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CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH DOCUMENTARY VIDEO MEDIA IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: EFFECTS ON CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING, STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, AND MORAL REFLECTION

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effectiveness of a Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach integrated with documentary video media in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). A quantitative quasi-experimental non-equivalent control-group design was employed with 60 tenth-grade Madrasah Aliyah students, comprising an experimental group (n = 30) receiving CTL supported by documentary video and a control group (n = 30) receiving standard CTL with conventional visual aids. Data were collected through validated pretest-posttest instruments, a classroom engagement observation rubric, a moral-reflection questionnaire, and supporting reflective response logs. Baseline testing indicated normal and homogeneous pretest distributions with no meaningful initial difference between groups. After the intervention, the experimental group achieved a higher posttest mean (84.50, SD = 6.25) than the control group (72.30, SD = 7.85), with a significant difference, $t(58) = 6.64$, $p < .001$. The experimental group also achieved a higher N-gain (0.63 versus 0.32), $t(58) = 7.12$, $p < .001$. Overall engagement reached 85.6% in the experimental class compared with 69.4% in the control class. Moral-reflection scores were descriptively higher in the experimental group (M = 4.38, SD = 0.42) than in the control group (M = 3.62, SD = 0.55). The findings indicate that documentary video can function as a contextual anchor that strengthens conceptual understanding, active engagement, and reflective internalization of Islamic values when systematically embedded within CTL phases.

Keywords: Contextual Teaching and Learning, documentary video, Islamic Religious Education, student engagement, moral reflection, learning outcomes

I. INTRODUCTION

Submission of a manuscript implies: that the work described has not been published before; that it is not under consideration for publication anywhere else; that its publication has been approved by all co-authors, if any, as well as by the responsible authorities tacitly or explicitly at the institute where the work has been carried out.

Islamic Religious Education is expected to develop not only students' conceptual understanding of religious teachings but also their ability to connect Islamic values with everyday conduct, social responsibility, and moral judgment. This expectation is especially important at the secondary-school level, where learners increasingly encounter complex social issues and digital information environments. Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is relevant to this objective because it organizes learning around meaningful links between academic content and real-life situations, allowing students to construct understanding through inquiry, questioning, collaboration, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment. Recent studies in Islamic education indicate that CTL can make PAI learning more meaningful by connecting religious concepts with students' lived environments and practical behavior (Anwar 2021; Sarwani 2023).

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At the same time, contemporary students engage extensively with audiovisual and digital content. Educational research published during the last several years has shown that well-designed video can improve learning when it is used as an integral part of instruction rather than as passive entertainment. A systematic review by (Noetel et al. 2021) found that replacing or supplementing conventional instruction with video generally improved learning outcomes, while (Mayer 2021) emphasizes that coordinated visual and verbal representations can support meaningful learning when multimedia design manages cognitive load and directs attention to essential information. In PAI specifically, recent studies report positive contributions of audiovisual and digital video media to comprehension, learning outcomes, and motivation (Yahya et al. 2024; Yamin, Hairun, and Jumadi 2023).

Despite these developments, the integration of video media into CTL-based PAI learning remains conceptually and operationally underdeveloped. Recent CTL studies in PAI largely examine contextual models in general, while digital-media studies often focus on platforms, audiovisual tools, or learning videos without systematically mapping those media onto the main CTL phases. For example, recent research has discussed CTL for PAI learning outcomes and religious behavior (Mashuri 2024; Sarwani 2023; Utami and Iryanti 2025), while other studies have examined YouTube, TikTok, and audiovisual media in PAI (Putri and Astutik 2021; Rahmadani et al. 2024; Yahya et al. 2024). The intersection between documentary video, CTL, classroom engagement, and moral reflection therefore remains comparatively less explored.

Documentary video is particularly suitable for contextual religious learning because it can present authentic social events, historical narratives, community problems, humanitarian situations, and ethical dilemmas in a form that is concrete and emotionally resonant. When the video is positioned as a contextual anchor, students can observe a real or realistic situation, formulate questions, identify values and problems, discuss possible responses, relate the case to Islamic teachings, and reflect on personal implications. In this way, documentary video is not merely a visual aid; it becomes part of the instructional architecture through which CTL moves students from observation to inquiry, collaborative meaning-making, and reflection.

