

Strategies for Enhancing Qur'anic Literacy in Developing Outstanding Santri at Al-Amin Tarub Islamic Boarding School

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ABSTRACT

This study is based on a limited understanding of Qur'anic literacy as merely a technical learning activity rather than an institutionally managed strategy systematically implemented in pesantren. This study aims to analyze the strategies used to improve Qur'anic literacy skills at Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin Tarub Tegal. A qualitative approach with a case study design was used to gain an in-depth understanding of literacy management practices within the pesantren. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed thematically through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings show that the improvement of Quran literacy is implemented through three interrelated strategies: vision-based strategic planning, gradual implementation (tadarruj) through structured habituation, and integrated evaluation that combines academic and character dimensions. The literacy program is also strengthened by a supportive religious environment and active participation from all elements of the pesantren. This study concludes that the development of Qur'anic literacy can be effectively achieved through a structured, sustainable, and value-oriented management system. In addition, this research offers a Strategic Religious Literacy Management model that contributes to strengthening the cognitive, affective, and spiritual development of students in Islamic educational institutions.

I. INTRODUCTION

Qur'anic literacy in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) holds a central position in shaping students' intellectual, emotional, and spiritual capacities. In practice, however, Qur'anic literacy is often treated primarily as a technical learning activity that emphasizes correct recitation (tahsin) and memorization (tahfidz). Such an approach tends to overlook the broader institutional dimension, where literacy could be developed as a structured and sustainable program aligned with the vision and mission of the pesantren. As a result, its implementation is sometimes fragmented and less effective in producing well-rounded santri. This condition highlights the importance of rethinking Qur'anic literacy not only as a pedagogical activity but also as a strategically managed institutional effort. Over the past decade, a number of studies have explored Qur'anic literacy from different perspectives. Several works focus on instructional methods, including phonetic approaches, talaqqi-based learning, and the use of digital media, which have shown positive impacts on students' reading abilities [1], [2]. Other studies emphasize the integration of character education and religious values within literacy practices [3]. Meanwhile, research on Islamic educational institutions has also begun to address aspects of management, particularly in relation to planning and quality assurance [4]. Despite these developments, most existing studies still concentrate on teaching techniques or partial evaluations, leaving the managerial aspect of Qur'anic literacy programs relatively underexplored. From this point, it becomes clear that there is a gap in the literature. Few studies have examined Qur'anic literacy as an integrated management system that connects planning, implementation, and evaluation within a single framework. Previous research has not fully addressed how such programs can be systematically organized to support the development of high-quality santri. This study seeks to fill that gap by offering a different perspective, namely by formulating a Strategic Religious

Literacy Management model that places emphasis on institutional strategy and value-based management.

The main question guiding this research is how strategies to improve Qur'anic literacy skills are implemented in a pesantren context. Rather than testing a hypothesis, this study aims to explore and understand the practices that take place in the field. A qualitative case study approach is employed to examine how planning, implementation, and evaluation are carried out in a particular pesantren setting. In addressing the problem, this research adopts a management-oriented perspective that looks at literacy development as a continuous and structured process. It pays attention to how strategic planning is formulated, how programs are implemented gradually (*tadarruj*), and how evaluation is conducted in an integrated manner. Through this approach, the study is expected to offer a clearer picture of how Qur'anic literacy programs can be effectively managed. The purpose of this study is to describe and analyze the strategies used to enhance Qur'anic literacy skills and to develop a model that can be applied in similar educational settings. The findings are expected to identify key elements in managing literacy programs and to contribute to strengthening students' cognitive, affective, and spiritual development. In a broader sense, this study aims to provide an alternative viewpoint in the discussion of Islamic education, particularly in relation to the management of Qur'anic literacy.

II. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a case study design to explore in depth the strategies used to improve Qur'anic literacy skills in an Islamic boarding school context. The qualitative approach was chosen to gain a comprehensive understanding of processes, meanings, and practices as they occur naturally in the field. The subject of this research consisted of pesantren stakeholders, including administrators, Qur'anic teachers, and santri at Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin Tarub Tegal. The object of the study was the strategy for improving Qur'anic literacy skills. The population included all individuals involved in the Qur'anic literacy program within the pesantren, while the sample was determined purposively. Informants were selected based on their roles, experience, and level of involvement in the implementation of literacy programs, ensuring the relevance and depth of the data obtained. Data were collected using three main techniques: in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation study. Interviews were conducted to gather detailed information regarding planning, implementation, and evaluation strategies. Observations were carried out to examine real practices of Qur'anic literacy activities, while documentation was used to support and validate findings through institutional records, schedules, and program reports. The research instruments included interview guidelines, observation checklists, and documentation sheets. The data analysis technique used in this study was thematic analysis, which involved data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The researcher organized the data into meaningful categories and identified recurring patterns related to literacy management strategies. To ensure data validity, triangulation of sources and techniques was applied, along with prolonged engagement in the research setting. This methodological approach is consistent with the research objectives, allowing for a detailed and systematic examination of Qur'anic literacy improvement strategies within the pesantren.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the key findings regarding the strategies used to improve Qur'anic literacy skills at Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin Tarub Tegal. The results show that literacy development is not merely carried out as a routine instructional activity, but is managed as a structured institutional process. The findings highlight three interrelated components, namely strategic planning, gradual implementation, and integrated evaluation, which together form a coherent system of literacy management. These results not only support previous studies on religious literacy but also provide a

broader perspective by emphasizing the role of institutional management in sustaining literacy practices [2], [3], [9].

3.1 Strategic Planning of Qur'anic Literacy

The findings indicate that the development of Qur'anic literacy begins with careful and vision-driven planning. The pesantren formulates literacy programs by aligning them with its institutional goals, particularly in shaping students who are not only proficient in reading and memorizing the Qur'an but also demonstrate strong character. This planning process includes setting measurable targets, designing structured learning stages, and grouping students based on their initial competencies. From an analytical perspective, this finding suggests that effective literacy development requires more than instructional design; it demands strategic alignment at the institutional level. This supports the argument that educational quality is closely linked to planning and management practices [14], [15]. However, unlike previous studies that mainly focus on curriculum or teaching methods, this study shows that planning functions as a foundational element that determines the direction and sustainability of literacy programs.

3.2 Gradual Implementation (Tadarruj) and Habituation

The implementation of the literacy program is carried out through a gradual approach (tadarruj), supported by consistent and structured habituation. Daily activities such as Qur'an reading, memorization sessions, and tajwid guidance are systematically organized, allowing students to develop their skills progressively. The use of talaqqi and musyafahah methods also ensures close interaction between teachers and students, which enhances learning accuracy. This finding indicates that the success of Qur'anic literacy programs is closely related to the consistency of practice and the learning environment. In line with previous research, habituation plays a significant role in strengthening religious literacy [3], [9]. However, this study extends earlier findings by showing that habituation is not only an individual learning process but also a product of institutional culture. The structured environment created by the pesantren contributes significantly to maintaining students' engagement and discipline.

3.3 Integrated Academic and Character Evaluation

Evaluation in the pesantren is conducted in a comprehensive manner, combining academic assessment with character development. Students are assessed not only on their reading and memorization abilities but also on their discipline, consistency, and attitudes toward the Qur'an. Various evaluation methods are applied, including oral examinations, daily monitoring, and progress reports. This approach reflects a broader understanding of literacy, where cognitive achievement is inseparable from affective and spiritual dimensions. The findings are consistent with studies emphasizing holistic evaluation in value-based education [7], [10]. At the same time, this study highlights that integrating character assessment into literacy evaluation provides a more complete picture of student development. This suggests that literacy in the pesantren context is not limited to technical competence but is deeply connected to moral and spiritual formation.

Discussion: Toward a Strategic Religious Literacy Management Model

The findings indicate that the development of Qur'anic literacy at Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin Tarub Tegal operates within an integrated institutional framework where planning, implementation, and evaluation are systematically interconnected. Literacy activities are not positioned as incidental learning practices or additional religious programs, but rather as part of a broader educational orientation at the pesantren. The institution's vision influences how literacy goals are formulated, how learning activities are organized, and how evaluation mechanisms are implemented in daily educational practices. Thru this interconnected structure, Qur'anic literacy becomes embedded in the culture of the pesantren organization and shapes the daily experiences of the students. In this framework, strategic planning serves as the initial foundation that determines the direction and

sustainability of the literacy program. The planning process reflects the pesantren's efforts to integrate academic targets with spiritual and moral goals. The literacy program is designed not only to enhance students' technical skills in reading and memorizing the Quran but also to foster discipline, consistency, and religious awareness. This orientation shows that educational planning in pesantren goes beyond administrative arrangements and enters the realm of value-based educational management. Such patterns are closely related to the broader perspective of Islamic education, where intellectual development is continuously linked to the formation of ethics and spirituality [21], [22].

