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The Effectiveness of the Timeline Method on Student Learning Outcomes in Islamic Cultural History Class 4 MI PAS Baitu-l-Quran Gontor

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Abstract

This study explores the efficacy of the Timeline method on the academic performance of fourth-grade students in Islamic Cultural History at MI PAS Baitul Quran Gontor. The Timeline method presents events chronologically to help students better understand historical sequences. A quantitative experimental approach with a Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design was used. Forty students were selected through Simple Random Sampling, with 20 in both experimental and control groups. Data was analyzed using the Mann-Whitney U test with SPSS software. The results indicate a significant difference between the experimental class, which used the Timeline method, and the control class. The experimental class's post-test average was 85.25 compared to the control class's 71, supported by a Mann-Whitney significance value of Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000 < 0.05. This shows the Timeline method's effectiveness in improving learning outcomes in Islamic Cultural History. Recommendations include encouraging students to enhance motivation and understanding, supporting educators in using innovative teaching methods, and urging institutions to foster creativity in the learning process.

Keywords: *timeline method, islamic cultural history, learning outcomes*

INTRODUCTION

Education is the fundamental foundation in shaping individuals of high quality, both intellectually, morally, and socially (Pettaloni, 2013). A good education is capable of creating a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also possesses the strong character needed in social life (Agbedahin, 2019). In the context of education in Indonesia, the purpose of education as stated in the Republic of Indonesia Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System is to enlighten the life of the nation and develop a fully integrated Indonesian human being, one who is devout, pious, of noble character, and possesses the ability to contribute to the welfare of society (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2003). One important aspect of education is the study of history. Specifically, in the subject of Islamic Cultural History, students are expected to understand the development of Islamic history, which involves significant events, prominent figures, and the values contained within it. (Lubis et al., 2021) This subject not only provides insights into the past but also instills moral and spiritual values that are highly relevant to contemporary life. However, the challenges faced in teaching Islamic Cultural History often lie in students' ability to understand the chronological sequence of events and connect one event to another. (Syurgawi & Yusuf, 2022)

However, learning history poses unique challenges for students. A common difficulty lies in understanding the chronological sequences of events and establishing logical connections between them. Students often struggle to see the relevance of historical content to their current lives, leading to low motivation and superficial learning. Moreover, traditional teaching methods that rely heavily on lectures and rote memorization are still prevalent in history education, including Islamic Cultural

History. These approaches often fail to engage students in meaningful ways, making the subject feel monotonous and detached from real-life experiences. Many students find historical lessons abstract due to the lack of visual aids such as maps, timelines, and multimedia content (Bunyamin, 2019). Furthermore, note that without the support of interactive learning tools, students tend to forget historical facts quickly and struggle to apply historical lessons to contemporary moral and social context. These pedagogical and cognitive barriers underscore the need for innovative methods that can make history, particularly Islamic Cultural History, more accessible, engaging, and transformative (Jalaluddin & isi H. A, 2020). At MI PAS Baitul Quran Gontor, the subject of Islamic Cultural History is taught with the hope that students can understand the journey of Islamic history and derive valuable lessons from each event. However, based on initial observations, it was found that students' learning outcomes in this subject have not yet reached a satisfactory level. Many students face difficulties in remembering and connecting various historical events that are taught, especially because the teaching methods used have not fully supported a deep understanding of the material. The average student scores on the Islamic Cultural History exam are often below the expected standard, indicating issues in the learning process (Gontor, 2024).