Accordingly, this study aimed to examine the implementation and effectiveness of a CTL approach integrated with documentary video media in PAI. Specifically, the study evaluated differences in conceptual understanding between students receiving CTL with documentary video and those receiving standard CTL with conventional visuals, compared classroom engagement across behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions, and examined the pattern of students' moral-reflection responses after learning. The study is expected to provide a recent empirical basis for PAI teachers seeking to integrate contextual pedagogy and digital audiovisual media in a structured manner.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Contextual Teaching and Learning in Islamic Religious Education

CTL emphasizes the construction of knowledge through meaningful relationships between subject matter and learners' real-life contexts. In PAI, this orientation is closely aligned with the need to move beyond memorization toward the application of Islamic values in personal and social life. Anwar (2021) describes CTL as compatible with PAI because it

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encourages independent and collaborative learning, while Sarwani (2023) reports that contextual PAI learning can connect curriculum content with contemporary issues and religious behavior. Muslimah et al. (2022) further show how CTL can be designed for akhlak learning, illustrating its relevance to value-laden religious content.

Operationally, CTL is commonly realized through interconnected activities involving constructivism, inquiry, questioning, learning community, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment. The pedagogical value of these components depends on the quality of the context presented to students. A weak or abstract context may leave learning largely verbal, whereas a concrete context can provide evidence and situations that students can investigate. Recent PAI studies using contextual approaches continue to report improvements in participation, critical thinking, and learning outcomes, supporting the use of CTL as a student-centered alternative to lecture-dominated instruction (Mashuri 2024; Utami and Iryanti 2025).

Documentary Video as Contextual and Multimedia Learning Media

Documentary video combines spoken language, images, movement, sound, sequencing, and authentic scenes. Within the cognitive theory of multimedia learning, words and pictures can support deeper understanding when learners are guided to select, organize, and integrate relevant information without unnecessary cognitive overload (Mayer, 2021). Systematic evidence likewise indicates that video can improve learning, particularly when it is embedded in active learning processes rather than presented without instructional prompts (Noetel et al., 2021).

For Islamic education, video can make abstract or text-heavy content more observable. Putri and Astutik (2021) show that short-form digital media can provide new modes of presenting PAI material to younger learners, while Rahmadani et al. (2024) note that YouTube-based PAI content can enrich learning and increase motivation when content is carefully selected. A meta-analysis by Yahya et al. (2024) reports a large overall effect of IT-based audiovisual media on PAI learning outcomes. These findings support the instructional potential of documentary video, while also reinforcing the need for teacher curation, pedagogical alignment, and appropriate digital competence (Falloon, 2020).

Student Engagement and Moral Reflection

Student engagement is multidimensional and can be observed in students' participation, emotional involvement, and cognitive investment during learning. Research on educational technology shows that digital tools do not automatically create engagement; their effects depend on purposeful instructional design, opportunities for interaction, and the active role given to learners (Bond et al., 2020; Nkomo et al., 2021). In a CTL lesson, documentary video can support engagement by providing a shared experiential stimulus that invites questions, interpretation, debate, and collaborative problem solving.

Moral reflection is particularly important in PAI because learning aims to support the internalization of values, not simply the recall of concepts. Recent research on PAI and moral development emphasizes the relationship between religious learning, character formation, and the application of values in everyday life (Hilmy et al., 2024). CTL-based akhlak learning similarly positions reflection as a bridge between contextual experience and ethical meaning (Muslimah et al., 2022). For this reason, the present study treats students' reflective responses as a distinct outcome alongside cognitive achievement and classroom engagement.

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III. METHOD

Research Design and Setting

This study employed a quantitative quasi-experimental method using a non-equivalent control-group design. The research was conducted at [Insert Madrasah Aliyah Name] during the 2025/2026 academic year. The target population comprised tenth-grade students. Two intact classes were selected purposively on the basis of class homogeneity and comparable baseline academic performance. One class was assigned as the experimental group (n = 30) and received CTL integrated with documentary video media, while the comparison class (n = 30) received standard CTL using conventional visual aids.

The instructional intervention was implemented within the selected PAI curriculum unit. In the experimental class, the documentary video was embedded within the CTL sequence rather than used as an independent presentation. Video scenes were used to activate prior knowledge, present contextual problems, support inquiry and questioning, stimulate small-group discussion, provide concrete models of social or moral situations, and prompt individual reflection. The control class studied the same general PAI learning objectives through standard CTL activities supported by static images, textbook materials, and teacher explanations.

Instruments and Data Collection

Data collection used three primary instruments. First, conceptual understanding was measured through pretest and posttest instruments consisting of validated multiple-choice and open-ended items aligned with core PAI competencies. Second, classroom engagement was observed using a structured rubric covering behavioral, emotional, and cognitive indicators. Third, moral reflection was measured using a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire administered after the intervention. Student reflective response logs were also collected as supporting descriptive evidence of how students connected documentary scenes with values such as ta'awun (mutual assistance), shiddiq (truthfulness), and 'adalah (justice).

