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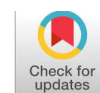
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Influence of Busy Book Media on Learning Outcomes of Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Addition Operation

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ABSTRACT

Mathematics learning for students with intellectual disabilities needs to be designed in a simple and easy-to-understand manner, especially on basic materials such as addition operations. However, the learning outcomes of students with intellectual disabilities at Sukamaju Special Needs School (SLBN) on addition operations are still below the Minimum Completion Criteria (MCC), so appropriate learning media are needed to improve student understanding. One of the media that can be used is Busy Book. The study was intended to see whether there is an effect of using Busy Book media on the learning outcomes of students with intellectual disabilities in addition operations at Sukamaju Special Needs School (SLBN). The research method used was a pre-experimental with a one-group pretest-posttest design. The population of this study was all students with intellectual disabilities at Sukamaju Special Needs School (SLBN) in the 2025/2026 academic year. The research sample was determined using a cluster random sampling technique, so that grade 10 students were selected as the research sample. The research instrument was an essay test on addition operations, which had been tested for validity and reliability before being used. The t-test results showed a calculated t value of 6.555 and a calculated t table of 1.8596, which means that the calculated t value is greater than the t table. The results of the study indicate that the Busy Book media influences the learning outcomes of mentally retarded students on the addition arithmetic operation material. This finding indicates that the manipulative and visual Busy Book media is an effective alternative learning media to help students with mental retardation understand basic mathematical concepts.



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Introduction

Education is essential in social life (Widiansyah, 2018). According to Pranada et al. (2024) education is very important because it will lead humans to one knowledge and to other knowledge so that humans will continue to develop themselves. Given the importance of education, every child deserves to receive an education, including children with special needs, this right is also protected by the 1945 Constitution (Wardhani & Tammu, 2022). Children with special needs are those who have unique characteristics that distinguish them from ordinary children, with different needs and challenges physically, emotionally, and personality wise (Syafudin et al., 2019). Children with intellectual disabilities are included in this group; although their physical appearance is almost the same as normal children, their psychological condition is different. According to Sinaga et al. (2023) kids with intellectual disabilities are individuals who have uniqueness and wholeness as human beings, just like other children. According to Napitupulu et al., (2022) children with intellectual disabilities are children who have an IQ far below average accompanied by an inability to adapt to their environment. The characteristics of intellectual disabilities according by Napitupulu et al., (2022) are difficulty speaking, slow ability to sit or walk, difficulty understanding rules, difficulty remembering things, late mastering daily skills, difficulty understanding the consequences of an action, explosive tantrums, difficulty thinking logically and difficulty solving problems. Children with intellectual disabilities are indeed different, but they have the same rights and needs, including the need for love, attention, learning, and opportunities to develop (Wulandari, 2024).

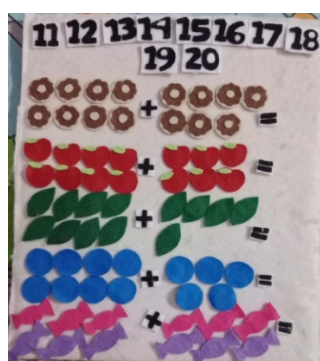
Education for children with intellectual disabilities is certainly different from the usual approach because the learning provided requires an approach tailored to their below-average intellectual abilities. Mathematics instruction, particularly for children with intellectual disabilities, is easier to understand and covers more basic subjects. One of the more basic mathematics lessons for children with intellectual disabilities is addition. Basic numeracy skills, particularly basic operations such as addition, are crucial functional competencies in everyday life because they directly relate to cognitive activities and a person's independence. For children with special needs, especially those with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities, numeracy skills represent a learning challenge that is often difficult to achieve due to limitations in abstract thinking, symbol processing, and mathematical problem-solving strategies (Bakhtiar, 2022).

Several studies have shown that students with intellectual disabilities often have difficulty understanding number concepts and arithmetic operations. Dewanta & Murtadlo (2024) found that students with mild intellectual disabilities experience difficulties in calculating addition due to limitations in abstract thinking, even though concrete learning media help them develop. Saputri et al. (2017) also reported difficulties in calculation and the use of inappropriate strategies in addition by students with intellectual disabilities. Research Purba et al. (2024) shows variations in mathematical abilities in children with special needs, indicating the need for intensive support in arithmetic operations. Riski et al., (2025) also pointed out the need for an appropriate learning approach because students with intellectual disabilities often perform lower in basic mathematical operations such as addition. Therefore, understanding addition needs to be a primary focus in mathematics instruction for students with intellectual disabilities. Researchers also found something similar in mentally retarded students in Sukamaju, based on the results of observations in Class X of Sukamaju SLBN, which showed that mentally retarded children had learning outcomes for arithmetic operations below the Minimum Competency.

