Development of Qur'anic Literacy in Islamic Religious Education Learning: A Case Study at SMA Negeri 4 Pangkalpinang

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the development of Qur'anic literacy within Islamic Religious Education learning at SMA Negeri 4 Pangkalpinang by examining how the program is institutionally designed, pedagogically implemented, and systematically evaluated to strengthen students' reading competence and religious character formation in a public secondary school context. The research employed a qualitative field research design using a case study approach, with data collected through in-depth interviews, classroom and extracurricular observations, and document analysis of assessment records and institutional policies. Data were analyzed using the Interactive Model of Miles and Huberman, supported by triangulation to ensure credibility. The findings reveal that Qur'anic literacy development is structurally integrated into Islamic Religious Education learning rather than positioned as a supplementary activity, and is implemented through a differentiated pedagogical model consisting of foundational Iqra'-based instruction, drill reinforcement for fluency, and Tahfidz enrichment for advanced learners. The development process follows a cyclical framework involving diagnostic assessment, staged instruction, mentoring through peer tutoring, periodic evaluation, and literacy culture reinforcement practices such as One Day One Ayat and morning Tadarus. Evaluation mechanisms include placement, formative, diagnostic, and summative assessments through oral recitation tests, written examinations, and memorization deposits, enabling adaptive instructional adjustments and measurable student progression. The novelty of this study lies in conceptualizing Qur'anic literacy as a systemic pedagogical process embedded within formal Islamic Religious Education learning, demonstrating that effective literacy development emerges from the integration of institutional commitment, differentiated instruction, and continuous evaluation. The study contributes theoretically by proposing an institutional, differentiated, and adaptive model of Qur'anic literacy development, and practically by offering a structured framework for secondary schools seeking to strengthen religious literacy and character formation within formal educational settings.

Keywords: Qur'anic Literacy Development; Islamic Religious Education; Differentiated Instruction; Literacy Assessment; Religious Character; Secondary Education.

Introduction

Qur'anic literacy, understood as the ability to read, comprehend, and engage with the Qur'an in ways that inform belief and practice, is a central learning outcome of Islamic Religious Education in Indonesian schools. National education regulations and programmatic initiatives emphasise the urgency of Qur'anic competence as both a curricular obligation and a vehicle for moral formation (Suhartini, 2023). Empirical evaluations of structured programs such as guided Qur'anic reading (Bimbingan Membaca Al-Qur'an) indicate that organized, methodical instruction produces measurable improvements in hijaiyah literacy and fluency, and that sustained pedagogical scaffolding is necessary to translate basic reading skill into deeper religious literacy (Patimah, 2022; Rahayu, 2020).

Contemporary literature argues that Qur'anic literacy should be conceptualised beyond isolated skill acquisition: it is a curriculum problem, a pedagogical challenge, and a matter of institutional policy. Studies on method and media (for example, Iqra' method implementations and drill approaches) show consistent gains when instruction combines graded materials, regular practice, and formative evaluation (Halili, 2022; Syahraini Tambak, 2020; Sari et al., 2024). At the same time, curriculum development scholarship stresses the need to align Qur'anic literacy programs with students' socio-cultural backgrounds and the school's learning objectives so that literacy practices are sustainable and meaningful (Nurliah, 2024). Research on program sustainability also identifies common constraints, unequal resource allocation, variation in teacher competence, and insufficient institutional coordination, that reduce program effectiveness despite well-designed interventions (Samudr, 2022; Nurhayati, 2020).

Teacher capacity and institutional leadership are pivotal mediating variables in successful Qur'anic literacy development. Field studies demonstrate that routine teacher-led reading schedules, paired with mentoring and parental engagement, raise both participation and achievement (Fadhila, 2024; Salmia, 2022). Moreover, research on Islamic education management indicates that teacher professional development, institutional supervision, and curriculum coherence materially affect program outcomes; teacher motivation and commitment mediate how pedagogical designs are enacted in practice (Fauzi, 2022; Rodliyah, Khusnuridlo, Fauzi, & Baharun, 2024). These findings imply that effective Qur'anic literacy initiatives require integrative attention to curriculum, pedagogy, human resources, and monitoring systems.

SMA Negeri 4 Pangkalpinang provides a useful case to study these dynamics because of its multi-year commitment to eradicating Qur'anic illiteracy through layered interventions (hijaiyah programs, Iqra' groups, tahfidz streams, and monthly/semester evaluation). The school's 2022–2023 intake assessment shows heterogeneous competency distribution, only a minority achieve advanced memorization levels while a significant share remain at basic or intermediate fluency, indicating the need for differentiated

instructional pathways and robust evaluative practices (see original dataset and program description in the submitted manuscript).