The further implementation process illustrates how institutional culture contributes to the development of literacy. The application of the *tadarruj* approach allows students to develop competencies gradually according to their readiness and learning progress. Instead of emphasizing rapid achievement, the pesantren prioritizes continuity, repetition, and disciplined practice through structured daily routines. Literacy activities are reinforced through collective worship, regular reading sessions, memorization practices, and teacher supervision, creating an educational environment that continuously exposes students to engagement with the Qur'an. In this context, literacy becomes an experiential journey shaped by habit formation and social interactions within the pesantren community. This pattern reflects the importance of habituation as an educational strategy in pesantren. Repeated religious practices not only contribute to technical mastery but also to the internalization of values and attitudes associated with the Qur'an. The learning atmosphere created by pesantren strengthens students' emotional connection with religious activities and encourages the development of self-discipline. Previous studies have emphasized the relationship between habituation and character education [7], [9], but current findings indicate that habituation has a stronger influence when supported by institutional consistency and collective participation from all educational actors. Another important dimension that emerges from these findings relates to the evaluation system implemented by the pesantren. The evaluation practice combines academic assessment with observation of students' character development and behavior. Reading accuracy, memorization progress, and mastery of *tajwid* are assessed alongside discipline, responsibility, sincerity, and participation in religious activities. This integrated approach reflects a broader understanding of literacy in Islamic education, where cognitive competence is inseparable from moral and spiritual dimensions. The evaluation process, therefore, serves not only as a tool to measure academic achievement but also as a mechanism to monitor personal and ethical development among students. The integration of academic and character evaluation also shows that literacy management in pesantren is oriented toward holistic educational outcomes. Students are expected to demonstrate balanced growth in intellectual abilities, emotional maturity, and spiritual awareness. This approach differs from educational models that focus more on measurable cognitive performance. In the context of pesantren, literacy is associated with the instillation of manners, discipline, and commitment to religious values, making the educational process more comprehensive and transformative.

Based on these interrelated dimensions, this research formulates a Strategic Religious Literacy Management model that emphasizes the relationship between institutional management and literacy development. This model highlights three main components: vision-oriented planning, gradual implementation through habituation, and holistic evaluation that integrates academic and character aspects. These components operate collectively within the pesantren environment and reinforce each other in maintaining literacy practices over time. The relevance of this model becomes clear when viewed from the tendency of previous studies that focused more on teaching methods, classroom practices, or learning outcomes [2], [24]. Existing research has made significant contributions to understanding pedagogical approaches in Qur'anic learning; however, limited attention has been given to how institutional structures and management systems affect the sustainability of literacy programs. This study positions literacy management as a strategic institutional process involving organizational commitment, cultural reinforcement, and long-term educational orientation. Further

findings indicate that the success of the Qur'an literacy program heavily relies on the active involvement of all elements within the pesantren environment. Teachers play an important role not only as educators but also as supervisors and role models in daily religious practices. Administrators contribute thru program organization and policy support, while senior students participate in maintaining discipline and a culture of collective learning. The interaction between these elements creates a supportive educational ecosystem that strengthens student engagement in literacy activities. In this context, institutional culture emerges as a determining factor in maintaining literacy development. The pesantren environment continuously reinforces religious values thru routines, social interactions, and collective responsibilities. The strengthening of such a culture allows literacy practices to become part of students' daily behavior rather than a separate academic obligation. As a result, the development of Qur'anic literacy reflects a broader educational process aimed at shaping students' intellectual competence, moral character, and spiritual awareness within the framework of integrated Islamic education.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that improving Qur'anic literacy skills in pesantren requires a structured and integrated approach that goes beyond technical instruction. The findings demonstrate that literacy development is most effective when supported by three interconnected elements: strategic planning aligned with institutional vision, gradual implementation through consistent habituation, and comprehensive evaluation that integrates academic and character aspects. The results confirm previous studies on religious literacy while offering a broader perspective by placing literacy within a managerial framework. In this sense, the study does not contradict existing theories but rather extends them by showing that literacy development is closely linked to institutional processes and organizational culture. The main contribution of this study lies in the formulation of a Strategic Religious Literacy Management model, which provides both a conceptual and practical framework for managing literacy programs in Islamic educational settings. This model advances current understanding by integrating pedagogical and managerial dimensions into a unified system. Practically, the findings can serve as a reference for pesantren and other Islamic educational institutions in designing more effective literacy programs. For future research, it is recommended to examine the applicability of this model in different contexts and to explore its impact on broader educational outcomes.

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