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# Barriers to Instructional Media Use in Secondary School Sociology: A Qualitative Study at SMA Negeri 1 Buru

**Hasan Asyhari**[1*], **Maria Montessori**[2], **Desri Nora**[2]
[1] SMA Negeri 1 Buru, Buru Regency, Maluku, Indonesia.
[2] Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia
Email: hasanasyhari72@guru.sma.belajar.id*

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**ABSTRACT**

Instructional media can connect sociological concepts with observable social situations, but their classroom use depends on teachers' practices and school conditions. This study explored barriers to instructional media use in Grade XI social science lessons at SMA Negeri 1 Buru, Karimun Regency, Indonesia. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed using classroom observation, interviews, and documentation. The participants described in the original study comprised a sociology teacher, the school administrator responsible for facilities and infrastructure, and several students from Grade XI IPS 2. Preliminary observation covered 26 students. Qualitative analysis involved data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Five barriers were reported: the perceived burden of preparing and using media, limited confidence and fear of electrical equipment, inadequate supporting facilities, a preference for lecture-based instruction, and perceived insufficient recognition from the principal. The preliminary observation recorded active participation by eight students in listening, two in asking questions, ten in taking notes, and twelve in completing assigned tasks. These observations describe classroom participation but do not establish that limited media use caused disengagement. The findings suggest that underutilization reflects interacting practical, personal, pedagogical, and organizational constraints. Context-sensitive responses include printed and offline materials, manageable preparation routines, supported practice with equipment, improved facilities, and constructive instructional leadership. Interpretation remains limited by incomplete reporting of interview recruitment, analytical procedures, and ethical safeguards, together with the absence of comparative or learning-outcome data.

**Keywords:** instructional media; sociology education; teacher confidence; school infrastructure; instructional leadership

## INTRODUCTION

Sociology education requires students to relate concepts such as social interaction, social groups, and institutions to the situations they encounter in everyday life. Instructional media can provide representations of these situations through photographs, diagrams, news excerpts, printed cases, or audiovisual materials. Their educational contribution depends on how teachers select and use them within a lesson. A resource can make a social event visible without necessarily helping students explain it. The broader science of learning emphasizes the importance of purposeful learning experiences, prior knowledge, supportive relationships, and opportunities for active

sense-making (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

Evidence from multimedia research supports attention to the design of representations rather than the mere presence of technology. Reviews indicate that well-designed multimedia can support learning, while cognitive load theory explains why poorly organized information may hinder comprehension (Noetel et al., 2022; Sweller, 2020). Research on instructional video also highlights the role of instructional design, but findings from higher education should be transferred to school sociology cautiously (Mayer et al., 2020; Noetel et al., 2021). These studies provide a rationale for examining media use; they do not establish the effectiveness of any specific resource in the present setting.

Teachers' ability to integrate resources is shaped by the conditions in which they work. An umbrella review describes digitalization as a complex process involving teacher competence, support, resources, professional learning, collaboration, and leadership (Wohlfart & Wagner, 2023). Reviews of primary teachers' technology use and teachers' perceptions in Pakistan similarly identify interacting personal and contextual constraints (Akram et al., 2022; Spiteri & Chang Rundgren, 2020). Although these contexts differ from Indonesian secondary sociology, they show why limited media use should be examined through both classroom practice and school organization.

Preliminary observations in Grade XI IPS 2 at SMA Negeri 1 Buru indicated that teaching relied largely on verbal explanation, textbooks, and student summaries. The original account also described students who appeared disengaged during lessons. An observation table covering 26 students recorded relatively low participation across four indicators: listening, asking questions, taking notes, and completing assigned tasks. These observations motivated inquiry into media use, but they do not demonstrate that a particular teaching approach caused the participation pattern. Student engagement includes multiple dimensions that cannot be adequately represented by a single classroom checklist (Bond et al., 2020).