All instruments underwent content validation by expert judges in PAI pedagogy and educational measurement, followed by empirical checks of reliability and construct appropriateness before the main data collection. Documentary selections were reviewed for curriculum relevance, factual accuracy, age appropriateness, ethical sensitivity, and consistency with the intended PAI learning objectives.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were calculated for pretest, posttest, N-gain, engagement, and moral-reflection scores. Before hypothesis testing, Shapiro-Wilk tests were used to assess normality and Levene's test was used to assess homogeneity of variance. Baseline comparability was evaluated using the pretest means. Independent Samples t-tests were then applied to posttest and N-gain scores to determine whether the experimental and control groups differed significantly after the intervention. The significance level was set at 0.05. Engagement data were summarized as percentages for the three dimensions, while moral-reflection questionnaire scores were summarized using means and standard deviations. Reflective logs were used to contextualize the quantitative pattern but were not treated as a separate qualitative research design.

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IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Baseline Equivalence and Assumption Testing

Before the main hypothesis tests, the pretest data were examined for distributional assumptions. The Shapiro-Wilk test indicated that pretest scores were normally distributed in both the experimental group ($p = 0.245$) and the control group ($p = 0.180$). Levene's test produced $F = 0.261$, $p = 0.612$, indicating homogeneous variances. The experimental group had a pretest mean of 58.40 (SD = 8.15), while the control group had a mean of 59.10 (SD = 7.92). The absence of a statistically meaningful baseline difference supported the interpretation that the two groups began the intervention with comparable academic readiness.

Table 1- Comparison of Conceptual Understanding Scores and N-Gain

Group	N	Pretest Mean (SD)	Posttest Mean (SD)	N-Gain Mean	Interpretation
Experimental (CTL + Documentary Video)	30	58.40 (8.15)	84.50 (6.25)	0.63	Moderate-to-High
Control (CTL + Conventional Visuals)	30	59.10 (7.92)	72.30 (7.85)	0.32	Low-to-Moderate

The experimental group achieved a posttest mean of 84.50 compared with 72.30 in the control group. An Independent Samples t-test on posttest scores produced $t(58) = 6.64$, $p < .001$, demonstrating a statistically significant difference between the groups after instruction. The N-gain comparison produced the same general pattern: the experimental group reached 0.63 while the control group reached 0.32, and the difference was significant, $t(58) = 7.12$, $p < .001$. These results indicate that CTL supported by documentary video produced stronger improvement in conceptual understanding than standard CTL using conventional visuals.

The learning-gain pattern is consistent with recent multimedia and PAI research. Mayer (2021) explains that integrated visual and verbal representations can support the construction of coherent mental models, while Noetel et al. (2021) report that video generally improves learning when it is incorporated into instructional design. Within PAI, Yahya et al. (2024) similarly found that IT-based audiovisual media has a strong positive relationship with learning outcomes. In the present study, the documentary format likely strengthened CTL because the video supplied concrete evidence and realistic situations that students could analyze rather than merely illustrating a teacher explanation.

Student Classroom Engagement

Table 2- Observation Results of Student Classroom Engagement (%)

Engagement Dimension	Experimental Group (%)	Control Group (%)	Category (Exp vs Ctrl)
Behavioral Engagement	84.2	71.5	Very High vs High
Emotional Engagement	84.4	68.0	Very High vs Moderate
Cognitive Engagement	88.2	68.7	Very High vs Moderate

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Overall Mean	85.6	69.4	Very High vs Moderate

Classroom engagement was consistently higher in the experimental group. Overall engagement reached 85.6% compared with 69.4% in the control group, with cognitive engagement producing the highest experimental score at 88.2%. Observational notes indicated that documentary scenes frequently triggered spontaneous questions, references to students' own social experiences, peer disagreement, and attempts to justify moral positions using PAI concepts. These patterns suggest that the video functioned as a common contextual object around which inquiry and collaborative discussion could develop.

This result is consistent with research showing that educational technology supports engagement most effectively when learners are invited to interact cognitively and socially with the material (Bond et al., 2020; Nkomo et al., 2021). The finding also extends recent PAI media studies in which audiovisual and platform-based video resources were associated with increased motivation, attention, and comprehension (Rahmadani et al., 2024; Yahya et al., 2024). In the present design, the important factor was not video exposure alone but its placement within the CTL sequence of inquiry, questioning, learning community, and reflection.

Moral Reflection

Table 3- Post-Intervention Moral Reflection Scores

Group	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Experimental	30	4.38	0.42
Control	30	3.62	0.55

The experimental group obtained a higher descriptive moral-reflection mean (M = 4.38, SD = 0.42) than the control group (M = 3.62, SD = 0.55). Because an inferential test for this outcome was not specified in the available data, this difference is interpreted descriptively rather than as a confirmed statistically significant effect. Reflective response logs nevertheless showed a consistent pattern: students frequently connected documentary episodes about social hardship, integrity, humanitarian responsibility, and community life with Islamic values such as ta'awun, shiddiq, and 'adalah. Students' responses moved beyond naming the values to explaining why a behavior was morally relevant and how they might respond in a comparable real-life situation.