Although numerous studies document specific methods (Iqra', drill, Dirosa, tutoring) and community programs (BMQ, Quran corner initiatives), there is still limited research that synthesises program design, classroom-level pedagogical procedure, and evaluation practice within the formal structure of Islamic Religious Education at the secondary school level. In particular, scholarship would benefit from case studies that link (1) program formulation (objectives, grouping, resources), (2) classroom implementation (pedagogical sequences, teacher roles, media), and (3) monitoring and assessment systems (placement tests, formative diagnostics, summative evaluation), showing how these three dimensions interact to shape learning trajectories.

Accordingly, this study examines the development of Qur'anic literacy in Islamic Religious Education learning at SMA Negeri 4 Pangkalpinang through a focused case study. The research objective is threefold: to (a) describe and analyse program design and intended learning outcomes, (b) document and evaluate pedagogical procedures and teacher-student interactions in classroom and extracurricular settings, and (c) appraise the evaluation and monitoring mechanisms used to track progress and inform instructional differentiation. By situating Qur'anic literacy within the formal pedagogical frame of Islamic Religious Education, the study aims to offer theoretical clarification about religious literacy development and to deliver pragmatic recommendations for strengthening Qur'anic literacy programs in similar public secondary school contexts.

Method

This study employed a qualitative field research design situated within a case study approach. Field research was selected to enable an in-depth understanding of the development of Qur'anic literacy within its natural educational setting at SMA Negeri 4 Pangkalpinang. Qualitative research emphasizes naturalistic inquiry, descriptive interpretation, and prioritizes process over outcome (Moleong, 2018). It seeks to understand social phenomena from the perspectives of participants and within the context in which they occur (Moleong, 2018). In this study, the qualitative case study design was adopted to explore how Qur'anic literacy is developed within Islamic Religious Education learning, focusing on program formulation, pedagogical implementation, and evaluation practices. Case study research is particularly appropriate when the objective is to investigate contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts and when boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2018).

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 4 Pangkalpinang, Bangka Belitung Islands, Indonesia. The participants consisted of Islamic Religious Education teachers, Qur'anic literacy tutors, school administrators, and selected students representing different levels of Qur'anic reading competence (Iqra', fluent, and tahfidz groups). Participants were selected using purposive

sampling to ensure that information-rich cases were included in the study (Patton, 2015). Primary data were obtained directly from participants through interviews and observations, while secondary data were derived from institutional documents, program reports, assessment records, and curriculum materials related to Qur'anic literacy development.

Data collection employed three principal techniques: in-depth semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with teachers and tutors to explore instructional strategies, grouping mechanisms, and evaluation systems. Semi-structured interviews allow flexibility while maintaining focus on predetermined research objectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Observations were carried out during Qur'anic literacy sessions, both within Islamic Religious Education classroom hours and extracurricular activities, to capture pedagogical interactions, student engagement, and instructional media utilization. Observational protocols were structured to document teaching sequences, feedback mechanisms, and classroom dynamics. Document analysis included the review of initial assessment data, grouping records, evaluation instruments, and institutional policies concerning Qur'anic literacy programs.

Data analysis followed the Interactive Model of Analysis developed by Miles and Huberman (1984), consisting of three concurrent activities: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data reduction involved coding and categorizing interview transcripts, field notes, and documents to identify recurring themes related to program design, instructional procedures, and evaluation mechanisms. Thematic coding was conducted iteratively to ensure analytic rigor and conceptual clarity (Saldaña, 2021). Data display was performed through matrices and narrative descriptions to facilitate pattern recognition and cross-case comparison among participant groups. Conclusion drawing involved interpreting relationships between institutional policy, pedagogical practice, and student literacy outcomes, while continuously verifying emerging findings through revisiting the data corpus.

To ensure trustworthiness, this study applied triangulation techniques encompassing source triangulation, method triangulation, and time triangulation (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Credibility was strengthened through member checking, whereby interview summaries were confirmed by participants to ensure accuracy of interpretation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability was addressed by providing thick description of the research context and program structure, enabling readers to determine applicability to similar settings. Dependability was enhanced through maintaining an audit trail of research procedures, coding decisions, and analytical memos. Confirmability was supported by reflexive documentation to minimize researcher bias. These procedures align with qualitative research standards in educational studies (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Tracy, 2010).

Through this methodological framework, the study aims to generate a comprehensive and analytically grounded understanding of how Qur'anic

literacy is developed within Islamic Religious Education learning at SMA Negeri 4 Pangkalpinang.