The study therefore asked: What barriers were reported to constrain the use of instructional media in sociology lessons at SMA Negeri 1 Buru? Its objective was to describe those barriers and examine their implications for feasible classroom improvement. The contribution is a contextual account of underutilization in one school, rather than a test of media effectiveness or a claim that all sociology teachers experience the same constraints. The term "underutilization" is used because the reported problem concerns limited use of supplementary media, not evidence that instructional media lack educational value.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Instructional Media and Meaningful Learning

Instructional media include both digital and non-digital resources used to represent information and support learning activity. This broader definition is important where electricity or projection equipment is unreliable. A printed social case can support discussion, while a digital presentation may still reproduce a teacher-centered lesson. Research on technology integration models cautions against treating a simple model or adoption label as a complete explanation of classroom practice (Tondeur et al., 2021). The central question is what students do with a representation and how this activity relates to the intended learning objective.

Several reviews clarify why visual appeal alone is insufficient. The seductive-details literature indicates that interesting but irrelevant additions can distract from learning, whereas emotional-design research examines how affective features of multimedia may influence learning under particular conditions (Sundararajan & Adesope, 2020; Wong & Adesope, 2021). These perspectives support selecting a small number of relevant images or examples and avoiding unnecessary decoration. A meta-analysis of digital tools in secondary mathematics and science provides evidence from a more comparable educational level, but its subject-specific findings cannot be assumed to apply directly to sociology (Hillmayr et al., 2020).

Meaningful use of media also requires suitable learning tasks. Generative learning concerns learners' efforts to organize and integrate information, including explanation, visualization, and enactment (Fiorella, 2023). The suitability of different generative strategies varies with learners' age and the guidance provided (Brod, 2021). Activity-based learning likewise needs intellectual engagement rather than activity for its own sake (Skulmowski, 2024). In a sociology lesson, an image can therefore serve as a basis for identifying a social relationship, comparing interpretations, or explaining a concept rather than functioning only as an illustration.

Retrieval practice offers another way to link media with purposeful participation. A review of classroom studies supports the learning value of opportunities to retrieve information (Agarwal et al., 2021). Evidence that active learning can reduce achievement gaps in undergraduate STEM also illustrates the importance of participation, although that population and subject area differ from this study (Theobald et al., 2020). These findings justify designing tasks that elicit responses; they do not establish that every activity or every media format is superior to explanation by a teacher.

## Teacher Competence, Confidence, and Readiness

Competence in media use extends beyond operating devices. The teacher digital competency framework brings together technical, pedagogical, and broader professional considerations (Falloon, 2020). Research on technology-related knowledge, skills, and attitudes likewise treats teacher preparation as involving multiple complementary dimensions (Seufert et al., 2021). A teacher may understand the potential value of a resource while lacking confidence in its operation or in its application to a particular subject. Conversely, technical familiarity does not guarantee an appropriately designed lesson.

Studies of teacher readiness reinforce the need to distinguish individual capacity from institutional conditions. Research in secondary education identifies different readiness profiles based on teachers' perceptions of personal and institutional readiness (Howard et al., 2021). A related higher-education study likewise treats readiness as multidimensional (Scherer et al., 2021). These studies concern online teaching, whereas the present study concerns face-to-face sociology lessons. Their relevance lies in the distinction between having access to a tool and feeling able to use it effectively, not in assuming that online and classroom teaching are equivalent.

The relationship between digital competence and technology acceptance has been examined in vocational education (Antonietti et al., 2022). Research with in-service teachers also connects digital competence with personal and contextual characteristics, including confidence and ease of use (Lucas et al., 2021). Such work supports a nuanced interpretation of a teacher's statement that she "cannot" use media: the statement may concern confidence, opportunity, safety, preparation, or instructional judgment, and requires contextual interpretation rather than a deficit label.

