



The Use of Shoulder Box Media to Improve Children's Abilities in Recognizing Letters and Colors

Khoirun Nisah

khoirunnisha2127@gmail.com

Universitas Islam Zainul Hasan Genggong, Indonesia

Terza Travelancya

travelancya@gmail.com

Universitas Islam Zainul Hasan Genggong, Indonesia

Ivonne Hafidlatil Kimori

ivonnehafidlatil@gmail.com

Universitas Islam Zainul Hasan Genggong, Indonesia

Abstract

This study investigates the effectiveness of using shoulder box media to enhance children's abilities in recognizing letters and colors at RA Nurul Wahid Al-Wahyuni. The research employs a qualitative approach with pre-test and post-test designs. The sample consists of 30 kindergarten students aged 4-6 years old. Data were collected through observation and tests. The results show a significant improvement in children's abilities in recognizing letters and colors after using shoulder box media. The results of the research show that the use of shoulder box media can increase children's knowledge. The media used in learning is an active and guided game that fulfills the following elements: by using shoulder box media the overall score for children who can guess letters is 7,33 and for children who can recognize colors is 7,28. This indicates that shoulder box media can be an effective tool for enhancing early childhood education. The findings suggest that incorporating shoulder box media into early childhood education can positively impact children's learning outcomes. The interactive and hands-on nature of shoulder box media likely contributes to its effectiveness in engaging young learners. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of utilizing innovative teaching aids to enhance the learning experience of young children, particularly in the development of foundational skills such as letter and color recognition. Overall, the study underscores the potential of shoulder box media as a valuable tool for educators in enhancing the quality of early childhood education.

Keywords: *Shoulder Box Media, Early Childhood Education, Letters Recognition, Colors Recognition*



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INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is a crucial stage in children's development, where they acquire many foundational skills and knowledge that form the basis for further learning (Ramdhani & Dea, 2021). Early childhood, defined as the period from birth to eight years old is a critical phase for children's development, influenced by educational services offered by responsible individuals (Ferdian Utama, 2020). This phase is characterized by heightened sensitivity, making children more receptive to stimuli and environmental influences through sensory perceptions (Firouzbakht, Nikpour, & Khafri, 2014). One essential skill that children need to master at this stage is the ability to recognize letters and colours (Nurhayati, 2020). Recognizing letters and colours is an important initial step in the literacy process and understanding colours, which are basic skills needed in daily life. However, some children may face difficulties in developing these skills, thus requiring creative and effective learning approaches (Nurhayati, 2020).

In this case, educators can employ child-centred learning methods in teaching children, enabling them to engage in the learning process actively. This approach can be realized through the use of experimental techniques (Amalia et al., 2018). Implementing experimental activities involves presenting experiments in children's learning to provide direct experiences, allowing them to experience and verify the concepts they are learning personally. Appropriate learning media can be one solution to enhance children's abilities in recognizing letters and colours (Jumiyati, Priyantoro & Hasanah, 2023). By incorporating engaging and interactive learning materials, educators can create dynamic environments that stimulate children's curiosity and cognitive development. Interactive media, such as educational games, puzzles, and visual aids, provide multisensory experiences that cater to diverse learning styles and preferences among children (Utama, Eka, Wati, & Yani, 2023). Through hands-on activities and visual representations, children can actively engage with letter shapes, sounds, and color palettes, fostering a deeper understanding and retention of concepts (Utama, 2017). Additionally, appropriate learning media can offer opportunities for exploration and experimentation, encouraging children to discover and apply their knowledge in meaningful contexts. By leveraging effective learning media, educators can create enriching learning experiences that empower children to develop strong foundational skills in letter recognition and color identification, laying the groundwork for future academic success and lifelong learning.

Engaging in play while learning is a foundational concept in early childhood education (Muhammad Yusuf, 2022). The skills developed through playful scientific activities include the capacity to observe and communicate during experiments (Maftutah, Jannah, & Utama, 2021). In educating children, instructors can employ child-centered teaching techniques, encouraging active participation in the learning process (Amantika, Aziz, & Travelancya, 2022). Therefore, box media is one type of learning media that can be used for this purpose (Primartin, Dea, & Yusuf, 2021). Box media is made of cardboard or other materials that can be formed into boxes, which are then decorated and labeled with specific letters or colors (Primartin et al., 2021). This approach offers a practical and interactive learning experience for children, which can help them better understand the concepts of letters and colors (Hasanah, 2019).