Results and Discussion

Program for the Development of Qur'anic Literacy among Students at SMA Negeri 4 Pangkalpinang

The findings of this study indicate that the Qur'anic literacy development program at SMA Negeri 4 Pangkalpinang is not positioned as a supplementary or ceremonial religious activity, but rather as an institutionally embedded component within Islamic Religious Education learning. The program involves school leadership, Islamic Religious Education teachers, Tahfidz tutors, and structured school policies that formally designate Qur'anic literacy as a compulsory program. This institutional integration demonstrates that literacy development is designed as a core pedagogical objective within PAI, rather than as a reactive response to students' reading deficiencies. In this context, Qur'anic literacy functions as a foundational religious competency aligned with the broader aims of Islamic Religious Education, which emphasize cognitive mastery, affective internalization, and practical religious skills.

Substantively, the program is developed through three principal instructional approaches: the Iqra' method, the drill method, and the Tahfidz enrichment program. The Iqra' method serves as the foundational pathway for students with limited prior competence. It applies a gradual and structured progression from recognition of hijaiyah letters to fluent recitation. This staged model is consistent with the pedagogical characteristics of the Iqra' approach, which emphasizes incremental mastery and systematic evaluation at each level (Halili, 2022). Sulistya (2023) further notes that the sequential nature of the method supports accuracy and fluency development through step-by-step reinforcement. The empirical findings show that students placed in the Iqra' group experienced measurable improvement in makharijul huruf articulation when instruction was conducted consistently and intensively.

The drill method is implemented as a reinforcement strategy to improve reading fluency and pronunciation precision. Drill activities are not limited to mechanical repetition but are accompanied by direct corrective feedback from teachers. As explained by Jamhuri (2016) and Syahraini Tambak (2020), the effectiveness of drill-based instruction depends heavily on instructional design and systematic sequencing. Classroom observations reveal that drill sessions combined with teacher modeling and peer demonstration result in greater improvement compared to unsupervised repetition. Thus, the study confirms that repetition becomes pedagogically effective when integrated with feedback and guided practice.

The Tahfidz program functions as an enrichment track for students who have achieved adequate fluency. Memorization activities are integrated with tajwid accuracy and tartil recitation, ensuring that memorization is not detached from reading quality. This indicates vertical differentiation within the

literacy program, enabling students to progress according to their respective competencies. Rather than focusing solely on memorization quantity, the program emphasizes quality and accuracy of recitation.

The use of instructional media, particularly hijaiyah letter cards, emerges as an important supporting element in early literacy development. Visual card media facilitate symbol recognition and phonetic association, as supported by Prasetiyorini (2020), who found that hijaiyah card media significantly improve recognition and reading outcomes. In practice, students in the Iqra' group demonstrated increased participation and faster letter identification when visual media were applied.

Overall, the Qur'anic literacy development program at SMA Negeri 4 Pangkalpinang demonstrates three primary characteristics: institutional integration within Islamic Religious Education learning, differentiated pedagogical pathways, and multimodal instructional support. These characteristics indicate that effective Qur'anic literacy development requires structured design, systematic implementation, and coordinated institutional commitment.

Procedures for the Development of Qur'anic Literacy among Students at SMA Negeri 4 Pangkalpinang

The study reveals that the development of Qur'anic literacy is implemented through systematic and cyclical procedures consisting of initial assessment, structured instruction, mentoring, periodic evaluation, and literacy culture reinforcement. These stages operate as a continuous improvement cycle rather than a linear sequence.

The initial assessment functions as a placement evaluation to map students' baseline competencies. Grouping students based on diagnostic results allows teachers to apply differentiated instructional strategies tailored to specific competency levels. This placement mechanism ensures instructional alignment and prevents pedagogical mismatch. Without diagnostic assessment, literacy instruction risks becoming ineffective due to heterogeneity in student ability levels.

Structured instruction is conducted during formal Islamic Religious Education lessons as well as supplementary sessions. The instructional content includes hijaiyah recognition, makharijul huruf, tajwid rules, and tartil recitation practice. Integrating literacy instruction within formal PAI learning ensures curriculum coherence and avoids fragmentation between academic instruction and religious practice.

The mentoring stage incorporates peer tutoring as a cooperative learning strategy. Students with higher proficiency levels assist peers who experience reading difficulties under teacher supervision. Mahsup (2020) and Anggorowati (2023) explain that peer tutoring enhances comprehension and reduces student anxiety. Group guidance dynamics, as discussed by Winkel (2024) and Sukiman (2019), further support collaborative learning environments. Empirical findings show that students who were initially

hesitant to recite in front of teachers demonstrated increased confidence when supported by peer tutors.