Professional learning is a potential response, but its design matters. A systematic review examines digital competence within teacher professional development (Fernández-Batanero et al., 2022), while a critical review of effective professional development cautions against treating commonly listed program features as sufficient evidence of effectiveness (Sims & Fletcher-Wood, 2021). Supported practice should therefore address the actual resources, concerns, and lesson demands teachers face. Where electrical equipment creates anxiety, supervised familiarization and equipment checks may be more relevant than a general presentation about technology's benefits.

## School Conditions, Leadership, and Pedagogical Routines

Technology integration is also an organizational process. Research using activity theory

distinguishes the introduction of equipment from broader pedagogical and organizational change (Pettersson, 2021). A review of leadership and technology integration identifies school leadership as an important part of the conditions supporting teachers' practice (Dexter & Richardson, 2020). Research on successful school leadership similarly locates leadership influence within school organization and instructional improvement (Leithwood et al., 2020). In this perspective, appreciation should be considered alongside access, support, planning time, and professional collaboration.

A study in Kuwait examined the relationship between principals' digital leadership and teachers' technology integration during the pandemic (AlAjmi, 2022). This provides a comparison for understanding organizational support, but it does not verify the present teacher's account of recognition at her school. Recognition is one reported feature of the local working environment; its relative influence was not measured. Claims about the principal's behavior should consequently remain attributed to the participant's perspective.

Pandemic-era studies provide additional lessons about the interaction between resources, competence, and working conditions. Research with early-career teachers in Germany examined adaptation to online teaching during school closures (König et al., 2020), while a qualitative account documented changes in the professional life of a K–12 teacher (Kaden, 2020). A systematic review of K–12 emergency remote teaching shows the diversity of challenges faced across school contexts (Al Mazrooei et al., 2022). These sources are used as contextual comparisons, not as evidence that the present lessons were delivered remotely or that pandemic conditions explain the local findings.

Research on online teaching and teacher presence also emphasizes instructional activity and interaction rather than platform availability (Martin et al., 2020; Rapanta et al., 2020). An account of emergency remote teaching further highlights the importance of preparation and support (Trust & Whalen, 2020). Taken together, the literature supports examining media underutilization as an interaction between preparation demands, perceived capability, available facilities, familiar teaching routines, and organizational support. This interpretive perspective guides the discussion without replacing the five factors described in the original field account.

## METHODS

### Design, Setting, and Participants

The study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the limited use of

instructional media in sociology lessons at SMA Negeri 1 Buru, Karimun Regency, Indonesia. The classroom context was Grade XI IPS 2, a social science class. The original study identifies a sociology teacher, the administrator responsible for facilities and infrastructure, and several students from the class as interview participants. It does not specify the total number of interviewees or the recruitment criteria. The 26 students in the preliminary observation table represent the observed classroom group and should not be interpreted as the interview sample. The observation table is dated 2022; precise dates for the remaining data collection are not reported.

## Data Collection

Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Classroom observation focused on the teacher's instructional practice and students' behavior during sociology lessons. The preliminary observation table recorded whether students were active or inactive in listening to explanations, asking questions, taking notes, and completing assigned tasks. Interviews explored participants' accounts of media use and school conditions. Documentation was obtained during classroom teaching. The original report does not provide the interview guide, interview duration, recording or transcription procedures, the number of observation sessions, or the criteria used to classify students as active or inactive.

## Analysis and Reporting Boundaries

The reported qualitative analysis involved data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Five descriptive categories organize the barriers reported in the original account. The manuscript does not provide sufficient detail to establish how coding was performed or how interpretations were checked across participants and data sources. Methodological discussions emphasize that qualitative analysis should be described consistently with the procedures actually undertaken (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Byrne, 2022). Accordingly, this study is not retrospectively relabeled as reflexive thematic analysis.

