



From Struggle to Fluency: Teacher Solutions to Quranic Reading Barriers in Senior High School

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Abstract

Students' difficulties in reading the Quran are a significant challenge in Islamic Religious Education at the high school level. This study aims to identify and analyze teachers' efforts in overcoming these obstacles. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design, through data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and documentation. The main informants are Islamic Religious Education teachers, supported by the principal and curriculum deputy. The results show that teachers apply three main strategies: i) providing motivation through varied learning methods such as group discussions, demonstrations, and question-and-answer sessions to increase student enthusiasm, ii) providing examples of good Quran reading with the help of teaching aids and digital technology to clarify *makebraj* and *tajwid*; and iii) accustoming students to reading the Quran regularly through *halaqah* methods and youth *wirid* activities. This strategy has proven effective in improving students' ability to read the Quran, despite challenges such as limited learning time, differences in student backgrounds, and a lack of support from the family environment. The implications of this study indicate that the active role of teachers, the support of school principals, and the involvement of parents are very important in shaping a culture of reading the Quran in the school environment. These findings are expected to serve as a reference for educational institutions in designing more effective and sustainable Quran learning strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education plays a strategic role in shaping the character and spirituality of students at the high school level (Hidayat, 2025; Oktavia et al., 2025; Pujianti, 2024; Rahman et al., 2024). One of the fundamental aspects of this education is the ability to read the Quran, which is not only part of basic competencies but also a gateway to understanding Islamic teachings comprehensively (Aziz et al., 2023; Nuh et al., 2025). However, in reality, many students still experience difficulties in reading the Quran, both in terms of pronouncing Hijaiyah letters, applying *tajwid*, and reading fluency in general (Engkizar et al., 2024; Sabrina et al., 2022).

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This phenomenon is a serious concern because reading the Quran is a worship activity that has high spiritual value and is the basis for practicing Islamic teachings. Students' inability to read the Quran not only affects their academic performance, but also their moral development and religious understanding (Engkizar et al., 2018; Muryati & Hariyanti, 2024; Putri & Rohman, 2024). Therefore, appropriate pedagogical intervention from Islamic Education teachers is needed to overcome these difficulties in a systematic and sustainable manner.

The urgency of this research lies in the need to identify concrete strategies used by teachers in facing the challenges of teaching the Quran. In the context of modern education, teachers not only act as conveyors of material, but also as facilitators and motivators who are able to create a conducive learning environment (Riswanto & Mulyanti, 2024; Wangi et al., 2022). This study seeks to reveal how teachers use varied learning methods, set good examples, and accustom students to reading the Quran regularly.

Theoretically, this study reinforces the concept of Islamic education that emphasizes the importance of habit formation, role modeling, and motivation in the learning process (Kurniawanto, 2025; Musbaing, 2024). Islamic education theory, which is derived from the Quran and Hadith, emphasizes that learning must be carried out using an approach that touches on cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Thus, the strategies used by teachers in this study can serve as empirical evidence of the relevance of this theory in contemporary educational practice (Akem et al., 2025; Dasrizal et al., 2025.; Rahman et al., 2025).

In addition, this study contributes to the development of Islamic education, particularly in the field of Quranic learning methodology. The findings can serve as a reference for teachers, policymakers, and other researchers in designing more effective learning programs that are adaptive to students' needs. In the long term, this is expected to improve the quality of religious education in schools and strengthen Quranic literacy among the younger generation.

In the current context, the challenges of learning the Quran are becoming increasingly complex with the development of technology and changes in students' learning styles. Therefore, the approach used by teachers must be able to bridge the gap between traditional learning methods and digital learning innovations. This study shows that the use of teaching aids, digital applications, and halaqah methods can be relevant and effective solutions in improving students' ability to read the Quran.

Thus, this study not only answers problems that occur in the field, but also contributes to the development of future-oriented Islamic education theory and practice. This study confirms that the role of teachers is crucial in shaping the culture of Quran literacy in schools, and that the right strategies can bring significant changes in the overall quality of Islamic education.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was chosen because the focus of the study is to gain an in-depth understanding of teachers' efforts to overcome students' difficulties in reading the Quran in the context of Islamic Religious Education at the high school level (Engkizar et al., 2023; Engkizar et al., 2025; Oktavia et al., 2020, 2023). Case studies allow researchers to explore phenomena holistically and contextually, as well as to explore the meaning of the actions and strategies employed by teachers in real situations. The data sources in this study consisted of key informants and supporting informants. Key informants were Islamic Education teachers who were directly involved in the process of teaching the Quran, while supporting informants included the principal and curriculum staff who had insight into the policies and implementation of religious education at the school. Informants were selected purposively, considering the

relevance and depth of information they could provide (Aryasutha et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2025; Rahman et al., 2025).