Table 1. Learning Outcomes of Class X SLBN Sukamaju

No	Student Name	Value
1	Dea	30
2	Efa Zahra	30
3	M Labib Marzuqy	31
4	Naela Dewantari	41
5	Ilham Saputra	42

Based on classroom observations, teachers only use learning media in the form of simple objects such as pencils, pens, sticks, leaves, and an abacus. Simple media makes it difficult for children to understand the lesson, because suboptimal media utilization significantly impacts student learning outcomes (Pilomonu, 2021). Children with intellectual disabilities require innovative, engaging, safe resources that do not harm them mentally, intellectually, or emotionally (Istiarsyah et al., 2019). A Busy Book is a book made of thick, multicolored paper and complemented with attractive illustrations. This book is designed to develop children's creativity and skills (Rantika et al., 2024). Armed with a Busy Book, children with intellectual disabilities can be more active and participate in learning activities about arithmetic operations. Busy Books also provide activities that can be adjusted according to the needs and interests of children and can be used repeatedly (Maharani & Mustafa, 2025). In addition, the attractive images and colors in Busy Books have the potential to optimize children's learning interests and make the learning process more enjoyable.

**Figure 1.** Media Busy Book

Busy Books have been widely used in various studies as an effective hands-on learning tool for developing cognitive, logical, and numeracy skills in early childhood and children with mild disabilities. For example, research results Febrisia & Hadiyanto (2023) show that Busy Books are effective in developing numeracy, logical, and numerical understanding skills through contextual manipulative activities. Purnamasari et al. (2020) stated that visual and manipulative media, such as concrete teaching aids, play a role in facilitating children with intellectual disabilities to understand basic mathematical concepts optimally compared to conventional methods. Furthermore, research results Puspitasari & Noormiyanto (2021) state that Busy Books can improve the numeracy skills of students with mild intellectual disabilities in special schools, making them a suitable solution. Therefore, the use of media such as Busy Books is highly relevant, as they not only combine engaging visual and tactile elements but also create a fun learning experience that aligns with the characteristics of children with intellectual disabilities.

However, a clear research gap remains, particularly the lack of studies evaluating the use of Busy Books specifically for addition for students with intellectual disabilities in special needs schools like Sukamaju. Many studies focus on general early childhood or general counting, rather than on addition as a functional numeracy competency. Furthermore, there is limited empirical evidence in the context of special schools in Indonesia with evaluation designs that measure improvements in learning outcomes after Busy Book interventions, particularly numeracy learning outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities in real classroom settings. Therefore, this research is important to conduct because in addition to answering the need for appropriate learning, it also fills the gap in empirical evidence about the effectiveness of Busy Books in improving learning outcomes of addition arithmetic operations in mentally retarded students at Sukamaju Special Needs School. This research is expected to not only contribute to learning practices in schools but also enrich the literature on manipulative learning media for special needs students, especially addition numeracy. Based on this explanation, the researcher proposed a research topic entitled: "The influence of Busy Book media on the learning outcomes of mentally retarded students on the material of addition arithmetic operations at Sukamaju SLBN".

Method

Type of Research

This research was conducted using a pre-experimental method using *a one-group pretest-posttest design*, limited to one class without comparison, by comparing pretest and posttest results (Sugiyono, 2021). In the initial stage, previous learning outcomes were taken, considered as a pretest, to assess their initial capacity. Next, students participated in the learning process using the Busy Book media, then were given a final test (posttest) to evaluate the development of learning outcomes after the learning process. Through this design, the distinction between pretest and posttest results was used to assess the effect of the Busy Book media on student learning outcomes.

Samples

All students at special needs high schools with intellectual disabilities in the 2025/2026 academic year were included in this study's population. The sample was selected using cluster random sampling (randomization based on class). This technique selected 10th-grade students as the sample.