The preliminary observation frequencies are presented descriptively. Percentages were calculated as the number classified as active or inactive divided by 26 and multiplied by 100. These calculations supplement the original counts; no inferential tests were performed. The four indicators concern the same classroom group and are not combined into a single engagement score. Interview recruitment, sample adequacy, researcher reflexivity, and the basis for stopping data collection are not documented. Guidance on saturation underscores the need to justify sampling in relation to the research aim and dataset (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). Ethical approval, consent, and

confidentiality procedures are also not specified in the available report and require author verification before submission.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Preliminary Classroom Participation

The preliminary observation showed that fewer than half of the 26 students were classified as active on each indicator. Asking questions was the least frequent recorded behavior: two students were active, compared with 24 classified as inactive. Task completion had the highest active count, at twelve students. Table 1 reproduces the original frequencies and adds descriptive percentages.

**Table 1.** Preliminary classroom participation in Grade XI IPS 2 (N = 26)

| No. | Observed indicator | Active (n) | Inactive (n) | Active (%) | Inactive (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Listening to the teacher's explanation | 8 | 18 | 30.8 | 69.2 |
| 2 | Asking questions about material not understood | 2 | 24 | 7.7 | 92.3 |
| 3 | Taking notes on the teacher's explanation | 10 | 16 | 38.5 | 61.5 |
| 4 | Completing tasks assigned by the teacher | 12 | 14 | 46.2 | 53.8 |

Source: Preliminary classroom observation reported in the original manuscript (2022). Counts are unchanged; percentages were calculated using N = 26 and rounded to one decimal place. Indicators refer to the same classroom group and should not be summed.

These figures identify a classroom participation concern. However, the indicators do not measure the same process: a student may listen without asking questions, and the absence of note-taking does not establish an absence of understanding. Because the observation criteria and duration are not reported, the classifications cannot be interpreted as a validated engagement measure. There are also no achievement scores, comparison classes, or observations following a media intervention. The data therefore contextualize the inquiry without testing whether supplementary media would improve participation or learning.

### Perceived Preparation Burden

The first reported barrier was the perceived inconvenience of preparing and using media. The sociology teacher associated media use with additional preparation, a demanding teaching schedule, and difficulty accessing electricity in classrooms. This account suggests that media were viewed as another task competing with existing responsibilities. The evidence concerns perceived burden; preparation time, workload, and equipment setup time were not measured.

This finding is compatible with literature that situates technology integration within both teacher capacity and working conditions (Spiteri & Chang Rundgren, 2020; Wohlfart & Wagner, 2023). Research on the quality of technology-enhanced lesson plans also examines professional knowledge together with motivational beliefs (Backfisch et al., 2020). The local implication is that a resource may be judged difficult to use even when its potential instructional value is recognized. A feasible response is to reduce recurring preparation demands through shared resources and short tasks that can be reused and adapted. Such recommendations are prospective and were not evaluated in this study.

For sociology, manageable alternatives could include a printed photograph with two discussion questions, a newspaper excerpt illustrating a social issue, or a diagram comparing social relationships. These are examples of possible teaching resources, not materials observed during data collection. Their selection should follow the lesson objective and the available class time. A resource bank would be most useful if teachers could quickly identify the concept addressed, the expected student response, and the preparation required.

**Limited Confidence and Fear of Electrical Equipment**

The second barrier concerned perceived inability and apprehension about equipment. The teacher reported a previous electric shock at home and associated this experience with reluctance to use electrically powered media. The original discussion also mentioned concerns about operating devices incorrectly or damaging them. The account should be interpreted as reported fear and limited confidence, not as a clinical diagnosis or proof that the teacher lacked pedagogical competence.

Research on technology acceptance and teachers' knowledge, skills, and attitudes provides relevant perspectives for understanding this concern (Antonietti et al., 2022; Seufert et al., 2021). Studies of teacher readiness also indicate that preparation and confidence cannot be reduced to the possession of equipment (Howard et al., 2021; Scherer et al., 2021). In this setting, encouragement alone would leave the stated concern unresolved. Practical support could include checking equipment, demonstrating safe operation, and providing assistance during initial use. The appropriate response should follow the teacher's concerns and the school's actual resources.