This finding is pedagogically important because PAI aims at the relationship between religious knowledge and moral practice. Recent studies continue to emphasize that PAI contributes to students' moral formation when learning is connected with concrete experience and value internalization (Hilmy et al., 2024). CTL-oriented akhlak design also treats reflection as an essential moment in which experience is reinterpreted through religious concepts (Muslimah et al., 2022). Documentary video appears to strengthen this process by giving students emotionally and socially recognizable situations to interpret, while reflection activities provide the space needed to convert observation into personal ethical meaning.

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Operationalization of CTL through Documentary Video

Table 4- Integration of Documentary Video within CTL Components

CTL Component	Documentary-Video Function	Observed / Intended Learning Process
Constructivism	Activates prior experience through realistic scenes	Students connect religious concepts with familiar social situations
Inquiry	Presents a concrete problem or dilemma	Students identify facts, causes, values, and possible responses
Questioning	Provides visual evidence that invites investigation	Students formulate questions and challenge assumptions
Learning Community	Creates a shared case for group discussion	Students compare interpretations and construct meaning collaboratively
Modeling	Shows actions, consequences, and social practices	Students observe examples and counterexamples of value application
Reflection	Supplies emotionally resonant experiences for reinterpretation	Students connect PAI concepts with personal attitudes and decisions
Authentic Assessment	Provides contextual cases for response tasks	Students justify solutions or value-based decisions using learned concepts

The table illustrates the central contribution of the study: documentary video was treated as a contextualizing mechanism across multiple CTL components rather than as a closing activity or motivational insert. This design is consistent with recent CTL research in Islamic education that emphasizes meaningful links between religious content and lived reality (Anwar, 2021; Sarwani, 2023). It also helps explain why the experimental group showed stronger cognitive and engagement outcomes: students repeatedly returned to the same contextual evidence as they questioned, discussed, modeled, and reflected.

Practical Implications, Challenges, and Limitations

The findings have practical implications for PAI teachers. Short, carefully curated documentary segments can be integrated into CTL lesson plans to create an authentic starting point for inquiry without replacing direct teaching, textual religious sources, or teacher guidance. The teacher's role shifts from primarily explaining content to selecting contexts, guiding questions, verifying doctrinal accuracy, moderating discussion, and helping students connect observations with authoritative PAI concepts. This requires digital competence that combines technical ability with pedagogical judgment and ethical awareness (Falloon, 2020).

The approach also has operational constraints. Effective use depends on access to projection devices, stable playback resources, appropriate documentary content, and teacher time for previewing and aligning scenes with learning outcomes. Digital PAI studies similarly identify content quality, teacher technological capability, and infrastructure as recurring implementation issues (Rahmadani et al., 2024; Yahya et al., 2024). For sensitive religious or humanitarian topics, teachers also need to avoid sensational footage and provide adequate

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contextual explanation so that emotional response supports rather than replaces critical and theological analysis.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the quasi-experimental design used intact classes within one Madrasah Aliyah, so the findings should not be generalized automatically to other schools, grade levels, or regional contexts. Second, the study assessed immediate post-intervention outcomes and did not measure long-term retention or whether moral reflection translated into durable behavior. Third, the moral-reflection difference was described using group means because no inferential test for that variable was supplied. Future studies should include longitudinal follow-up, multi-school samples, validated behavioral indicators, and experimental comparisons between different types of video such as documentary, animation, and student-generated video.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide evidence that integrating documentary video into Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) can create a more cognitively, socially, and morally engaging environment for Islamic Religious Education (PAI). The experimental group, which received CTL supported by documentary video, reached a posttest mean of 84.50 compared with 72.30 in the control group, while the respective N-gain values were 0.63 and 0.32. The between-group differences in both posttest scores and N-gain were statistically significant. Nevertheless, the pedagogical meaning of these findings should not be reduced to the simple proposition that “video improves learning.” The experimental condition combined a contextual pedagogy with a particular form of audiovisual representation, while the comparison condition also used CTL but relied on conventional visual materials. The more defensible interpretation is therefore that documentary video appears to strengthen the operation of CTL by supplying concrete and socially recognizable situations around which inquiry, questioning, discussion, modeling, and reflection can be organized.