The research instruments used were interview guidelines, observation sheets, and documentation. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to obtain in-depth and flexible data in accordance with the dynamics in the field. Observations were conducted during the learning process to record interactions, methods used, and student responses to learning. Documentation in the form of syllabi, activity schedules, and learning archives was used as supporting data to reinforce the results of observations and interviews.

The data analysis technique used was thematic analysis, with stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Abdullah et al., 2024; Dyta et al., 2024; Hamzah et al., 2024). Data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation were categorized based on main themes relevant to the research focus, such as motivation, role modeling, and the habit of reading the Quran. Data validity was tested through source and technique triangulation, as well as member checks with informants to ensure the accuracy and consistency of information. This approach enabled researchers to produce credible and scientifically accountable findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of this study's data analysis, three strategies were found to be used by Islamic education teachers in overcoming students' difficulties in reading the Quran in high school, namely i) providing motivation through varied learning methods such as group discussions, demonstrations, and question and answer sessions to increase student enthusiasm, ii) providing examples of good Quran reading with the help of teaching aids and digital technology to clarify *makebraj* and tajwid; and iii) accustoming students to reading the Quran regularly through *halaqah* methods and youth *wirid* activities.

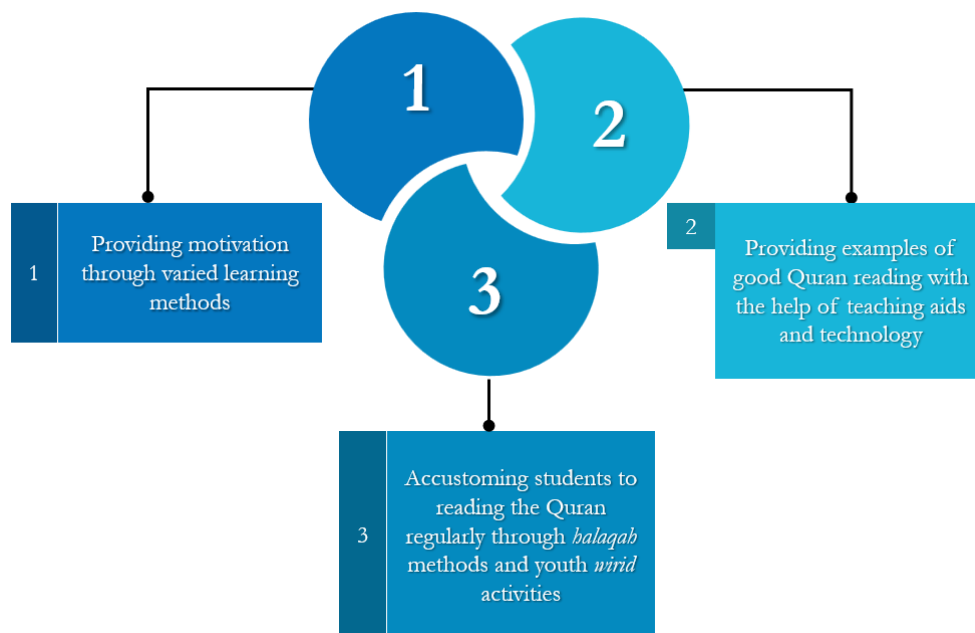


Fig 1. Teachers' Solutions to Obstacles in Reading the Quran in High School

One of the main efforts teachers make to overcome students' difficulties in reading the Quran is to motivate them through varied learning methods. Teachers not only use lectures, but also apply interactive approaches such as group discussions, demonstrations, and question and answer sessions. The aim is to create a dynamic and enjoyable learning atmosphere so that students are more enthusiastic

about participating in lessons. This method has been proven to increase student participation and reduce the boredom that often arises in religious education.

Group discussions are an effective means of building students' confidence. In small groups, students feel more comfortable expressing their difficulties in reading the Quran and helping each other understand the material (Dhani et al., 2024; Koto & Rahman, 2025). Teachers act as facilitators who guide the discussion and provide constructive feedback (Ani, 2025). In this way, students learn not only from teachers but also from their peers, creating a collaborative learning environment.