Printed and other non-electrical media remain relevant while confidence and facilities are developed. A teacher can structure a meaningful discussion around an image or case without operating a projector. This follows the broader distinction between technical operation and

purposeful instructional design (Falloon, 2020). The choice of a simple medium should be guided by educational suitability and practical feasibility rather than by an assumption that more advanced equipment necessarily produces better teaching.

### Inadequate Supporting Facilities

The third barrier was limited supporting infrastructure. The teacher reported that electricity was not available in every classroom and that other resources, including a projector, were insufficient for presenting digital materials. The original report does not provide an inventory of equipment, a power-availability record, or an independent facilities assessment. The finding therefore describes the reported conditions rather than a comprehensive technical audit.

The concern parallels constraints identified in research on teachers' perceptions of technology integration, including electricity, infrastructure, and access to support (Akram et al., 2022). Research on digitalization also shows that equipment provision must be connected with organizational and pedagogical development (Pettersson, 2021). At this school, increasing the availability of devices would be only one part of improvement. Access arrangements, maintenance, classroom power, and assistance with setup could also determine whether resources become usable in routine lessons.

A practical school response would begin by identifying which rooms and materials can reliably support instruction. Teachers could then plan lessons using available printed resources, offline digital files where equipment permits, and a contingency activity when projection is unavailable. These suggestions address the conditions described in the report. They should not be interpreted as evidence that all classrooms lack electricity or that online platforms would resolve the barriers. The study offers no information about students' access to personal devices or internet connectivity.

### Preference for Lecture-Based Instruction

The fourth barrier was the teacher's preference for lecturing. She reportedly considered verbal explanation an effective way to help students understand the material. The observed practice also involved textbook use and student summaries. This preference may reflect familiarity and perceived control within existing conditions. The study does not establish that lecturing is inherently ineffective or that the teacher was unwilling to improve her practice.

The relevant distinction concerns how explanation is combined with opportunities for student response. Work on generative and activity-based learning emphasizes the quality of the

thinking demanded of learners (Fiorella, 2023; Skulmowski, 2024). Evidence on retrieval practice supports incorporating opportunities to recall and apply information (Agarwal et al., 2021). For sociology, a brief explanation could be followed by analysis of a social case, comparison of two images, or a question requiring students to connect evidence with a concept. These possible activities retain a clear teacher role while broadening participation.

Media can also be used in ways that add distraction or reproduce passive listening. Reviews of multimedia design, irrelevant details, and instructional video provide reasons to focus on coherent organization and purposeful prompts (Mayer et al., 2020; Noetel et al., 2022; Sundararajan & Adesope, 2020). The improvement implied by the present findings is therefore not a requirement to use media in every lesson. It is to consider whether an appropriate representation and task would help students engage with the concept being taught. Changes should be reviewed against student responses and learning evidence rather than the frequency of media use alone.

**Perceived Insufficient Recognition from the Principal**

The fifth barrier was perceived insufficient appreciation from the principal. The teacher described limited recognition for efforts to prepare or use media and referred to information about a mathematics teacher whose use of printed media was reportedly not acknowledged. The latter account is secondhand and was not independently verified in the manuscript. The evidence establishes a participant's perception of organizational recognition; it does not establish the principal's intentions or the frequency of recognition practices.

Leadership literature supports treating this concern as part of the wider instructional environment. Research on technology integration and leadership examines the ways leaders support teacher practice (Dexter & Richardson, 2020), while work on successful school leadership connects improvement with school-level conditions (Leithwood et al., 2020). The Kuwait study offers further comparative evidence on digital leadership and integration, but its results cannot be used to validate the present allegation (AlAjmi, 2022). Recognition should consequently be discussed together with concrete support, including access to resources, time for collaboration, and assistance with implementation.