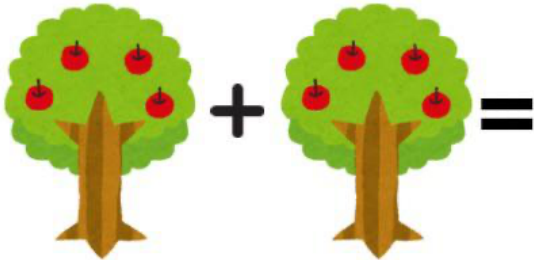
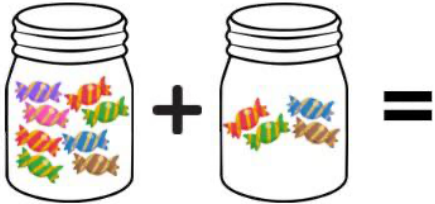
Table 2. Student Tunagrahita SMA SLBN Sukamaju

No	Class	Number of Students
1	X	5
2	XI	6
3	XII	8

Instrument

When collecting data for testing, researchers will use an essay-based test administered to students, which will assess the arithmetic operations of addition. The instrument will consist of six questions; the following is an example of the questions used by the researchers.

Table 3. Example of a test instrument for addition arithmetic operations

Questions	Grid
<p>1. How many fruits are there on the two trees?</p> 	<p>Adding two whole numbers whose result is less than 10</p>
<p>2. How many candies are in both jars</p> 	<p>Adding two whole numbers whose result is above 10</p>

Before being used for research, the questionnaire must pass validation tests, assessing its discriminatory power, difficulty level, and reliability. Validation in this study was conducted based on expert judgment, consisting of a lecturer from Kotabumi Muhammadiyah University and subject teachers. The following is the formula for the instrument test:

Differential Power

This test is intended to evaluate how effectively the questions are able to identify differences in test participants based on variations in student ability levels, so that the effectiveness of the questions in measuring differences in ability can be identified objectively (Lestari et al., 2019). The calculation of discriminatory power uses the following formula:

$$DP = \frac{\bar{X}_A - \bar{X}_B}{SMI}$$

Notes:

DP = Distinguishing power

\bar{X}_A = average of respondents' answers in the upper group

\bar{X}_B = average answer of respondents in the lower group

SMI = Ideal maximum score

Table 4. Classification of Differential Power of Question Items

Differential power	Category
$1,00 > 0,70$	Very Good
$0,40 < DB \leq 0,70$	Good
$0,20 < DB \leq 0,40$	Enough
$0,00 < DB \leq 0,20$	Bad
$DB \leq 0,00$	Very bad

Source: (Rahman & Nasryah, 2019)

Questions with poor or very poor discrimination power should be revised or eliminated to ensure they function optimally in differentiating student abilities (Herniati, 2021). With these considerations in mind, the researcher decided to use a question instrument that at least met the criteria for sufficient discrimination power.

Test level of difficulty

This test aims to classify test questions based on their difficulty, medium, or easy. The difficulty level analysis for descriptive tests can be expressed using the following formula (Lestari et al., 2019):

$$IK = \frac{X}{SMI}$$

Notes:

IK = Index of the level of difficulty of a question item

X = average score of each question item

SMI = highest score that can be obtained on each question item

Table 5. Classification of Question Item Difficulty Levels

Difficulty Level (TK)	Category
$TK < 0,30$	Difficult
$0,30 \leq TK \leq 0,70$	Currently
$TK > 0,70$	Easy

Source : (Rahman & Nasryah, 2019)

According to Rahman & Nasryah (2019), a good question is one whose difficulty level is proportional, meaning it is neither too easy nor too difficult. Therefore, the question instrument used in this study had a moderate level of difficulty.

Test Realibility

The reliability of the instrument applies the Cronbach Alpha coefficient formula, as explained below (Lestari et al., 2019):

$$r_{11} = \left[\frac{n}{n-1} \right] \left[1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n S_i^2}{S_t^2} \right]$$

Notes:

r_{11} = Test reliability coefficient

n = Total test items

S_t^2 = Variance of the overall score

$$\sum_{i=1}^n S_i^2 = \text{Total variance of each question item}$$

The results are considered reliable if they meet the established criteria, namely $r_{11} \geq 0,7$ Rahman & Nasryah (2019), meaning that questions must have a reliability coefficient ≥ 0.70 to be used for measurement.

Instrument trial results

The instrument trial was conducted before the instrument was administered to the research sample. This trial was conducted in grade XI students with intellectual disabilities at SMA SLBN Sukamaju with a total of 6 students. The trial was conducted in grade XI because grade XI students already had a deeper understanding of addition operations than the grade X class that served as the research sample.