This interpretation is theoretically compatible with situated perspectives on learning. Brown et al. (1989) argue that knowledge cannot be completely separated from the activities, contexts, and cultures in which it is acquired and used. Learning becomes more meaningful when concepts are encountered through situations that make their practical relevance visible rather than being presented as decontextualized information. The documentary scenes used in the present intervention appear to have provided precisely this contextual function. Instead of encountering Islamic values only as definitions or abstract propositions, students were invited to interpret visible social situations and relate them to concepts such as ta'awun, shiddiq, and 'adalah. This movement from conceptual language toward recognizable social reality is particularly important in PAI because the educational goal extends beyond factual religious knowledge toward judgment and action within actual moral situations.

The instructional sequence also resembles Merrill's (2002) proposition that learning is strengthened when learners engage with real-world problems, activate existing knowledge, encounter demonstrations, apply new understanding, and integrate it into their own world. Documentary video can potentially connect these stages because it presents a common contextual event that teachers can repeatedly use during a lesson. A scene may first activate prior experience, subsequently become evidence for an inquiry question, provide an example or counterexample during modeling, and later serve as a stimulus for reflection or authentic

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assessment. In the present study, the same documentary material was deliberately integrated across constructivism, inquiry, questioning, learning community, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment rather than being shown as an isolated motivational activity. This repeated pedagogical use distinguishes the intervention from conventional classroom video viewing.

The improvement in conceptual understanding may therefore be associated with the way documentary material made problems available for examination rather than with audiovisual stimulation itself. Schwartz and Bransford (1998) show that learners may become better prepared to understand explanations when they first encounter contrasting cases or problems that create a need for subsequent knowledge. In a comparable manner, documentary scenes may have created a “need to know” by exposing students to concrete moral and social tensions before religious concepts were used to interpret those tensions. The instructional value lies in turning content into something students need for explanation and judgment. Such sequencing is especially relevant for PAI, where students may already be familiar with terms such as justice, honesty, and mutual assistance but may not automatically recognize their implications in ambiguous social contexts.

This distinction also helps prevent an overly technological interpretation of the findings. Educational video is not inherently effective. Brame (2016) emphasizes that effective educational video requires careful management of cognitive load, student engagement, and active learning rather than simple exposure to audiovisual content. PMC Likewise, Fiorella and Mayer (2018) conclude that learning from instructional video depends substantially on design decisions, including segmentation and opportunities for learners to process information meaningfully. The present results are therefore more persuasive when understood as evidence for instructionally embedded documentary video rather than video as a stand-alone instructional technology. Without questioning, discussion, explanation, and reflection, similar documentary footage could easily remain passive entertainment.

This critical distinction is reinforced by research on active learning. Prince (2004) found broad, although uneven, support for learning environments in which students actively engage with instructional material rather than merely receive information. Chi and Wylie's (2014) ICAP framework provides an even more precise interpretation: learning activity can range from passive reception to active manipulation, constructive generation, and interactive co-construction, with deeper forms of engagement generally expected to support stronger learning. The classroom observations in this study suggest that the documentary intervention moved students beyond passive viewing. Students asked spontaneous questions, connected scenes with their own social experience, disagreed with peers, and attempted to defend moral positions using PAI concepts. These behaviors are more consistent with constructive and interactive engagement than with simple audiovisual consumption.

The engagement findings are therefore particularly important. Overall observed engagement reached 85.6% in the experimental group compared with 69.4% in the control group, with cognitive engagement reaching 88.2%, emotional engagement 84.4%, and behavioral engagement 84.2%. Fredricks et al. (2004) conceptualize school engagement as multidimensional, encompassing behavioral participation, emotional involvement, and cognitive investment. DOI The present pattern is notable because cognitive engagement was the strongest dimension. This suggests that students were not merely attracted by the visual novelty of documentary media; rather, classroom observations indicate that the material

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stimulated interpretation, questioning, and attempts to connect evidence with religious concepts.

Even so, the engagement figures should be interpreted carefully. High observed engagement does not automatically imply deep conceptual transformation. Kahu (2013) warns that engagement should be distinguished from its antecedents and consequences; contextual features may promote engagement, but engagement itself should not simply be equated with achievement. In the present study, the simultaneous occurrence of stronger achievement and stronger engagement is encouraging, but the design does not establish that engagement mediated the improvement in learning outcomes. A more rigorous future study could measure whether cognitive engagement statistically explains part of the relationship between the instructional treatment and conceptual understanding.

The observation-based engagement measure also introduces a methodological consideration. The manuscript reports the use of a structured classroom observation rubric but does not report inter-rater reliability, the number of observers, or whether observers were blind to the study condition. Consequently, the percentages should be treated as structured descriptive evidence rather than perfectly objective measurements of classroom engagement. Future studies could strengthen this component by combining observation with student self-report, teacher ratings, learning analytics, or multiple trained observers. Triangulation would be particularly useful because behavioral participation is relatively visible whereas cognitive engagement must often be inferred from student discourse, reasoning, and task behavior.

