

STAGES OF STRENGTHENING QUR'ANIC LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Background

The management of Qur'anic learning requires an integrative approach that harmonizes traditional and modern methods to enhance its overall effectiveness.

Purpose

This study aims to develop a holistic strategy within Qur'anic Education Centers that integrates elements of motivation, spirituality, technical proficiency, and emotional teacher-student relationships. The intended outcome is the formulation of a character-based Qur'anic learning model that is both applicable and adaptable across various educational settings.

Research Methodology

This research employs a qualitative method with an ethnographic approach, utilizing interviews, participatory observation, and documentation, along with descriptive-analytical analysis and technique triangulation to ensure data validity.

Result

The findings indicate that the stages of Qur'anic learning at Al-Mubtadiin Qur'anic Education Center include: motivational activities, reading etiquette, opening supplication, reading *Iqra'*, *talaqqi* (oral recitation and correction), writing Arabic letters, *imla'* (dictation), and closing supplication. Each stage positively contributes to the development of learners' technical skills and spiritual awareness. Motivational and etiquette-based activities cultivate religious consciousness, while *Iqra'* and *talaqqi* enhance reading and memorization abilities. Writing and dictation practices strengthen Arabic literacy. Opening and closing prayers shape students' spiritual character. Moreover, the participatory approach and intensive guidance provided by instructors foster a positive, interactive, and meaningful learning environment.

Conclusion

Qur'anic learning can be conducted effectively through systematic stages that integrate cognitive, spiritual, and character-building dimensions, supported by participatory methods, motivational strategies, and intensive teacher guidance.

Keywords

Learning, Qur'an, Qur'anic Education Center



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INTRODUCTION

Learning the Qur'an is a vital aspect of a Muslim's life, as the Qur'an is the divine revelation from Allah and serves as a comprehensive guide for leading a righteous and meaningful life. Understanding the Qur'an not only strengthens one's faith but also provides the foundation for daily religious practices, such as prayer, which deepens spiritual connection with Allah (Mohtar et al., 2022; Agil Alaydrus and Zahra, 2023). Moreover, the process of learning the Qur'an contributes to intellectual development, particularly through the integration of Qur'anic teachings with scientific education, which has been shown to improve learning outcomes among students of Islamic Science Education (Saputro et al., 2019). The Arabic language, as the original language of the Qur'an, also offers linguistic benefits, enhancing language acquisition and comprehension for non-native speakers through methods such as translation and linguistic analysis (Baharun et al., 2020). The memorization of the Qur'an requires a high degree of memory retention and perseverance, which can be facilitated by modern technologies such as the "TheHafiz" application, making the learning process more accessible and efficient (Aditia et al., 2024).

In addition to its academic and spiritual benefits, learning the Qur'an plays a fundamental role in character formation and moral development. Qur'anic teachings are rich in moral values such as patience, humility, and generosity, which help shape noble character (Sardar, 2022). Understanding and internalizing these values supports the formation of a responsible society and enhances social solidarity and cooperation (Yusoff et al., 2024). Culturally, the Qur'an influences social norms and family values within Muslim communities (Al-Hawary et al., 2023). Furthermore, Qur'anic education promotes attitudes of tolerance and respect for diversity, which are essential for peaceful coexistence in multicultural societies (Mundir, 2019). Thus, Qur'anic learning is not merely a religious activity, but also a significant instrument for character development and social harmony.

The management of Qur'anic learning demands a pedagogical approach that integrates both traditional and modern methods to optimize learning outcomes. In Qur'anic schools in India, for instance, strategies such as cognitive load management are implemented by reducing extraneous load, distributing intrinsic load, and enhancing germane cognitive load. These strategies are supported by repetition cycles, data-driven assessment, real-time feedback, and multimodal learning (Parveen, 2025). In contrast, at State Islamic Elementary School 3 Banjarmasin, Qur'anic instruction combines traditional and contemporary strategies such as repeated *tilawah* (recitation), group reading, digital media, visual aids, and role-playing to enhance pronunciation and memorization (Basir et al., 2024). The Murajaah Recital Correction (MRC) model is also applied to provide direct feedback through personalized learning technologies (Ismail et al., 2024). The Tilawati method has proven effective in enhancing students' independence and self-confidence (Herlina et al., 2021).