Validity Test

Before the instrument is given to students for trial testing, content validity will be carried out using expert judgment, consisting of a lecturer from Muhammadiyah University of Kotabumi and a mathematics teacher. The purpose of this content validity is used to assess whether the test items are in accordance with all the specified criteria. The criteria in question are the suitability of the language used, suitability with the research objectives, and the completeness and accuracy of the instrument. The test questions numbered 6 questions and the results of the content validation test in this study showed that the test instrument has valid criteria with suggested improvements. After the instrument is deemed valid, the instrument is then ready for trial testing.

Differential power test

Referring to Table 6, it can be seen that one item falls into the very poor category, while the other five fall into the very good category. Therefore, the results of the discriminatory power test indicate that five items meet the requirements for use.

Table 6. Differential Power

No Questions	Differential Power	Criteria
1	1,00	Very Good
2	1,00	Very Good
3	0,00	Very Bad
4	1,00	Very Good
5	1,00	Very Good
6	1,00	Very Good

Test the level of difficulty

According to Rahman & Nasryah, a question item is said to be of quality if the level of difficulty is in the medium category, that is, it is neither too easy nor too difficult (Rahman & Nasryah, 2019). In this study, questions are considered to meet the criteria if the difficulty index

value is $0.30 \leq p \leq 0.70$. Table 7 presents a summary of the results of calculating the level of difficulty:

Table 7. Level of Difficulty

No Questions	Level of difficulty	Criteria
1	0,50	currently
2	0,50	currently
3	1,00	easy
4	0,50	currently
5	0,50	currently
6	0,50	currently

From Table 7, one question falls into the easy category and five questions fall into the medium category. Thus, this test shows that five questions meet the criteria.

Test reliability

Based on the results of the discriminatory power and difficulty level tests, five questions were selected as instruments. These questions were then subjected to reliability testing, resulting in an r_{11} value of 1.0. Since the reliability coefficient was ≥ 0.70 , the test instrument was deemed reliable and suitable for use

Research procedures

The treatment in this study was carried out over three meetings, each lasting 2 x 35 minutes. The learning process was conducted by the researcher, assisted by the class teacher, with the aim of maintaining continuity and adapting to the characteristics of students with intellectual disabilities. The material presented at each meeting focused on simple addition operations, presented in stages using the Busy Book media. The learning model used is a direct instruction approach, which includes the stages of conveying learning objectives, providing explanations and examples of addition using Busy Book, guided practice, and independent practice. During the learning process, students work on LKPD as a means of practicing and reinforcing the material, without giving homework, considering the limited independent learning abilities of students with intellectual disabilities. Consistency of treatment is maintained by using the same lesson plan (RPP) at each meeting, a uniform flow of learning activities, and the use of media and materials that are adjusted repeatedly so that students gain a consistent learning experience.

Analysis Data

After the pretest and posttest data were successfully obtained, the next step was to analyze the data to determine the effect of the Busy Book media. To determine this effect, a paired t-test was used. Before administering the t-test, the pretest and posttest data must first be analyzed for normality and homogeneity. The following is the t-test formula according to Nuryadi et al., (2017):

Paired Sample t-Test :

$$t_{hit} = \frac{\bar{D}}{\left(\frac{SD}{\sqrt{n}}\right)}$$

Information:

t = calculated t value

\bar{D} = average of measurements 1 and 2

SD = standard deviation of measurements 1 and 2

n = number of samples

Significance value $\alpha = 5\%$ and $df = N - 1$. Hypothesis in t test:

H_0 : There is no influence of Busy Book media on student learning outcomes

H_1 : There is an influence of Busy Book media on student learning outcomes

Testing criteria H_1 Accepted if $t_{hitung} > t_{tabel}$

Research Findings and Discussion

Normality Test

The Liliefors test was used in this study to test the consistency of the data obtained at a 5% significance level. The normality test using Liliefors on the pretest and posttest data yielded the following results:

Table 8. Results of normality test

No	Variable	L_{value}	L_{table}	Decision	Conclusion
1	Pretest	0,332	0,377	H_0 accepted	Normal
2	Posttest	0,300	0,377	H_0 accepted	Normal

Based on the normality test, the pretest-posttest data had a calculated $L_{value} < L_{table}$. This shows that both data are normally distributed.

Homogeneity test

The F-test is intended to analyze data homogeneity at a 5% significance level. Data is considered homogeneous if the calculated $F \leq F_{table}$. The calculation results show that the calculated $F = 5.30504$ and the $F_{table} = 6.3882$, thus showing that the variances of the two classes are homogeneous.

t-test

Furthermore, to see the improvement in learning outcomes using the Busy Book media, it was analyzed using a Paired sample t-Test with $dk = n - 1$. From the analysis results of the Paired sample t-Test, the average posttest score was 80, higher than the average pretest score of 34.8. In addition, the obtained values $t_{value} = 6,555$ and $t_{table} = 1,8596$ meaning the calculated t value is greater than the t table, so the testing criteria are H_0 rejected and H_1 accepted. This shows an increase in learning outcomes after the implementation of the Busy Book media.