The emotional dimension also deserves a more nuanced interpretation. Documentary material can make social and humanitarian problems emotionally salient. Immordino-Yang and Damasio (2007) argue that emotion is deeply intertwined with attention, reasoning, memory, and decision making, particularly when knowledge is connected to socially meaningful situations. Pekrun's (2006) control-value theory similarly shows that achievement emotions can affect motivation, engagement, and learning. The relatively high emotional engagement in the experimental class may therefore have supported attention and interest. However, emotional intensity cannot itself be treated as educational value. A disturbing or dramatic documentary scene can attract attention while simultaneously narrowing interpretation or encouraging superficial emotional responses.

This issue is especially important in religious and moral education. The teacher must ensure that emotional reactions are followed by conceptual clarification and ethical reasoning. If documentary footage presents poverty, conflict, dishonesty, injustice, or humanitarian suffering, students may initially react with sympathy, anger, or sadness. These reactions become educationally meaningful only when learners are guided to ask why a situation is morally significant, what competing values are involved, what Islamic sources or principles are relevant, and what responsible action would require. Thus, documentary video should not replace theological or ethical analysis; it should create a context in which such analysis becomes necessary.

The moral-reflection findings provide preliminary support for this function. The experimental group reached a mean moral-reflection score of 4.38 compared with 3.62 in the control group. Reflective logs further indicated that students did more than identify Islamic values; they attempted to explain why particular behaviors were morally important and how

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they might respond in comparable circumstances. This progression from naming values to reasoning about their application is pedagogically meaningful because moral education requires more than recognition of correct terminology.

King and Kitchener (2004) describe reflective judgment as the capacity to evaluate knowledge claims and reason about complex or ill-structured problems where answers are not immediately obvious. Documentary cases may be particularly useful for this purpose because real social situations often resist simplistic binary responses. Students must distinguish evidence, identify relevant values, consider consequences, and justify positions. In PAI, this could provide a bridge from declarative knowledge knowing that justice, honesty, or mutual assistance are Islamic values to deliberative competence: understanding how those values should inform judgment under contextual complexity.

Moon (2004) similarly treats reflection as a process through which experience is reconsidered and reorganized to produce learning rather than merely remembered. Mezirow (1997) further argues that critical reflection can challenge unexamined assumptions and support more autonomous forms of thinking. These perspectives illuminate the potential significance of the reflective logs in this study. When students reinterpret documentary situations through Islamic concepts and then consider their own possible actions, they are moving from observation toward personally meaningful judgment. Yet the available evidence remains evidence of expressed reflection, not proof of durable moral internalization.

That distinction must be maintained. Moral reasoning, moral intention, and moral behavior are related but not interchangeable. Narvaez and Lapsley (2008) emphasize that character education involves more than transmitting moral propositions; teachers must create environments that cultivate ethical understanding, identity, and practice. Earlier meta-analytic evidence from Schlaefli et al. (1985) also suggests that educational interventions involving moral dilemmas and structured discussion can improve moral judgment, but the effects depend on the nature and duration of the educational experience. Therefore, higher moral-reflection scores after the intervention should be regarded as promising evidence of reflective engagement rather than evidence that students' moral behavior has permanently changed.

The methodological design makes this caution particularly necessary. Unlike conceptual understanding, the moral-reflection outcome was not subjected to an inferential comparison in the available dataset. The authors explicitly report the group difference descriptively. Moreover, the questionnaire appears to have been administered only after the intervention, so baseline moral-reflection equivalence cannot be demonstrated from the reported data. Consequently, statements that documentary video “significantly improves” moral reflection would exceed the evidence. A stronger future design should include pre- and post-intervention moral-reflection measures, validated subscales, an inferential between-group analysis, and ideally behavioral follow-up.

The quasi-experimental design provides stronger evidence for conceptual learning than a single-group pretest-posttest study, but it still has limitations. The two intact classes showed similar pretest means 58.40 in the experimental group and 59.10 in the control group and the distributions met the reported normality and homogeneity assumptions. These similarities increase confidence that the groups began with comparable measured academic readiness. Nevertheless, purposive selection and non-random class assignment cannot exclude

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unmeasured differences in teacher-student interaction, classroom climate, motivation, prior familiarity with audiovisual media, peer dynamics, or other contextual characteristics.

Shadish et al. (2002) emphasize that quasi-experimental designs can provide valuable causal evidence but require careful attention to selection effects and alternative explanations. The current findings therefore justify a stronger statement than simple classroom description, but a weaker statement than definitive experimental causality. The observed achievement difference is consistent with an instructional advantage of CTL integrated with documentary video, but it should not be represented as proof that the video component alone generated the difference.