This issue not only affects students' low academic performance but also leads to a lack of interest and motivation in studying Islamic Cultural History. The history material, which is filled with events and figures, is often perceived as boring by students, especially when presented in a less engaging format (Ramadhan & Ihsan, 2025). This results in students being less enthusiastic about participating in the lesson, which in turn hinders their understanding of the material being taught (Triwardhani et al., 2020). Therefore, an innovative and effective approach is needed in the teaching of Islamic Cultural History that can help students better understand the sequence of historical events and spark their interest in learning. With the right approach, it is expected that students will be able to more easily remember the chronological order of events, understand the context of each event, and relate it to values that are relevant to their current lives. The main issue in this research is how to improve students' learning outcomes in Islamic Cultural History, particularly in the 4th grade at MI PAS Baitul Quran Gontor, where students' scores are low and current teaching methods do not promote a deeper understanding of the material. This study aims to test the effectiveness of the Timeline Method in enhancing students' learning outcomes in this subject. It is hoped that this research will contribute to the development of more effective teaching methods applicable in various educational institutions.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative experimental method with a Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design. The research was conducted at MI PAS Baitul Quran Gontor during the 2024-2025 academic year. The sample was selected using Simple Random Sampling, consisting of 40 4th-grade students, with 20 students in the experimental group and 20 students in the control group. The experimental group used the Timeline Method, which visualizes historical events in the form of a chronological timeline to help students understand the sequence of Islamic Cultural History events. Meanwhile, the control group used conventional teaching methods. Conventional learning methods described as mostly lecture-based and often less engaging, with little student interaction and limited effectiveness in stimulating active learning. (Meghana, 2022) This study aims to measure the difference in learning outcomes between the two groups. This study aims to measure the difference in learning outcomes between the two groups. The instrument used in this study is a test that measures students' learning outcomes before and after the implementation of the method. The collected data were analyzed using the Mann-Whitney U test with the help of SPSS software to determine whether there is a significant difference in learning outcomes between the experimental and control groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Timeline Method is an approach that combines a chronological visual representation with the concept of the sequence of historical events. (Sundari & Rofiah, 2018) This visualization allows students to more easily understand the progression of events in sequence, helping them identify the cause-and-effect relationships between the events being studied. (Rahmawati & Rachmadyanti, 2020) In the context of Islamic Cultural History, significant events such as the development of Islamic civilization, the contributions of influential figures, and major events in Islamic history can be better understood through a timeline (Hofer & Townsend, 2018). The implementation of the Timeline

method in classroom instruction follows a series of systematic steps designed to create a more structured and interactive learning process (Ahmad & Kelly, 2020). This approach aims to facilitate students' understanding of the chronological sequence of historical events while ensuring that the method can be replicated in similar educational contexts by other researchers or educators.

First, the teacher prepares the learning materials by identifying key events in the subject of Islamic Cultural History that will be studied. These events are then organized chronologically to serve as the foundation for the construction of the timeline. This stage includes the selection of learning resources, determination of the relevant time periods, and preparation of an appropriate visual timeline format that aligns with the students' grade level. Second, during the instructional session, the teacher briefly introduces the core material and provides a conceptual explanation of the Timeline method. Students are divided into small groups and assigned tasks to collaboratively construct a timeline based on the information provided, which may be drawn from textbooks or other predetermined supplementary sources. This process encourages teamwork, critical analysis, and visual organization of information in chronological order. The resulting timelines may be created manually (e.g., on paper) or using digital tools such as Canva, Padlet, or PowerPoint.

Third, after completing their timelines, each group presents their work, explaining the sequence of events and highlighting significant historical figures within their constructed timelines. The teacher then offers clarifications and reinforces key concepts as needed. Finally, reflection and evaluation activities are conducted to assess students' comprehension and to determine the effectiveness of the method in achieving the intended learning outcomes (Sundari & Rofiah, 2018). This method is grounded in the constructivist learning approach, where students actively construct knowledge through meaningful learning experiences (Akrim, 2021). Moreover, the use of visual media such as timelines has been shown to enhance information retention and conceptual understanding in history education (Lubis et al., 2021). The implementation of this method also promotes active student engagement and serves as an alternative to the passive and often monotonous nature of conventional lecture-based instruction. (Harefa et al., 2023)

At MI PAS Baitul Quran Gontor, conventional teaching methods tend to be static, relying heavily on memorization and lectures for history lessons. However, with the implementation of the Timeline Method, students become more interactive in the learning process. They not only memorize events but also understand how and why these events occurred, as well as their impact on the development of Islamic civilization. The use of a structured timeline makes it easier for students to see the continuity of events, strengthening their memory and enhancing their understanding of the material being studied. In addition, this method also facilitates the learning process visually, which is generally more effective for students in absorbing information. Such visualization stimulates students' critical thinking abilities, encouraging them not only to remember historical details but also to explore and analyze events within a broader context (Bremner, 2020).

The subject of Islamic Cultural History covers various important events that illustrate the development of Islamic civilization over time (Suherman & Sunarto, 2020). Students are expected not only to know historical facts but also to understand the values embedded in each event. However, challenges in history education often arise when the methods used fail to engage students' interest or are overly focused on memorization, without considering the broader context of the events being studied. As a result, students tend to be less motivated to learn history, and their learning outcomes become less optimal (Munawir et al., 2024). In the learning of Islamic Cultural History, it is important for students not only to know when an event occurred but also to understand how that event influenced the overall development of Islam. (Nurulhaq, 2018) Through the Timeline Method, historical events are presented in a logical sequence, helping students to connect various events, analyze their impacts, and develop a deeper understanding of Islamic history. With this approach, students are expected not only to memorize historical facts but also to understand the relevance of these events in the context of present-day life.