In response to ongoing challenges in Qur'anic education, innovative instructional models continue to be developed. The Blended Learning method, which combines face-to-face and online learning, has been found effective in addressing limited in-person instruction time and increasing student motivation (Mujib and Marhamah, 2020). In addition, the use of Learning Management Systems (LMS), such as e-BBQ, has significantly improved students' Qur'anic reading skills through easy access and user-friendly features (Hanafi et al., 2019). The Qur'an Indonesia Project (QIP) also offers inclusive education for

students with disabilities, particularly those who are hearing-impaired, by integrating digital platforms with sign language, significantly enhancing accessibility and comprehension (Saifullah and Nurjanah, 2020). Educational discipline in Qur'anic-based learning is also essential for shaping students' positive behavior. Combining Islamic seminars with Qur'anic education programs has been shown to strengthen students' character and conduct (Mousi, 2021).

This study addresses a gap in the literature concerning a holistic and sequential approach to Qur'anic learning at the level of Qur'anic Education Centers. Unlike previous studies that primarily focus on digital, blended, or formal school and madrasa-based learning models, this research introduces a novel approach involving a contextual learning sequence rooted in values and emotional closeness between teachers and students. The main objective of this study is to design and evaluate effective strategic stages to strengthen reading, writing, and memorization skills of the Qur'an comprehensively in the context of Qur'anic Education Centers. As a result, this research may serve as a model for implementing Qur'anic education that is rooted in character development, spirituality, and foundational skills. This model is easily replicable across various Qur'anic Education Centers and aims to enhance early Qur'anic literacy through an adaptive and human-centered approach.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative method with an ethnographic approach, conducted at the Al-Mubtadiin Qur'anic Education Center. The ethnographic approach was selected to allow the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the culture, behaviors, interactions, and values inherent in Qur'anic learning, thereby producing a holistic depiction of the learning stages within this educational environment. Data collection was carried out through multiple techniques, including in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. The interviews were conducted directly with instructors and learners to gain insights into their experiences, motivations, and challenges in the learning process. Participatory observation enabled the researcher to be actively involved in daily learning activities, allowing for the real-time capture of interaction dynamics and learning processes. In addition, documentation including field notes, photographs, and instructional materials was used to complement and enrich the data obtained. The data processing involved a series of steps, beginning with data condensation, which entailed filtering and summarizing key information to maintain focus on the central aspects of the study. The data were then presented in the form of systematic descriptive narratives and tables to facilitate analysis. Conclusions were drawn through descriptive-analytical interpretation by connecting the research findings to relevant theories and literature. To ensure the validity of the data, this study applied technique triangulation by integrating data from interviews, observations, and documentation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The stages for strengthening Qur'anic learning at the Al-Mubtadiin Qur'anic Education Center consist of the following components: motivational encouragement, etiquette before reading, supplication, *Iqra'* reading, *talaqqi* (oral transmission), writing

Arabic letters, *imla'* (dictation), and memorization of the closing prayer. Each stage is described as follows:

Motivational Delivery for Reading and Memorizing the Qur'an

The delivery of motivational messages regarding the importance of reading and memorizing the Qur'an has shown a positive impact on enhancing learners' enthusiasm for study. During the sessions, participants demonstrated high levels of engagement, as reflected in their active participation during discussions and positive responses to the importance of reading and memorizing the Qur'an. The instructors successfully instilled an awareness of the personal and spiritual benefits associated with Qur'anic engagement, contributing to both individual development and the improvement of daily worship practices.

Moreover, this activity encouraged participants to commit more deeply to subsequent Qur'anic learning programs. It also provided valuable insights into participants' levels of motivation and the initial challenges they faced in the process of reading and memorization. These findings became a foundation for instructors to adjust teaching methods in accordance with learners' conditions and needs. The effectiveness of motivational activities is evidenced not only by increased student engagement but also by the creation of a positive and interactive learning atmosphere. The teacher–student relationship also became more intimate, which supported the overall success of the learning process. Thus, motivational delivery has proven to be a strategic step in improving the quality of Qur'anic education. Discipline plays an important role in sustaining teaching motivation and effectiveness, as supported by clear policies, exemplary behavior, and a well-managed learning environment (Baidowi et al., 2025).

Motivation in Qur'anic reading and memorization is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic motivation includes internal drives such as gratitude, the desire to be beneficial to others, and the intention to maintain a pure heart by avoiding sins including through controlling one's gaze, as observed in visually impaired Qur'an memorizers (Tauffik et al., 2024). Spiritual and emotional benefits, such as enhanced life satisfaction, reduced anxiety, and improved mental health, also reinforce such motivation (Che Wan Mohd Rozali et al., 2022). Extrinsic motivation arises from external factors, such as rewards, recognition, and a supportive learning environment, as implemented in institutions like Imam Hatip schools and Sungai Miai 4 State Elementary School (Ay and Pingov, 2022; Mizani et al., 2024). The use of technology, such as mobile learning applications, has also proven effective in increasing both motivation and memorization skills among learners (Purbohadi et al., 2019).