Indeed, the study does not isolate the unique contribution of documentary video from the broader way it altered classroom interaction. The experimental condition may have changed the quality of questions, the depth of discussion, the amount of student talk, and the emotional salience of examples. These processes are not confounds in a practical sense they may be precisely how the intervention works but they mean that the “active ingredient” cannot yet be identified. Future factorial or multi-condition research could compare standard CTL, CTL with static visuals, CTL with documentary video, and documentary video without a fully developed CTL sequence. Such a design would clarify whether documentary authenticity, audiovisual representation, active inquiry, or their interaction produces the strongest effect.

The findings also raise a question of transfer. Hattie and Donoghue (2016) distinguish surface, deep, and transfer phases of learning and argue that different strategies serve different stages. Nature The current posttest demonstrates improved conceptual performance immediately after instruction, but it does not establish whether students can transfer their understanding to new social and ethical situations. The reflective logs provide some indication of transfer because students connected values to situations beyond simple recall; however, stronger evidence would require unfamiliar cases, delayed assessment, or observations of how students reason in new contexts.

Documentary video may be particularly promising for transfer because it can present varied examples of how religious principles operate outside textbook language. Brown et al.'s (1989) account of situated cognition warns that knowledge learned in one context may not automatically transfer elsewhere. If students repeatedly examine different social situations using the same underlying Islamic principles, they may develop more flexible conceptual representations. Therefore, future instructional designs should not rely on one emotionally powerful documentary case; they should use multiple contexts that require students to identify the same value under changing circumstances.

Video design itself also matters. Guo et al. (2014), based on millions of video-viewing sessions, found that production characteristics such as length and presentation style substantially affect engagement. Although that research was conducted in online learning rather than PAI classrooms, it reinforces an important principle: not all documentary material is equally suitable for instruction. Teachers should avoid assuming that a professionally produced documentary is automatically pedagogically appropriate. Short, clearly segmented excerpts may be more useful than long uninterrupted sequences because they create opportunities for questioning, prediction, discussion, and reflection.

The findings therefore imply a curatorial role for PAI teachers. Selection should consider factual accuracy, religious relevance, age appropriateness, emotional intensity, possible bias,

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and alignment with learning objectives. The current manuscript already states that documentary materials were reviewed for curriculum relevance, factual accuracy, age appropriateness, ethical sensitivity, and consistency with PAI objectives. This is an important methodological strength because documentary media often carry implicit perspectives. "Authentic" footage should not be treated as ideologically neutral simply because it represents real events. Teachers must help students distinguish observation from interpretation and challenge the assumption that visual realism automatically equals objective truth.

This need for interpretation is particularly significant when documentary media represent religious groups, social inequality, conflict, gender relations, poverty, or humanitarian crises. Visual narratives can simplify complex events through editing, framing, music, sequencing, and selective representation. Critical media literacy should therefore accompany contextual learning. Students need opportunities to ask whose perspective is visible, whose voice is missing, what evidence supports a claim, and how an Islamic ethical interpretation should respond without reducing complex social problems to moral slogans. In this sense, documentary-supported CTL can potentially contribute not only to PAI knowledge but also to critical religious literacy.

The teacher's role remains central throughout this process. A video-centered lesson can appear student-centered while still being pedagogically weak if students are left to interpret complex material without adequate conceptual scaffolding. The stronger model revealed by the present study is one in which students are active but teachers remain responsible for designing contexts, posing questions, checking evidence, correcting conceptual misconceptions, and connecting discussion to authoritative religious concepts. Active learning does not imply teacher withdrawal. Prince's (2004) review supports active and collaborative approaches but also demonstrates that their effectiveness depends on instructional structure.

Student engagement should likewise be understood relationally rather than as an individual trait. Wang and Eccles (2012) show that behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement can develop differently and are influenced by social support from teachers, peers, and families. Documentary-supported CTL may strengthen classroom engagement partly because all students share a common contextual object around which conversation can emerge. A documentary scene provides something observable that students can point to, dispute, reinterpret, and connect to experience. This can reduce the abstraction of discussion and create a more accessible basis for peer interaction.

At the same time, participation must be managed so that emotionally confident or verbally dominant students do not monopolize discussion. A high overall engagement percentage can conceal uneven participation. Future studies should therefore examine not only how much engagement occurs but whose engagement increases, which students remain silent, how gender or prior achievement affects participation, and whether small-group structures distribute opportunities equitably. Such analysis would make the differentiated impact of CTL more visible.

Pekrun's (2006) framework also suggests that students' appraisals of value and control shape their emotional engagement. Documentary contexts may increase perceived value because students can see why a religious concept matters outside examination requirements.

