



Implementation of the Improvement of the Qur'an Literacy Program for Modern Boarding School Students

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the implementation of the Al-Qur'an reading and writing program at Pondok Modern Al-Barokah Ngepung Patianrowo, focusing on enhancing the literacy skills of its students. The research employs a descriptive qualitative method, with the second grade of KMI as the sample group. Data was collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The study found that the students' pronunciation of Arabic letters is emphasized, particularly through the application of tajweed rules, direct reading practice in front of teachers, and the use of methods such as lectures, drills, assignments, and the traditional sorogan approach. The implementation of the program takes approximately six months, allowing for individual assessment of students' fluency in reading the Qur'an. This timeframe is necessary to ensure the students' proficiency in Qur'anic literacy.

Keywords: Implementation, Qur'an Literacy, Al-Barokah Modern Islamic Boarding School, Tajweed, Sorogan Method



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INTRODUCTION

Islamic education stands as a cornerstone of the Muslim intellectual and spiritual heritage, serving not only as a means of transmitting religious knowledge but also as a vehicle for preserving Islamic tradition and cultivating future scholars (*ulama*). Within the Indonesian context, *pesantren*—Islamic boarding schools—play an indispensable role in this educational framework. These institutions are vital in nurturing the religious, moral, and social values that are integral to the formation of a devout Muslim identity. By immersing students in an environment that emphasizes both religious learning and character development, *pesantren* have historically been at the forefront of shaping the religious landscape in Indonesia



(Hasan & Suryadi, 2021; Abdullah & Siddiq, 2022).

Central to the mission of Islamic education is the teaching of the Qur'an, the divine text revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a guide for all aspects of life. The Qur'an is revered not only for its legal and moral teachings but also for its spiritual and aesthetic dimensions. The act of reciting the Qur'an is a profound spiritual practice that connects the believer to Allah, offering a unique form of worship that transcends mere reading. This recitation is accompanied by specific rules of pronunciation and melody (*tajweed*), which are crucial for preserving the sacredness of the text. However, the complexity of the Arabic language, combined with the unique script of the Qur'an, presents significant challenges for learners, especially those whose native language is not Arabic (Hamid & Yusuf, 2022; Malik & Farooq, 2022).

In *pesantren* like Pondok Modern Al-Barokah Ngepung Patianrowo, the Qur'anic literacy program is a critical component of the curriculum. The program is designed to ensure that all students, referred to as *santri*, develop the ability to read and write the Qur'an with precision and fluency. The importance of this program cannot be overstated, as the ability to engage with the Qur'an directly is fundamental to the practice of Islam. Mastery of Qur'anic recitation and writing is not just an educational goal; it is a spiritual imperative. The accuracy with which the Qur'an is recited and written directly impacts the integrity of the text's transmission from one generation to the next (Basri & Zulkifli, 2020; Rahman & Ali, 2021).

However, teaching Qur'anic literacy involves overcoming several pedagogical challenges. The Arabic language used in the Qur'an is classical and differs significantly from modern Arabic dialects, making it less accessible to students, particularly those who do not speak Arabic as their first language. The process of learning to read and write in Arabic requires a deep understanding of the language's phonological and grammatical structures, which are markedly different from those of the students' native languages. Moreover, the Qur'anic script itself presents unique challenges; it includes diacritical marks and specific rules for pronunciation that must be adhered to rigorously (Ashraf & Malik, 2023; Khan, 2020).

The program at Pondok Modern Al-Barokah addresses these challenges through a structured approach that combines traditional teaching methods with modern pedagogical strategies. The use of *tajweed* rules ensures that students learn the correct pronunciation of each letter and word, while methods like *sorogan* provide individualized instruction that caters to the specific needs of each student. The program also emphasizes the importance of continuous practice and assessment, recognizing that mastery of Qur'anic literacy is a gradual process that requires sustained effort and guidance (Saleem & Ahmed, 2023). By focusing on both the technical and spiritual aspects of Qur'anic learning, the program aims to produce students who are not only proficient in reading and writing the Qur'an but also deeply connected to its teachings (Ibrahim & Saleh, 2022).



This study seeks to explore the implementation and effectiveness of the Qur'anic literacy program at Pondok Modern Al-Barokah. It aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of how the program is structured, the pedagogical approaches used, and the outcomes achieved. The research will delve into the specific challenges faced by both teachers and students, examining how these challenges are addressed and what impact they have on the overall effectiveness of the program. Additionally, the study will consider the broader implications of this program for Islamic education in Indonesia, offering insights that could inform the development of similar programs in other *pesantren* and educational institutions (Esposito & Voll, 2020; Mohamad, 2020).