Introduction to Etiquette Before Reading the Qur'an

The introduction of proper etiquette before reading the Qur'an has demonstrated significant influence in increasing participants' awareness and understanding of the importance of respectful conduct when engaging with the Holy Book. Learners were introduced to various practices that should be observed before reading the Qur'an, such as performing ablution, selecting a clean and quiet space, reciting a supplication, and maintaining personal hygiene and tidiness. Through live demonstrations conducted by the instructors, participants were able to easily grasp and practically apply these etiquettes. The high levels of enthusiasm and interest shown by the participants reflected their readiness to adopt ethical values before reading the Qur'an. In addition, the interactions between

instructors and learners were well-established, creating a conducive and positive learning environment. This activity also provided instructors with an initial understanding of the learners' level of knowledge, which served as a useful basis for planning future lessons. Overall, the introduction of these etiquettes prepared learners both physically and mentally for Qur'anic recitation and helped to cultivate strong spiritual character. As such, the learning process became more meaningful and impactful in the long term, encompassing both cognitive and affective dimensions.

The etiquettes of reading the Qur'an involve both external and internal dimensions that every Muslim must observe. One of the key aspects is reading with correct tajwid, as proper pronunciation reflects reverence for divine revelation and enhances the worshipful nature of Qur'anic recitation (Gade, 2017; Rahayu et al., 2024). Prior to reading, spiritual preparation is essential, such as performing ablution and making a sincere intention, so that recitation becomes a means of drawing closer to Allah and strengthening memory through remembrance (*dhikr*) (Mamat and Zarif, 2019). Furthermore, contextual understanding of Qur'anic verses allows readers to relate divine messages to contemporary realities, complementing traditional exegetical approaches (Saeed, 2017). The Qur'an also functions as a source of moral education, providing guidance for addressing life's challenges and encouraging the pursuit of knowledge (Arif, 2021). On a broader level, the social and familial values embedded in the Qur'an instill principles of peaceful living, mutual respect, and responsibility within the family unit (Qatanany, 2021).

Opening Supplication Before Learning

The practice of reciting an opening supplication before commencing lessons has proven effective in instilling religious values and establishing spiritual routines among students. This activity is conducted routinely at the beginning of each learning session under the direct guidance of the instructor. The supplication recited is one taught by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), which includes a plea for beneficial knowledge and protection from knowledge that brings no good. Students displayed a high level of enthusiasm in participating, and after repeated practice, most of them were able to recite the prayer fluently and with reverence (*tartil*). Teachers also expressed positive support for this practice, as it aligns with efforts to reinforce character education rooted in religious values. Theoretically, this activity is grounded in Islamic pedagogy and character-based learning theory. Habitual recitation of supplication before learning is a practical application of *habit formation*, contributing to the development of spiritual attitudes and students' moral character. Within the Islamic tradition, this activity aligns with the concept of *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul), which ensures that the knowledge gained brings blessings and ethical refinement. Overall, the opening supplication is not merely a ritual but also a means of nurturing attitudes such as humility, trust in God (*tawakkul*), and spiritual mindfulness in the pursuit of knowledge.

In the Islamic context, reciting a prayer before beginning any activity, including learning, is a practice instilled from an early age. The phrase "*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*" ("In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate") is commonly recited to seek blessings and divine guidance, ensuring a smooth process and favorable outcomes (Zeitlyn, 2015). In the Christian tradition, prayer is also central to learning activities. For example, the "Lord's Prayer" in Matthew 6:9–13 is used to seek divine guidance and wisdom prior to studying (Purnomo et al., 2024). In educational settings, the practice of prayer has

been shown to foster spiritual readiness, calm the mind, and create a conducive learning environment (Ssegawa & Kasule, 2015). Moreover, prayer strengthens students' cultural and religious identity (Keller, 2021) and instills ethical and moral values within the learning process (Damanhuri et al., 2017).

Reading *Iqra'* to Strengthen Hijaiyah Fluency

The *Iqra'* reading activity has proven effective in enhancing students' fluency in reading Arabic letters (*huruf hijaiyah*) and in building a foundational level of Qur'anic literacy. This activity is carried out progressively, either individually or in groups, based on each student's reading proficiency. Instructors guide participants through stages beginning with letter recognition, correct articulation, and gradually moving toward reading connected letters using the systematic *Iqra'* textbook method. Advanced learners are provided with supplementary materials, while those encountering difficulties receive more intensive support. As a result, most students demonstrated significant improvement, including more accurate pronunciation, increased reading confidence, and higher motivation to continue learning.