Constructive recognition could involve discussing what teachers tried, acknowledging preparation effort, and offering specific feedback linked to student learning. Recognition need not be a financial reward or a competition based on visible device use. Professional development research also encourages attention to the mechanisms through which teacher learning may change

practice (Fernández-Batanero et al., 2022; Sims & Fletcher-Wood, 2021). A supportive response would connect appreciation with opportunities to improve a lesson and review the results. The effect of such a response remains a question for future research.

## Interacting Constraints and Implications for Sociology Teaching

The five barriers should not be interpreted as independent predictors with established effect sizes. Preparation demands may become more burdensome when electricity and equipment are difficult to access. Apprehension about operation may discourage practice, while reliance on familiar explanations may reduce opportunities to develop confidence. Perceived limited recognition could further weaken the incentive to invest effort. This is an interpretive synthesis of the reported accounts, not a tested causal model.

Comparative research on adaptation to online teaching and emergency remote education illustrates how instructional practice depends on competence, resources, and support across different contexts (Al Mazrooei et al., 2022; Kaden, 2020; König et al., 2020; Trust & Whalen, 2020). Research on online learning and teacher presence similarly highlights the organization of learning activity (Martin et al., 2020; Rapanta et al., 2020). These comparisons strengthen the rationale for coordinated support while leaving the face-to-face setting and empirical limits of the present study explicit.

A context-sensitive improvement process could begin with a small, reusable sociology activity. Teachers and school leaders could identify a suitable printed or digital resource, anticipate preparation and equipment needs, and decide what student response would indicate understanding. A subsequent lesson could be reviewed using clearer observation criteria and a short learning task. Evidence on learner age, secondary-school digital tools, and broader active learning supports considering guidance and context when designing this work (Brod, 2021; Hillmayr et al., 2020; Theobald et al., 2020). None of these external findings substitutes for evaluating the proposed activity with the students at this school.

## Limitations

The findings are bounded by one school and the classroom context described in the manuscript. The number and characteristics of interviewees, recruitment strategy, interview guide, data collection duration, transcription process, coding procedures, researcher roles, and checks on interpretation are incompletely reported. Although observation, interviews, and documentation were collected, this alone does not establish that triangulation or participant checking was

performed. The available narrative relies substantially on one teacher's account, and the reported concern about a colleague's recognition is secondhand. Saturation and sample adequacy cannot be determined from the information provided (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022).

The participation table uses unspecified active/inactive criteria and provides no measure of reliability. It cannot demonstrate learning gains, diagnose disengagement, or identify the causal effects of media use. The study also lacks a comparison group and a documented media intervention. Recommendations are therefore grounded in reported constraints and relevant literature, rather than tested improvements. Ethical approval, consent, and confidentiality procedures require clarification. More transparent methodological reporting would improve readers' ability to evaluate the findings without changing the descriptive design into a different analytical approach (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Byrne, 2022).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study identified five reported barriers to instructional media use in sociology lessons at SMA Negeri 1 Buru: perceived preparation burden, limited confidence and fear of electrical equipment, inadequate supporting facilities, preference for lecture-based instruction, and perceived insufficient recognition from the principal. Preliminary observations of 26 students also documented limited participation on four classroom indicators. These data describe the setting and the reported barriers; they do not establish that media underutilization caused low participation or that adding media would necessarily improve achievement.

The findings support a coordinated response addressing teacher practice and school conditions. Teachers can begin with relevant printed or offline resources linked to short analytical tasks. Schools can improve the reliability and accessibility of facilities, provide practical assistance, enable resource sharing, and recognize instructional effort through constructive feedback. Professional learning should address the actual equipment, concerns, and sociology lesson demands reported by teachers.

Future research should document participant recruitment, ethical safeguards, and analytical procedures more fully. Repeated classroom observations with explicit criteria, diverse participant accounts, and appropriate learning evidence could clarify how the reported constraints shape practice. A subsequent evaluation of a feasible media-supported activity could examine participation and understanding while considering workload, infrastructure, and teacher confidence. The present study provides a local basis for that inquiry rather than a generalized or

causal assessment of instructional media effectiveness.

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