The findings of this research are expected to contribute significantly to the field of Islamic education, particularly in the area of Qur'anic literacy. By providing a detailed examination of the implementation and outcomes of the Qur'anic literacy program at Pondok Modern Al-Barokah, this study aims to enhance our understanding of effective teaching practices and offer recommendations for improving the quality of Qur'anic education in *pesantren* across Indonesia (Usman & Tahir, 2020; Latif & Wahyuni, 2021).

METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research approach, which is particularly suited for exploring the nuanced processes involved in the implementation of the Qur'anic literacy program at Pondok Modern Al-Barokah. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth examination of the experiences, perspectives, and interactions within the educational setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study is designed as a case study, focusing on the specific context of Pondok Modern Al-Barokah, where the aim is to describe and interpret the implementation process and its outcomes (Yin, 2018).

Research Design and Data Collection Methods



Research Setting and Participants

The research was conducted at Pondok Modern Al-Barokah Ngepung Patianrowo, located in Nganjuk, East Java, Indonesia. This setting was selected due to its established reputation for delivering comprehensive Qur'anic education. The



participants of this study include 17 female students from the second grade of the KMI (Kulliyatul Mu'allimin al-Islamiyyah), equivalent to the eighth grade in the formal education system, along with the teachers and administrative staff involved in the Qur'anic literacy program.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection in this study was carried out through multiple methods to ensure a rich and comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The primary methods included:

1. **Observation:** Non-participant observations were conducted to capture the dynamics of the Qur'anic literacy classes. The researcher observed classroom activities, focusing on the interactions between teachers and students, the application of teaching methods, and the students' engagement with the material. Observations were recorded in field notes and supplemented with video recordings to ensure accuracy (Spradley, 2016).
2. **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, students, and the administrative staff to gain insights into their experiences and perspectives regarding the Qur'anic literacy program. The interviews focused on understanding the challenges faced during implementation, the strategies employed to overcome these challenges, and the perceived effectiveness of the program (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2018).
3. **Documentation:** Relevant documents, including the curriculum, lesson plans, student assessments, and official reports from the school, were collected and analyzed. This documentation provided additional context and substantiated the findings from observations and interviews (Bowen, 2009).

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, a method that involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2019). The process began with data familiarization, where all collected data were reviewed repeatedly. Codes were then generated from significant features in the data, which were grouped into themes. These themes were refined and reviewed to ensure they accurately represented the data and addressed the research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Fluency in Qur'anic Reading

The findings of this study underscore the critical emphasis placed on fluency in Qur'anic recitation at Pondok Modern Al-Barokah, particularly the precise articulation of Arabic letters, which is fundamental to proper Qur'anic literacy. The program is meticulously designed to ensure that students master the phonetic



nuances of Arabic, focusing heavily on *makharijul huruf*—the articulation points essential for correct pronunciation. Mastery of these points is crucial, as improper pronunciation can alter the meaning of the Qur'anic text, thereby compromising the spiritual and doctrinal integrity of the recitation (Hamid & Alavi, 2019; Rahman & Wali, 2018).

The instructional strategy integrates a combination of didactic lectures on the rules of *tajweed*, intensive drilling sessions, and the traditional *sorogan* method. The *sorogan* approach, which involves students reciting individually in front of an instructor, is particularly effective in providing immediate, personalized feedback. This method allows for the identification and correction of specific phonetic errors, fostering a deeper understanding and retention of correct pronunciation among students (Jamil & Hussain, 2017).

Over a six-month implementation period, the program consistently assesses students' recitation skills through a series of rigorous individual tests. These assessments are designed to measure the students' progress in adhering to *tajweed* rules and their overall fluency in Qur'anic recitation. The longitudinal nature of the program highlights the inherent challenges in attaining proficiency, particularly for students with varying levels of prior exposure to Arabic (Chishti & Siddiqui, 2018). The study reveals that while some students demonstrate rapid improvement, others face significant hurdles in mastering the phonetic complexity of the language, necessitating ongoing, targeted instructional support (Umar & Tahir, 2019).

Teaching Methods and Pedagogical Challenges

The research further reveals the complexity and effectiveness of the teaching methods employed in the Qur'anic literacy program. The instructors at Pondok Modern Al-Barokah utilize a multifaceted pedagogical approach that blends traditional methods with modern educational practices. The curriculum is structured to accommodate diverse learning needs, incorporating direct instruction of *tajweed* principles from classical texts, practical application exercises, and continuous reinforcement through drills and assignments (Ali & Mahmood, 2021; Karim & Shah, 2019).

The *sorogan* method, central to the instructional approach, provides a unique pedagogical advantage. This method allows for an intimate teacher-student interaction, which is crucial in a setting where individual recitation nuances must be closely monitored and corrected. The method also fosters a sense of responsibility and self-discipline among students, as they must prepare thoroughly for each recitation session. However, the method's reliance on individual recitation can be time-intensive, which poses a challenge in large class settings (Luthfi & Zain, 2021; Ghazi & Khan, 2021).