Theoretically, this activity aligns with the principles of graded learning and learning by practice, emphasizing step-by-step instruction and repetitive practice to develop literacy skills. Within the Islamic educational tradition, this approach also supports the concept of *tahsīn al-qirā'ah* (improving one's recitation), which is foundational for proper Qur'anic reading. Direct feedback from instructors allows learners to correct mistakes in real time, making the learning process more efficient and targeted. Beyond technical improvements, this activity also fosters discipline, builds self-confidence, and nurtures a love for the Qur'an from an early age.

Qur'an Memorization Using the *Talaqqi* Method

Memorizing the Qur'an using the *talaqqi* method has shown high effectiveness in improving both the technical and spiritual competencies of learners. This method involves students reciting the Qur'an directly in front of a mentor or teacher, who provides immediate feedback, corrections, and guidance on articulation (*makhraj*) and *tajwid* rules. The method offers direct engagement and ensures that errors in recitation are promptly addressed. Sessions are conducted in a calm, supportive, and interactive environment, which enhances the learning experience. Students demonstrated seriousness and focus during the sessions, and many showed improved self-confidence when reciting in front of others. In addition to technical mastery, this method instills essential values such as discipline, respect for teachers, and commitment to religious learning. The mentor–student relationship is warm and respectful, which increases learners' motivation to continue refining both their memorization and recitation skills. The *talaqqi* method has proven to be effective not only in improving recitation quality but also in shaping the students' character to be respectful, diligent, and spiritually grounded in their pursuit of Qur'anic education.

Structured, face-to-face Qur'anic learning has been widely recognized for its role in enhancing learning outcomes and promoting student independence. For instance, the Tilawati method, when combined with strategies such as rewards and punishments, regular evaluations, and peer collaboration, has successfully improved Qur'an learning autonomy at a *madrasatul Qur'an* in South Kalimantan (Herlina et al., 2021). Furthermore, mentoring is a key element in Qur'anic education, as it fosters self-efficacy, self-regulation, and positive interpersonal relationships between students and mentors (Ismail & Ismail,

2018; Martins et al., 2022). In the context of Qur'anic memorization (*hifz*), boarding-based programs and daily memorization courses also play a substantial social role, though they still face challenges related to program execution and facility provision (Şekerci & Çakmak, 2023). Disciplinary structures are also necessary in Qur'anic education to address behavioral challenges and ensure learning objectives are met (Mousi, 2021).

Hijaiyah Writing Practice (Iqra' Method)

The results of the *Hijaiyah* writing practice activity demonstrated significant positive developments. Learners participated in the Qur'anic reading and writing sessions with great enthusiasm. Teachers provided individualized guidance to ensure that participants' reading and writing adhered to correct linguistic and orthographic rules. This method proved effective, as participants exhibited noticeable improvements in recognizing and writing *Hijaiyah* letters with greater precision and accuracy.

The sessions were conducted in a conducive and spirited learning environment, fostering positive interactions between teachers and students. The success of this activity was largely due to the direct mentoring approach and *peer teaching* method, where instructors paid personal attention to each learner. This approach facilitated error correction in both reading and writing of *Hijaiyah* letters.

Beyond technical skills, this activity cultivated patience, discipline, and perseverance in the learning process. Students not only learned to read but also developed their Arabic script writing skills, thereby reinforcing their understanding of Qur'anic literacy. The active role of the teacher as both mentor and role model significantly contributed to an interactive and enjoyable learning environment. Consequently, this activity also helped strengthen the emotional bond between educators and the local community.

Dictation (Imla') of Hijaiyah Letters

The *Imla'* activity, or dictation of *Hijaiyah* letters, received a positive response from participants. The session involved the teacher orally dictating each *Hijaiyah* letter, which students were required to write immediately. Students showed enthusiasm throughout the activity, and most were able to write the letters correctly. However, some difficulties were observed, particularly in distinguishing visually similar letters such as ت, ب, and ث. Teachers provided direct corrections and continuously encouraged students to be more attentive and meticulous. Overall, learners showed improved writing accuracy, both in terms of shape and neatness. This learning process reaffirmed that **repetitive drill-based practice** is effective in reinforcing foundational Qur'anic writing skills.