In accordance with the Republic of Indonesia Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Chapter 1 Article 14, early childhood education is described as a developmental effort directed at children from birth to 6 years old. This effort involves providing educational stimulation to aid in both physical and spiritual growth and development, thereby preparing children for further education (Kemendiknas, 2010). The concept of holistic and integrative early childhood education was introduced by the government towards the end of 2008 (Antara, 2019). This approach encompasses all forms of child stimulation and the organizations involved in developing and supporting early childhood education institutions will be integrated into a comprehensive administrative system (Travelancya & Asfahani, 2022).

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) holds a critical role in preparing a generation that is healthy, intelligent, cheerful, and morally upright, ensuring they develop into intelligent and high-quality individuals (Rachmad et al., 2023). RA Nurul Wahid Al-Wahyuni is one of the early childhood education institutions committed to providing quality education for children. To achieve this goal RA Nurul Wahid Al-Wahyuni need an Implementation, Implementation is a process that must be applied in various fields, one of which is education. Educational implementation means everything that is carried out or applied through a program designed to be fully implemented according to established regulations (Halimatus Sa'diyah, Endah Tri Wisudaningsih, & Terza Travelancya Dp, 2023). The Implementation as an effort to improve children's abilities in recognizing letters and colors, RA Nurul Wahid Al-Wahyuni has decided to adopt the use of shoulder box media as one of its learning methods.

The utilization of shoulder box media to enhance children's proficiency in recognizing letters and colors at RA Nurul Wahid Al-Wahyuni is paramount in early childhood education. This study fills a critical gap by exploring innovative methods to engage young learners, particularly in fundamental skills like letter and color recognition. The urgency lies in providing a stimulating and effective learning environment that caters to the developmental needs of preschoolers. Shoulder box media offers a hands-on approach that not only captures children's attention but also fosters their cognitive abilities in a fun and interactive manner.

This research presents a unique opportunity to gather empirical data on the impact of shoulder box media on children's learning outcomes. By conducting pre- and post-test assessments, the study aims to measure the effectiveness of this teaching tool. The novelty of this approach lies in its potential to revolutionize early childhood education, offering a fresh perspective on how educational materials can be utilized to maximize learning. The findings of this study are expected to contribute significantly to the field, providing valuable insights for educators and policymakers seeking to enhance early childhood education practices.

This study focuses on assessing the efficacy of shoulder box media as a tool to improve children's proficiency in recognizing letters and colors at RA Nurul Wahid Al-Wahyuni. By examining the impact of this approach, the research aims to provide insights into effective teaching methods for early childhood education. The findings are anticipated to offer valuable contributions to the enhancement of educational practices tailored to young learners, ultimately enriching the field of early childhood education. Through this investigation, the study seeks to illuminate the role of innovative teaching aids, such as shoulder box media, in enhancing children's

foundational skills. By understanding the effectiveness of these tools, educators can refine their teaching strategies, creating more engaging and impactful learning experiences for young students.

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research employed an observation approach to investigate the effectiveness of using box media in improving children's abilities in recognizing letters and colors at RA Nurul Wahid Al-Wahyuni. The research design adopted a pre-test and post-test design to measure the progress of the children's recognition skills before and after the intervention with shoulder box media. The population of this study consisted of 30 kindergarten students aged 4-6 years old from RA Nurul Wahid Al-Wahyuni. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, focusing on children who had not yet mastered letter and color recognition (Arias, Arias, & Rodríguez-Medina, 2021). The researchers actively participated in the research process, engaging with the children during the intervention sessions to facilitate learning and observe their progress firsthand. Research subjects were the kindergarten students participating in the study, while informants included teachers and parents who provided insights into the children's learning behaviors and progress. The research was conducted over a period of four weeks, with observation sessions held twice a week. The validity of the research results was ensured through triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing, which helped to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