The findings of this study indicate that the use of Busy Book media in learning addition arithmetic operations has a positive contribution to improving the learning outcomes of students with intellectual disabilities. This reinforces the view in special education that children with intellectual disabilities require learning media that are concrete, visual, and manipulative so that abstract concepts such as numbers and addition can be understood more meaningfully. Busy Book, with its characteristics that combine motor, visual, and cognitive activities, is considered appropriate to the learning needs of students with intellectual disabilities. The results of this study align with research [Puspitasari & Noormiyanto \(2021\)](#) which found that Busy Book media can improve the arithmetic skills of students with mild intellectual disabilities in special schools. This study confirmed that the manipulative activities in Busy Books help students understand addition concepts through direct experience, rather than mere memorization. Thus, Busy Books act as a bridge between abstract mathematical concepts and the concrete experiences of students with intellectual disabilities.

Another study by [Bakhtiar \(2022\)](#) also found that the use of Busy Books in basic mathematics learning, particularly in counting and addition, can increase learning engagement and completeness in students with intellectual disabilities. Busy Books provide students with opportunities for gradual and repetitive learning, which is particularly important for students with intellectual disabilities. This finding supports the research finding that improved addition learning outcomes are inseparable from the appropriateness of the media to the student's characteristics. The findings of this study also support constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that knowledge is built through direct experience. Busy Book provides a learning experience that aligns with this principle, as students are actively engaged in the process of finding the answer to addition problems through concrete media. This is relevant to the characteristics of students with intellectual disabilities, who tend to have difficulty with abstract thinking. Based on the correlation with previous research, it can be concluded that Busy Book is an effective learning tool for improving addition learning outcomes in students with intellectual disabilities. This tool not only helps conceptual understanding but also increases student engagement and interest in learning. Therefore, Busy Book is a suitable alternative learning tool for mathematics in special schools, particularly for addition.

Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis, it can be concluded that the application of Busy Book media in learning addition arithmetic operations shows an increase in the learning outcomes of mentally retarded students. This increase can be seen from the comparison of the average value before and after learning using Busy Book media, namely the average pretest value of 34.8 and the average posttest value of 80. The results of statistical tests using the t test show a significant difference between the pretest and posttest results, namely $t_{hitung} = 6,555$ and $t_{tabel} = 1,8596$, which indicates that the use of Busy Book media is related to the increase in the addition ability of mentally retarded students. These findings suggest that the Busy Book media has the potential to be an effective learning medium in helping students with intellectual disabilities understand the concept of addition through concrete and manipulative activities. However, because this study used a single-group pre-experimental design without a control group, the results cannot yet be used to draw strong conclusions about cause-and-effect relationships, but are limited to findings of differences in learning outcomes before and after the treatment. This study has several limitations, including the limited number of subjects, the lack of a comparison group, and the relatively short duration of media implementation. These

limitations make it possible that other factors beyond the treatment may have influenced improvements in student learning outcomes.

Although this study showed significant results, there are several limitations that need to be considered, including the use of a single-group pre-experimental design without a control group, which limits the drawing of strong causal conclusions; the limited number of subjects and the relatively short duration of the intervention, which allows for external factors to influence improvements in student learning outcomes. Therefore, it is recommended that future researchers use a more robust research design, such as a quasi-experimental design with a comparison group and involving a wider range of subjects, to increase the validity and generalizability of the research results. In addition, teachers are expected to optimize the Busy Book media as an alternative concrete learning that suits the characteristics of students with intellectual disabilities. Then, it is recommended that future researchers can develop and test this media on other mathematics materials.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declares that there is no conflict of interest.

Auhor Contributions

R.F.S. understood the research concept presented and was responsible for data collection and the initial drafting of the manuscript. The other authors, P.B.N. contributed to the development of the theory, the design of the methodology, data analysis, and the discussion of the research results through the final revision stage. All authors confirm that they have read and approved the final version of this paper. The total percentage of contribution to the conceptualization, drafting, and refinement of the manuscript is as follows: R.F.S.: 60%, and P.B.N.: 40%.

Data Availability Statement

The authors declare that data supporting the results of this study will be provided by the corresponding author, [R.F.S.], upon reasonable request.



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