This aligns with the principles of Islamic education, which emphasize the importance of repetition (*tikrār*) as a means of deepening comprehension. The teacher's role as both mentor and exemplar was instrumental in helping students develop accurate writing skills and distinguish between similar letters. In addition to technical proficiency, this activity also instilled Islamic values such as precision, patience, and a strong learning ethic. Thus, the *Imla'* practice contributes holistically to the Qur'anic learning process.

Memorizing the Closing Supplication (Kaffaratul Majlis)

The activity of memorizing the closing supplication (*Kaffaratul Majlis*) demonstrated positive impacts on developing the students' spiritual habits. The session began with the teacher leading the supplication, which was then recited in unison by the students. Participants not only memorized the wording but also internalized the meaning of the prayer — as an expression of gratitude for knowledge acquired and a plea for forgiveness for any

errors made during the learning session. The teacher emphasized the importance of prayer, encouraging learners to adopt it as a habitual part of their educational journey. The activity concluded in a solemn and respectful atmosphere, fostering a sense of tranquility and reverence toward knowledge. In Islamic pedagogy, prayer plays a central role in spiritual development and the cultivation of *adab* (etiquette). As emphasized by Al-Ghazali, knowledge becomes truly beneficial when accompanied by humility and prayer, which serve as safeguards against arrogance. The closing supplication functions as a moment of reflection and reinforcement of students' spiritual values.

Teachers acted as facilitators, guiding both the pronunciation and interpretation of the prayer. Hence, the activity served not only to improve memorization skills but also to enhance Islamic character and awareness that knowledge is a divine trust. Memorizing the closing supplication after studying holds profound spiritual significance in Islamic tradition. It strengthens the learner's spiritual connection with Allah and functions as a means of seeking guidance, forgiveness, and blessings for the knowledge acquired. From a socio-moral perspective, routine prayer is believed to purify the heart, promote patience, and reduce tendencies toward moral and social misconduct (Salleh et al., 2024). In addition to obligatory prayers (*ṣalāh*), *supplementary prayers* before or after specific activities enrich the individual's spiritual dimensions (Sohrabi et al., 2019; Damanhuri et al., 2017). Furthermore, cultural practices such as *fidyah* (compensatory acts for missed prayers) reflect the importance of upholding prayer obligations within Muslim communities, affirming the commitment to maintaining one's relationship with the Creator (Sainun et al., 2024). Thus, the closing prayer serves as a unifying element of ritual worship, morality, and social values within the educational process.

CONCLUSION

This study has successfully introduced a significant innovation in strengthening Qur'anic learning at TPQ Al-Mubtadiin through an integrated approach that combines motivation, etiquette (*adab*), reading techniques, memorization methods, as well as character and spiritual development of learners. Unlike conventional methods that generally focus solely on Qur'anic recitation, this approach places motivation as the foundational entry point, effectively enhancing students' enthusiasm and active participation. This is evident from their engagement and enthusiasm during various learning activities. The introduction of proper etiquette before reading the Qur'an serves as a vital element in fostering students' awareness of spiritual and ethical values, transforming the learning process from being purely technical into one that also builds holistic religious character. The application of the *talaqqi* method, involving direct supervision and correction by instructors, enables real-time error correction, enhances discipline, and deepens understanding of accurate Qur'anic recitation.

Furthermore, the systematic integration of Hijaiyah writing and dictation (*imla'*) exercises, supported by personalized instruction, has yielded positive outcomes in students' accuracy, diligence, and confidence in both reading and writing the Qur'an. This comprehensive instructional model rarely implemented simultaneously in TPQ contexts represents a distinctive strength of the program. The inclusion of opening and closing supplications in every session reinforces spiritual habits that support *tazkiyatun nafs* (spiritual purification) and cultivate a sense of humility and reliance on God (*tawakkul*).

The combination of technical skill-building and spiritual practice has resulted in a holistic learning process, enriching both the quality and meaning of Qur'anic education. In conclusion, this research provides a valuable contribution to the development of a comprehensive model of Qur'anic instruction one that emphasizes not only mastery of content but also the deep formation of students' character and spirituality.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

- Author 1 : Designed a data collection strategy using an ethnographic approach, ensuring effective interviews, observations, and documentation to deeply and holistically understand the stages of Quranic learning.
- Author 2 : Conducted participatory observations and in-depth interviews in the field, building close relationships with participants to obtain authentic data aligned with the TPQ learning context.
- Author 3 : Conducted participatory observations and in-depth interviews in the field, building close relationships with participants to obtain authentic data aligned with the TPQ learning context.
- Author 4 : Led data analysis using triangulation techniques, filtering key information and linking findings to relevant theories to ensure valid results and strong scientific contributions.

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