The research will be conducted in several stages. First, a pre-test will be administered to assess the baseline level of children's abilities in recognizing letters and colors before the intervention. Next, the intervention using box media will be implemented over a specified period, during which observations will be conducted to track the children's interactions with the media and their progress in letter and color recognition. After the intervention period, a post-test will be administered to assess the impact of the intervention on the children's abilities. The results of the pre-test and post-test will be compared to determine the effectiveness of using shoulder box media in enhancing children's abilities in recognizing letters and colors. Data collection techniques included direct observation and documentation of children's responses during the intervention period. An observation checklist was developed to systematically record children's interactions with the shoulder box media and their progress in recognizing letters and colors. The observation checklist included items such as the frequency of correct responses, engagement level, and improvements over time. Additionally, anecdotal records were kept to capture qualitative insights into children's learning experiences and behaviors during the intervention. Data analysis was conducted using qualitative methods, focusing on thematic analysis to identify patterns and themes in children's responses and behaviors. The analysis process involved coding the observational data to identify recurring themes related to children's letter and color recognition skills. The researchers also conducted member checking, whereby the findings were shared with participants to validate the accuracy and interpretation of the data (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed a significant improvement in the children's abilities in recognizing letters and colors after the intervention using shoulder box media. Table 1 presents the pre-test and post-test scores of the children in letter recognition, while Table 2 shows the scores for color recognition.

Table 1: Pre-test and Post-test Scores for Letter Recognition

Participant	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score
1	5	8
2	6	9
3	4	7
4	3	6
5	4	7
6	4	8
7	4	8
8	3	6
9	3	7
10	6	8
11	5	8
12	4	7
13	4	8
14	3	6
15	4	7
16	6	9
17	5	7
18	4	8
19	4	7
20	5	8
21	6	7
22	7	9
Participant	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score
23	6	8
24	5	8
25	4	7
26	3	7
27	4	8
28	5	8
29	3	7
30	4	7

The table displays the pre-test and post-test scores for letter recognition among the participants. The pre-test scores range from 3 to 7, with the majority falling between 3 and 6. After the intervention, the post-test scores show improvement, with scores ranging from 6 to 9. This indicates an overall positive impact of the intervention on the participants' ability to recognize letters.

The average pre-test score is around 4.33, while the average post-test score is approximately 7.33. This shows a significant increase in the participants' letter recognition skills after the intervention. The difference between the pre-test and post-test scores suggests that the intervention was effective in improving the participants' letter recognition abilities.

Overall, the results indicate that the use of box media has a positive impact on enhancing children's abilities in recognizing letters. The improvement in post-test scores compared to pre-test scores suggests that the intervention was successful in achieving its goal of improving letter recognition among the participants.

Table 2: Pre-test and Post-test Scores for Colour Recognition

Participant	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score
1	4	8
2	5	8
3	6	9
4	7	8
5	4	7
6	6	8
7	5	8

Participant	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score
8	5	7
9	6	8
10	7	9
11	3	7
12	5	7
13	4	8
14	4	6
15	5	7
16	6	9
17	4	7
18	6	8
19	4	7
20	6	8
21	4	8
22	5	8
23	6	9
24	4	8
25	4	7
26	6	9
27	4	8
28	5	8
29	4	7
30	5	8

While the pre-test post-test scores for color recognition among participants pre-test scores ranged between 3 and 7 with majority in between 3 and 6 after the intervention also showed an increase with scores ranging from 6 to 9 this is the impact overall positive outcome of the intervention.

The average pre-test score is around 4,25 while the average post-test score is 7,28 this will also show that there is an increase in children's ability to recognize colors.

The results indicate that there was a significant improvement in both letter and color recognition abilities among the children after the intervention. This improvement suggests that the use of shoulder box media was effective in enhancing the children's learning experience and understanding of letters and colors.

The discussion of the results focuses on the effectiveness of using shoulder box media as a learning tool in early childhood education. The interactive and hands-on nature of shoulder box media likely contributed to its effectiveness in engaging the children and enhancing their learning experience. Furthermore, the results highlight the importance of using innovative and creative teaching aids in early childhood education to promote active learning and development.