Timelines serve as powerful visual tools in teaching historical chronology. Timelines help students connect discrete events into broader eras and themes, laying the groundwork for effective historical thinking and context building. However, they must be more than static lists—interactive timelines that allow students to manipulate content, explore multimedia, and draw connections actively foster deeper engagement and understanding educational practitioners emphasize transforming the timeline from a passive memorization tool to an active, student-centered learning experience (Akrim, 2021). Learning outcomes are a measure of the success of the learning process. (Harefa et al., 2023) In this study, learning outcomes were measured by comparing the pre-test and

post-test scores given to students before and after the implementation of the Timeline Method. The pre-test was used to assess students' initial abilities, while the post-test was used to evaluate how well students were able to understand the material after the application of the Timeline Method (Dwijayani, 2019). Learning outcomes are crucial in assessing the effectiveness of a teaching method. An improvement in learning outcomes indicates that students not only understand the material but also have mastered it well (Harefa, 2023). In this study, students in the experimental group, who used the Timeline Method, showed a significant improvement in learning outcomes compared to students in the control group, who were taught using conventional methods. This improvement indicates that the use of visual methods such as the Timeline not only enhances students' understanding but also boosts their interest and motivation in studying history. Learning outcomes are not only measured by the improvement in post-test scores but also by the increase in student participation during the learning process. Students who are more active and engaged in learning tend to show better learning outcomes because they are more motivated and interested in the material being taught. (Jalaluddin, 2018) From the explanation above, the researcher then proceeded with data processing to test the existing hypothesis, using the following data:

Table 1. Statistic

		Pretest Experiment	Posttest Experiment	Pretest Control	Posttest Control
N	Valid	20	20	20	20
	Missing	0	0	0	0
	Mean	51.75	85.25	52.25	71.00
	Std. Error of Mean	.750	.571	.923	1.000
	Median	50.00	85.00	50.00	70.00
	Mode	50 ^a	85	50	70 ^a
	Std. Deviation	3.354	2.552	4.128	4.472
	Variance	11.250	6.513	17.039	20.000
	Range	10	10	15	15
	Minimum	45	80	45	65
	Maximum	55	90	60	80
	Sum	1035	1705	1045	1420

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

At the beginning of the study, a pre-test was conducted to assess the students' initial abilities before any treatment was applied. The pre-test was administered to both the experimental group, which would use the Timeline Method, and the control group, which would use conventional methods. The average score for the experimental group was 51.75, while the control group had an average score of 52.25. These results indicate that both groups had relatively similar abilities before the treatment began. The pre-test consisted of the same set of questions for both groups, designed to evaluate students' understanding of key events and figures in Islamic Cultural History, particularly the sequence of events and their significance. The nearly identical scores between the two groups suggest that there was no significant difference in their initial understanding of the material.

Table 2. Learning Outcomes

	Class	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Learning Outcomes	Controlling Class	20	10.55	211.00
	Experiment Class	20	30.45	609.00
	Total	40		

Test Statistics^a

Learning Outcomes

Mann-Whitney U

1.000

Wilcoxon W

211.000

Z

-5.569

Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)

.000

Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]

.000^b

a. Grouping Variable: Kelas

b. Not corrected for ties.

The statistical analysis of the pre-test using the Mann-Whitney U test also showed a Sig. (2-tailed) value of $0.791 > 0.05$, indicating that there was no significant difference between the two groups before the treatment was applied. Therefore, both groups can be considered equivalent, and any differences in the post-test results can be assumed to be the effect of the treatment provided. After the treatment was applied, with the Timeline Method in the experimental group and conventional methods in the control group, a post-test was conducted to measure students' learning outcomes. The results showed that the average score of students in the experimental group increased to 85.25, while in the control group, the average score was only 71. This improvement indicates a significant difference between the two groups, with the experimental group showing better results. This difference serves as an indicator that the Timeline Method is more effective in improving students' learning outcomes compared to conventional methods. In the post-test, students in the experimental group were better able to answer questions assessing their understanding of the sequence of historical events. They were also more capable of connecting one event to another, something that was difficult for students in the control group, who were only taught using lectures.