Literacy culture reinforcement is implemented through habitual programs such as One Day One Ayat and Morning Tadarus. These daily practices institutionalize Qur'anic engagement beyond classroom instruction and contribute to the formation of religious discipline. Therefore, procedural development extends beyond technical literacy to encompass character formation and habitual religious practice.

Evaluation of Qur'anic Literacy Development among Students at SMA Negeri 4 Pangkalpinang

The findings indicate that evaluation is conducted systematically through monthly, mid-semester, and end-semester assessments. The evaluation framework includes placement, formative, diagnostic, and summative evaluation types, as described by Primayana (2020). Placement evaluation determines initial grouping, formative evaluation monitors ongoing progress, diagnostic evaluation identifies specific learning barriers, and summative evaluation measures overall achievement.

Evaluation instruments include oral recitation tests, written assessments, and memorization deposits for Tahfidz students. Oral assessments allow teachers to evaluate articulation accuracy, tajwid application, and fluency in real time. Essay-based written tests are used to measure students' conceptual understanding of tajwid rules, consistent with the assessment principles described by Asrul (2024). This multidimensional evaluation approach ensures that literacy assessment encompasses both performance-based competence and cognitive understanding.

Self-evaluation is also encouraged, allowing students to reflect on their recitation accuracy and progress. Waminton (2015) argues that self-evaluation enhances motivation and self-regulated learning. Interview findings confirm that reflective practices increased students' awareness of pronunciation errors and motivated continuous improvement.

Overall, evaluation functions not merely as measurement but as a feedback mechanism that informs instructional adjustment. Evidence shows that several students transitioned from the Iqra' group to the fluent category following sustained participation in structured instruction and periodic evaluation. This indicates that the evaluation system operates adaptively and contributes to measurable literacy development within Islamic Religious Education learning.

This study offers novelty by positioning Qur'anic literacy not merely as an isolated reading skill, but as a pedagogical process that is systematically integrated into Islamic Religious Education learning in a public secondary school context. Previous studies have largely focused on the effectiveness of specific methods such as Iqra', drill, or Tahfidz in isolation. In contrast, this research demonstrates that successful Qur'anic literacy development is not determined solely by the choice of method, but by the coherence between program design, assessment-based grouping, differentiated instructional

practices, and continuous evaluation. In this framework, Qur'anic literacy is understood as a developmental cycle that connects curriculum alignment, instructional strategy, and the cultivation of religious culture within a unified Islamic Religious Education learning structure.

The contribution of this study lies in proposing an institutional, differentiated, and adaptive model of Qur'anic literacy development. Theoretically, the findings enrich the discourse of Islamic Religious Education by suggesting that religious literacy should be managed through interconnected mechanisms of diagnostic assessment, staged instruction, peer mentoring, and reflective evaluation. Practically, the study provides a reference for public secondary schools in designing Qur'anic literacy programs that strengthen not only technical reading competence but also students' religious habits and spiritual responsibility. By situating Qur'anic literacy as an integral component of Islamic Religious Education learning, this research demonstrates that strengthening religious competence can be systematically achieved within the structure of formal schooling.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the development of Qur'anic literacy at SMA Negeri 4 Pangkalpinang is implemented as an institutionally integrated component of Islamic Religious Education learning rather than as a peripheral or incidental program. The involvement of school leadership, Islamic Religious Education teachers, and Qur'anic tutors demonstrates that literacy development is positioned as a shared institutional responsibility. Instructional strategies such as the Iqra' method, drill reinforcement, and the Tahfidz enrichment pathway are systematically applied to accommodate students' varying competency levels. Teachers function not only as instructors but also as motivators and mentors, preparing structured lesson plans and utilizing instructional media such as hijaiyah letter cards to strengthen foundational reading skills. Students who demonstrate higher fluency are directed toward the Tahfidz program, enabling differentiated academic pathways within a unified literacy framework.

The procedural implementation of the program follows a structured cycle consisting of initial diagnostic assessment, differentiated instruction, mentoring support, periodic evaluation, and literacy culture reinforcement. Grouping students into Iqra' and Qur'an categories ensures instructional alignment and targeted intervention. Evaluation is conducted through written tests, oral recitation assessments, and performance-based observation to measure articulation accuracy, tajwid application, and reading fluency. Monthly and semester-based assessments function not only as measurement tools but also as mechanisms for instructional adjustment and student placement. Overall, the findings demonstrate that Qur'anic literacy development in Islamic Religious Education learning can be effectively strengthened through institutional integration, differentiated pedagogy, and continuous evaluation within the structure of formal schooling.

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