The study identifies several pedagogical challenges inherent in the program. One of the most significant is the extensive time commitment required to achieve



fluency in Qur'anic recitation. Given the complexity of the Arabic script and the specific demands of *tajweed*, students often require prolonged periods of practice to internalize the rules and apply them consistently. The findings suggest that while the traditional methods are effective, they may not be sufficient for all students, particularly those who struggle with the cognitive demands of learning a non-native language. This necessitates the exploration of supplementary instructional methods, such as peer-assisted learning and the integration of technological tools that can provide additional practice and reinforcement outside the classroom (Baig, 2022; Farooq & Ahmad, 2020).

Impact and Effectiveness of the Program

The impact of the Qur'anic literacy program at Pondok Modern Al-Barokah is evident in the significant improvements observed in students' recitation proficiency. The program's structured approach, with its strong emphasis on personalized instruction and adherence to *tajweed* rules, has resulted in measurable gains in students' ability to recite the Qur'an accurately and fluently. The use of the *sorogan* method, in particular, has been instrumental in enabling students to receive the immediate feedback necessary to refine their recitation skills (Syed & Ali, 2020; Iqbal & Sulaiman, 2022).

However, the study also highlights disparities in student progress, pointing to a need for further refinement of the program to ensure more uniform outcomes. For instance, while many students show marked improvement, others, particularly those with weaker linguistic foundations, require more intensive support to reach the desired level of fluency. The research suggests that incorporating adaptive learning strategies, which tailor instruction to the individual needs of each student, could enhance the program's effectiveness. Additionally, the potential integration of digital tools, such as interactive Qur'anic recitation software, could provide supplementary practice opportunities, enabling students to engage more deeply with the material (Yusuf & Hassan, 2022).

The program's effectiveness is also reflected in the positive feedback from both students and instructors, who report a heightened sense of achievement and spiritual fulfillment as students progress in their recitation skills. This feedback underscores the intrinsic value of the program, not only as an educational endeavor but also as a means of fostering a deeper connection with the Qur'anic text (Aydin & Kaya, 2019).

In conclusion, the Qur'anic literacy program at Pondok Modern Al-Barokah represents a robust educational initiative that successfully addresses the critical need for accurate and fluent Qur'anic recitation among students. The program's emphasis on rigorous, personalized instruction through methods such as *sorogan* has proven effective in enhancing students' recitation skills. However, the study also

identifies areas where the program could be further optimized, particularly in terms



of providing additional support for students who struggle with the linguistic demands of Qur'anic recitation.

The findings of this study contribute valuable insights into the pedagogical strategies that can be employed to improve Qur'anic education, particularly in contexts similar to Pondok Modern Al-Barokah. By continuing to refine and adapt the program, there is potential to achieve even greater levels of proficiency among students, ensuring that they are not only able to recite the Qur'an fluently but also to internalize its teachings in a meaningful and spiritually enriching way.

CONCLUSION

The study conducted on the implementation of the Qur'anic literacy program at Pondok Modern Al-Barokah Ngepung Patianrowo has provided significant insights into the effectiveness of traditional and modern pedagogical methods in enhancing Qur'anic literacy among students. The findings indicate that the program's emphasis on mastering makharijul huruf (correct pronunciation points of Arabic letters) and adhering to tajweed (rules of Qur'anic recitation) plays a crucial role in improving the students' recitation fluency. The use of diverse teaching strategies, such as lectures, drills, assignments, and the traditional sorogan method, has proven effective in fostering a deeper understanding and accurate recitation of the Qur'an.

The six-month implementation period allowed for a comprehensive assessment of each student's progress, highlighting both the strengths and areas for improvement within the program. While many students showed significant improvement in their recitation skills, the study also revealed that some students require additional support to achieve fluency. This suggests the need for further refinement of the instructional methods, including the potential integration of adaptive learning technologies and peer-assisted learning strategies to cater to the diverse needs of students.

Moreover, the study underscores the importance of continuous practice and the need for sustained instructional support to ensure that all students can meet the high standards of Qur'anic literacy required by the program. The personalized approach to teaching, particularly through the sorogan method, has been instrumental in providing students with the immediate feedback necessary to refine their recitation skills.

In conclusion, the Qur'anic literacy program at Pondok Modern Al-Barokah is a robust educational initiative that has successfully enhanced the recitation skills of its students. However, to achieve more uniform outcomes, the program could benefit from further enhancements, such as incorporating modern technological tools and expanding peer-based learning opportunities. These improvements could help reduce the time required for students to achieve fluency and ensure that all students can internalize and accurately recite the Qur'an, thereby fulfilling the program's educational and spiritual objectives.



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