Table 3. The Result of Posttest in Experimental Class (*With Timeline Method*)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	80	2	10.0	10.0	10.0
	85	15	75.0	75.0	85.0
	90	3	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total		20	100.0	100.0	

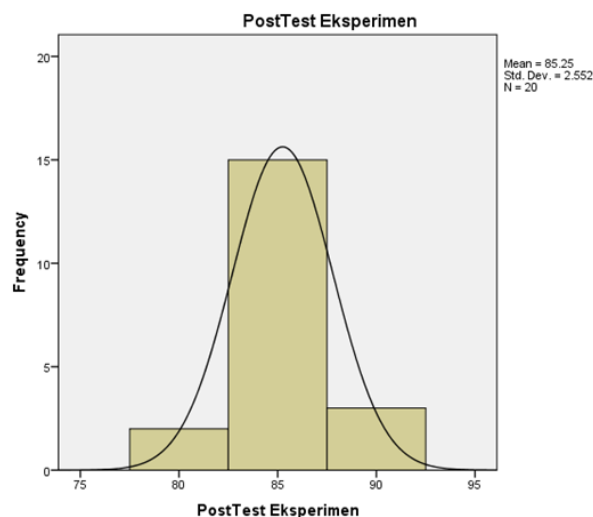


Figure 1. Distribution of Post-Test Scores for the Experimental Group

The post-test data is presented in the form of tables and graphs to visually demonstrate the difference in learning outcomes. The graph shows a significant improvement in the students in the experimental group after receiving the treatment. This improvement is not only reflected in the scores but also in the students' understanding of the material. Students in the experimental group were more active in discussions and found it easier to remember important events in Islamic Cultural History. In addition to quantitative data, qualitative insights were gathered to explore students' experiences with the Timeline method in greater depth. Based on interviews and open-ended responses, most students expressed that the Timeline method helped them better understand historical sequences, especially in remembering key events and figures in Islamic history. One student shared, "I found it easier to understand and remember the lessons because I could see the order of events clearly, especially when they were presented with visuals." Another mentioned that it felt more like "connecting a story" rather than memorizing isolated facts (Ahmadan, 2024).

However, the findings also revealed certain challenges. Some students reported difficulty in organizing historical information into a timeline format, particularly in selecting relevant details and arranging them chronologically. Others noted that creating timelines required more time and effort compared to traditional note-taking methods. A few students felt overwhelmed when dealing with

lengthy or complex topics, indicating the need for clearer guidance and scaffolding during the timeline-making process. Despite these challenges, several students highlighted increased motivation and engagement during the learning process. The visual and structured nature of the Timeline method made the subject feel more interactive and less monotonous than conventional lectures. These qualitative findings suggest that while the Timeline method enhances comprehension and student involvement, its implementation requires adequate support to address obstacles related to task complexity and time management (Sayuti et al., 2024).

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the Timeline Method has a significant positive impact on students' learning outcomes. Students in the experimental group, who were taught using the Timeline Method, showed a significant improvement in their understanding and learning outcomes. This indicates that the Timeline Method is effective in helping students better understand the material of Islamic Cultural History. The Timeline Method allows students to view historical events in a clear and logical sequence. Such visualization helps students understand the cause-and-effect relationships between different events, ultimately strengthening their comprehension of history (Harmonika et al., 2022). In addition, this method also makes learning more interactive, as students can more easily follow the sequence of historical events presented in the timeline.

The learning outcomes measured through the post-test indicate that the Timeline Method is more effective than conventional methods in improving students' learning outcomes. Students in the experimental group were not only able to answer questions more accurately but also demonstrated a deeper understanding of the material. They were better able to connect various historical events and understand how these events influenced the development of Islamic civilization. This study aligns with previous findings that suggest visual methods, such as the Timeline, can enhance students' learning outcomes. Visualization helps students focus more on the material being taught and makes it easier for them to remember significant events. Additionally, this method also boosts students' motivation to learn, as the learning process becomes more engaging and interactive.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to test the effectiveness of the Timeline Method in improving students' learning outcomes in Islamic Cultural History in the 4th grade at MI PAS Baitul Quran Gontor. The results showed that the Timeline Method significantly improved students' performance, with the experimental group achieving an average post-test score of 85.25, compared to 71 for the control group. This indicates that students taught using the Timeline Method had a better understanding of the material. The method's ability to present historical events in a visual and chronological format helped students more easily grasp the sequence and connections between events. By organizing the information in a structured way, students were able to remember the events more effectively and engage more actively during lessons. This visual approach not only made the learning process more interactive but also increased students' interest in the subject. Statistical analysis using the Mann-Whitney U test confirmed a significant difference in learning outcomes between the experimental and control groups, with a Sig. (2-tailed) value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates that the Timeline Method had a positive and statistically significant impact on students' understanding and learning outcomes. Based on these findings, it is recommended that educators consider adopting the Timeline Method in teaching Islamic Cultural History. The method not only improves learning outcomes but also helps to spark students' interest and motivation, encouraging them to delve deeper into historical studies. Thus, the Timeline Method is an effective approach that can help students gain a better understanding of history by connecting events within a broader context.

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