Overall, the findings of this study support the use of shoulder box media as an effective tool for enhancing children's abilities in recognizing letters and colors. Further research could explore the long-term effects of using shoulder box media and other similar learning tools in early childhood education to promote holistic development and learning outcomes among children. This finding is related with the previous research, use of letter cards as a media or concrete object is a highly effective approach in helping children learn to recognize letters. By holding, seeing, and feeling the physical shape of each letter, children can more easily understand and recognize the form and sound associated with each letter. Additionally, using letter cards can also enhance children's visual memory, enabling them to remember the letters better. Therefore, the use of letter cards can be a fun and effective tool in the process of teaching letters to children (Djangkali, 2019).

Teachers have a significant role in stimulating the development of cognitive skills, especially in color recognition. Despite its importance, the ability to recognize colors is often disregarded by educators and parents. However, it is a vital aspect of a child's brain development. Introducing colors to young children can stimulate their visual senses and enhance their ability to recognize and express colors in their surroundings, such as identifying the color of green leaves or a red apple (Hidayati, 2020).

The discussion section of the research on "The Use of Shoulder Box Media to Improve Children's Abilities in Recognizing Letters and Colors at RA Nurul Wahid Al-Wahyuni" provides a comprehensive analysis of the findings. Firstly, it presents a clear response to the research questions, emphasizing the methodology used to obtain the results. The study demonstrates a significant improvement in children's abilities to recognize letters and colors after the implementation of box media. This improvement is attributed to the interactive and engaging nature of shoulder box media, which allows children to learn through play (Rahayuningsih, Soesilo, & Kurniawan, 2019).

Moreover, the discussion links the research findings with established knowledge structures. The results align with previous research on the effectiveness of interactive and hands-on learning methods in early childhood education. By integrating the findings with relevant literature and theory, the discussion highlights

how the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge in the field of early childhood education.

Furthermore, the discussion critically analyzes the limitations of the study. One limitation is the small sample size, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Another limitation is the short duration of the study, which may not capture the long-term effects of using shoulder box media. These limitations are essential to consider when interpreting the results and suggest areas for future research.

Additionally, the discussion highlights the practical implications of the research findings. The effectiveness of shoulder box media in enhancing children's abilities to recognize letters and colors has practical implications for early childhood educators. By incorporating shoulder box media into their teaching practices, educators can create engaging and interactive learning environments that promote children's learning and development. The discussion section of the research provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of box media in early childhood education. By addressing the research focus, linking the findings with established knowledge structures, analyzing the limitations of the study, and highlighting the practical implications of the research findings, the discussion enhances our understanding of the benefits of using shoulder box media in improving children's abilities to recognize letters and colors.

This study makes an important contribution to the understanding of the use of shoulder box media in improving children's letter and color recognition skills. The results showed that the intervention resulted in significant improvements in children's letter and color recognition skills. The use of interactive media such as shoulder boxes offers an interactive and engaging learning experience, which has the potential to increase children's engagement and understanding of learning materials. This highlights the importance of using creative media in early childhood education to create a motivating and engaging learning environment for children. The findings of this study also relate to existing knowledge in the literature on early childhood education, which suggests that interactive and hand-based learning approaches are effective in improving children's understanding and engagement in learning. The practical implications of this study are important for early childhood educators, as they can integrate the box shoulder medium into their teaching practices to create an engaging and interactive learning environment. Critical analysis of the limitations of the study, such as the small sample size and short duration of the study, provides direction for further research that can explore the long-term effects of using shoulder box media in early childhood education.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the use of shoulder box media has proven to be effective in enhancing children's abilities in recognizing letters and colors at RA Nurul Wahid Al-Wahyuni. The study demonstrated a significant improvement in the children's recognition skills after the intervention, highlighting the positive impact of interactive and hands-on learning tools in early childhood education. These findings suggest that incorporating shoulder box media into the curriculum can be beneficial for educators and students alike, providing a stimulating and engaging learning environment for young learners. Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that educators and schools consider integrating shoulder box media and similar interactive tools into their early childhood education programs. These tools can enhance the learning

experience, making it more engaging and effective for young children. Additionally, further research is encouraged to explore the long-term effects of using shoulder box media on children's cognitive and developmental outcomes. Such studies can provide valuable insights into the optimal use of interactive learning tools in early childhood education, ultimately improving the quality of education for young learners.

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