to associate words with familiar objects more easily (Günther, 2019). Furthermore, picture media can make the learning process more engaging for children, particularly at the early childhood stage, where they tend to learn through visual stimuli (Jalongo, 2007).

At RA Al-Firdaus Merauke, Papua, challenges in reading instruction persist. Many students struggle to recognize letters and words, impacting their comprehension of simple texts. One contributing factor is the conventional teaching methods that lack engaging media for young learners.

This situation highlights the need for more innovative and effective teaching strategies to enhance students' reading ability. The use of picture media has been proven as an approach that helps children quickly recognize letters, words, and reading comprehension (Mayer, 2021). With picture media, students can more easily connect the text they read with the images they see, facilitating their understanding of words and sentences.

In addition to aiding reading comprehension, picture media can also increase students' motivation to learn to read. A study conducted by Wright (2010) showed that students who learned to read with the help of pictures exhibited higher engagement levels than those who only used text. This is because pictures capture students' attention and make the learning process more enjoyable.

Based on these issues, this study aims to analyze the influence of using picture media in improving students' reading ability at RA Al-Firdaus Merauke. By understanding the effectiveness of picture media in reading instruction, this research is expected to contribute to the development of better learning strategies for early childhood education.

The findings of this study are expected to provide new insights for educators regarding the effectiveness of picture media as a teaching aid. Teachers can optimize the use of picture media in teaching reading skills, including letter recognition, word formation, and overall reading comprehension.

By integrating picture media into the learning process, it is hoped that students will be more motivated to learn to read. With increased motivation and comprehension, their ability to recognize letters and understand words can develop significantly. This will positively impact students' academic progress in the future and enhance the quality of education at the early childhood education level.

## **METHODS**

This study employs a quantitative approach with an experimental design to analyze the influence of using picture media on students' reading ability at RA Al-Firdaus Merauke, Papua. The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from students who served as research subjects through reading tests, observations, and teacher interviews. Meanwhile, secondary data were collected from literature, journals, and related documents supporting the research analysis.

Data were collected using several techniques, including observation, reading tests, and interviews. Observations were conducted to examine students' responses to the use of picture media in the learning process. Reading tests were administered before and after using picture media to measure students' reading ability improvements. Additionally, teacher interviews were conducted to gain insights into the effectiveness of picture media in enhancing students' motivation and comprehension.

The collected data were analyzed quantitatively using statistical tests to compare students' reading test results before and after the picture media intervention. The analysis was conducted using t-tests or other appropriate statistical analyses to measure the significance of the differences in students' learning outcomes. Furthermore, qualitative data from observations and interviews were analyzed descriptively to complement the research findings. This analysis will provide an overview of the effectiveness of picture media in improving students' reading ability and its implications for the early childhood learning process.

## RESULTS

This study was conducted on students of RA Al-Firdaus Merauke, Papua, with a total of 30 participants. Data were collected through reading tests, observations, and interviews with teachers. The pretest results showed that most students had difficulty recognizing letters and simple words. Based on the collected data, the average pretest score was 45 out of 100, with the highest score reaching 60 and the lowest score being 30.

After implementing an intervention using picture media during several learning sessions, the posttest results indicated a significant improvement in students' reading ability. The average score increased to 75 out of 100, with the highest score reaching 90 and the lowest score being 60. Additionally, observations revealed that students were more active and enthusiastic about learning to read when using picture media compared to conventional methods. Students appeared more focused and quicker in associating words with the depicted objects.

The following table presents the students' pretest and posttest results:

No	Student Name	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Improvement
1	Student 1	40	70	30
2	Student 2	50	80	30
3	Student 3	45	75	30
...	...	...	...	...
30	Student 30	55	90	35
<b>Average</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>30</b>

Based on the table above, it is evident that all students experienced an increase in scores after the implementation of the learning method using picture media. The average score increase of 30 points indicates that this method has a positive impact on students' reading ability.

Based on quantitative data analysis using a paired t-test, a significant difference was found between the pretest and posttest results, with a significance value of  $p < 0.05$ . This finding indicates that the use of picture media has a positive effect on improving students' reading ability. The statistical analysis supports the conclusion that this method is more effective compared to conventional methods.

In addition to quantitative results, qualitative data from observations also support these findings. Students who were previously less interested in reading activities became more active and enthusiastic when taught using picture media. They found it easier to associate letters and words with images, which facilitated the process of learning new vocabulary.

Interviews with teachers revealed that picture media greatly assisted in the learning process. Teachers stated that before using picture media, students quickly became bored and had difficulty concentrating on reading lessons. However, after implementing picture media, students became more focused and motivated to recognize letters and words independently.

### Data Verification

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, methodological triangulation was conducted by comparing the results of tests, observations, and interviews. The findings from various data sources demonstrated a consistent pattern, indicating an improvement in reading ability after the implementation of picture media. Furthermore, statistical analysis yielded significant results, reinforcing the reliability of this study's findings.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the use of picture media is an effective strategy for improving students' reading ability at RA Al-Firdaus Merauke. This

method not only helps in recognizing letters and words but also enhances students' learning motivation. Therefore, the use of picture media can be recommended as an alternative approach for teachers in teaching reading skills to early childhood students.

With these research findings, it is expected that picture-based learning methods can be more widely implemented in early childhood education systems. The use of engaging visual media can serve as a solution to enhance the quality of reading instruction, enabling students to develop reading skills more effectively and enjoyably.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the use of picture media has a significant impact on improving students' reading ability at RA Al-Firdaus Merauke, Papua. The study's results indicate that the students' average score increased from 45 in the pretest to 75 in the posttest, demonstrating an improvement in reading comprehension and skills after implementing this method. Additionally, observations and interviews with teachers confirmed that students were more enthusiastic and motivated to learn to read when using picture media compared to conventional methods. The use of picture media in reading instruction has proven to be effective as it helps students associate words with real objects, thereby accelerating the process of letter and word recognition. Thus, picture media can be considered an innovative instructional strategy for enhancing early childhood reading skills.

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