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CTL may increase perceived control by giving students opportunities to ask questions, interpret evidence, and discuss possible responses. Together, these conditions may explain why cognitive and emotional engagement were both strong in the experimental group. This remains a theoretically plausible mechanism, however, rather than one directly tested by the present study.

A further implication concerns the relationship between conceptual understanding and moral reflection. These outcomes should not be treated as separate educational domains. In PAI, deeper conceptual knowledge may provide language and principles for ethical interpretation, while morally salient contexts may motivate students to understand concepts more deeply. Immordino-Yang and Damasio (2007) suggest that emotion and cognition are functionally intertwined in learning and decision making. The present study potentially illustrates this interaction documentary scenes made Islamic concepts emotionally and socially meaningful, while CTL activities transformed emotional reactions into questions, arguments, and reflection.

The broader contribution of the study therefore lies in conceptualizing documentary video as a contextual anchor, not simply as instructional media. A contextual anchor has value because the lesson repeatedly returns to it as a source of evidence, inquiry, disagreement, and reflection. This function explains why the medium can simultaneously support conceptual understanding, engagement, and moral reflection. It also clarifies why substituting one video for another without redesigning the instructional sequence may not reproduce the observed outcomes.

However, the findings should remain bounded by the study's context. The sample comprised only 60 tenth-grade students from two intact classes in one Madrasah Aliyah. Immediate post-intervention measures do not demonstrate long-term retention, and reflective self-report cannot establish durable moral behavior. The manuscript also does not report effect sizes or confidence intervals for the main between-group comparisons. Adding these statistics would strengthen interpretation by showing the magnitude and precision of the observed differences, not merely their statistical significance.

Future studies should therefore combine stronger experimental control with richer process evidence. Randomized class assignment, when feasible, would reduce selection threats. Multi-school research could test whether the approach transfers across institutional and regional contexts. Delayed posttests could examine retention, while unfamiliar case-based assessments could measure conceptual transfer. Moral outcomes should include pretest measures and potentially teacher ratings, scenario-based ethical reasoning tasks, or longitudinal behavioral indicators. Classroom discourse could also be analyzed to determine whether documentary-supported CTL actually changes the quality of student reasoning.

In addition, future research should compare alternative audiovisual formats. Documentary video may have specific advantages because of perceived authenticity, but animation, dramatization, student-generated video, and interactive case simulations may support different learning mechanisms. Short student-generated documentaries, for instance, could move learners from interpretation to production, requiring them to investigate a real social issue, select evidence, justify ethical framing, and communicate an Islamic perspective. Such work would extend students' engagement from analyzing contextualized knowledge to constructing it.

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Overall, the evidence supports a cautious but meaningful conclusion. CTL integrated with documentary video appears to offer a promising instructional structure for PAI because it connects religious concepts with socially recognizable situations and then uses those situations as resources for inquiry, discussion, modeling, and reflection. The stronger achievement and engagement patterns in the experimental group suggest that this combination can support both conceptual processing and active participation. The moral-reflection data further indicate pedagogical potential, although the absence of inferential testing and baseline moral measures prevents strong causal claims.

The most important implication is therefore pedagogical rather than technological. Documentary video becomes educationally powerful not because students watch reality on a screen, but because teachers transform represented reality into an object of disciplined inquiry. The instructional sequence must move students from seeing, to questioning, to interpreting, to evaluating, and finally to reflecting on responsible action. When that process occurs, PAI can move beyond memorization without abandoning doctrinal rigor, and digital media can become a bridge between religious knowledge and the complex moral realities students encounter in contemporary life.

V. CONCLUSION

This study examined a CTL approach integrated with documentary video media in Islamic Religious Education using a quasi-experimental non-equivalent control-group design. The experimental and control groups began with comparable pretest performance, while the experimental group demonstrated substantially higher posttest achievement and N-gain after the intervention. Student engagement was also higher across behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions, and the experimental group showed a higher descriptive moral-reflection mean.

The findings indicate that the instructional value of documentary video lies in its integration with pedagogy. When documentary scenes are deliberately used to initiate inquiry, stimulate questioning, sustain a learning community, provide concrete examples, support reflection, and frame authentic tasks, video becomes a contextual learning resource rather than a supplementary visual aid. For PAI, this structure offers a practical means of connecting religious concepts with real social and moral situations while maintaining the teacher's role in doctrinal clarification and ethical guidance.

Further research should test the model across broader populations, examine delayed learning and behavioral outcomes, and compare documentary video with other digital formats. Institutions can support implementation by strengthening teacher digital competence and developing curated repositories of short, curriculum-aligned documentary materials for PAI.

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