Demonstrations are also used to clarify Quran reading techniques. Teachers demonstrate the pronunciation of *Hijaiyah* letters, tajwid rules, and the length of readings directly (Muharomah & Sahlan, 2023). This helps students understand technical aspects that are difficult to explain with theory alone. In the question and answer session, teachers provide space for students to ask questions about parts of the reading that they do not understand. This interaction strengthens understanding and builds closer relationships between teachers and students.

In an interview, one informant stated, *"When students start to get bored, I change the learning method. Sometimes I invite them to group discussions or question and answer sessions so that they are more enthusiastic and not passive"*. This statement shows that teachers actively observe classroom dynamics and adjust learning methods to maintain students' enthusiasm for learning.

The first finding shows that providing motivation through varied teaching methods such as group discussions, demonstrations, and question and answer sessions can increase students' enthusiasm for reading the Quran. This strategy is in line with constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of active student involvement in constructing their own knowledge. In the context of Islamic education, this approach also reflects the principle of *targhib* (positive encouragement) recommended in fostering enthusiasm for worship (Cahyani et al., 2023; Engkizar et al., 2023; 2025; Yusnita et al., 2018). Research by (Aviatin et al., 2023; Novianti et al., 2024; Yusuf et al., 2024) supports these findings, where a variety of learning methods have been proven effective in overcoming student boredom and increasing their participation in Quranic learning.

The second strategy employed by teachers is to provide examples of good Quran recitation. This exemplary behavior is demonstrated through the use of teaching aids such as whiteboards and *hijaiyah* letter cards, as well as the use of digital technology. Teachers write down letters that often confuse students and explain the *makebraj* and characteristics of the letters in detail. With the help of visual media, students find it easier to understand the differences between letters and how to read them correctly.

Digital technologies such as Quran learning applications are also used to reinforce student practice. These applications allow students to listen to correct recitations and imitate them independently. This approach is very helpful for students with auditory learning styles and expands access to learning outside the classroom. Teachers also monitor the use of these applications and provide corrections during the learning process.

Teachers' exemplary behavior is not only technical, but also emotional and spiritual. Teachers show sincerity in reading the Quran and encourage students to love this activity. This attitude fosters respect and a desire among students to emulate their teachers' behavior. When teachers read with *tartil* and *khushyuk*, students are encouraged to improve their reading and make the Quran a part of their daily lives (Kurniawan & Sutarni, 2025; Ruslan, 2020; Shodiq & Kuswanto, 2024; Tang & Mappatunru, 2024).

In an interview, one informant stated, *"I often use a whiteboard to show similar letters, such as "س" and "ص", so that students don't get confused."* This quote reinforces that

teacher use visual approaches to overcome students' technical difficulties in distinguishing letters and understanding tajwid.

The second finding, namely the exemplary behavior of teachers in reading the Quran with the help of teaching aids and digital technology, reinforces the concept of *uswah hasanah* (good example) in Islamic education. Teachers, as central figures, have a major influence on student behavior and attitudes. When teachers demonstrate sincerity and accuracy in reading the Quran, students are encouraged to imitate and improve their reading. The use of digital media such as learning applications also demonstrates adaptation to technological developments in education. This is in line with the views of (Aini & Ramadhan, 2024; Dariana, 2025; Jalilah, 2025; Maulidi, 2020) that teachers not only impart knowledge, but also become spiritual and moral models for their students.

The third strategy is to encourage students to read the Quran regularly. Teachers organize *halaqah* activities, which are small circles where students read the Quran together before class begins. This activity lasts for 15 minutes and aims to form a positive habit of reading the Quran. In addition, teachers also initiate youth *wirid* activities as extracurricular activities every Saturday, which are conducted in a circle format with direct guidance from teachers.

This routine activity not only improves students' reading skills, but also strengthens spiritual values and togetherness. In an interview, one informant said, "Every morning before class, we recite the Quran together. I choose short verses so that they are not overwhelmed." This statement shows that teachers consider the comfort of students in forming consistent and enjoyable reading habits.

The third finding related to the habit of reading the Quran regularly through the *halaqah* method and youth *wirid* activities supports behaviorist theory, which emphasizes the importance of repetition in forming habits. In Islamic education, habit formation is a classical method used to instill values of worship and morals. *Halaqah* and youth *wirid* activities not only improve technical skills in reading the Quran, but also foster students' spiritual closeness to the holy book. Research by (Afnaz & Dahlan, 2024; Siregar et al., 2025) shows that the habit of reading the Quran collectively can improve students' fluency and understanding, as well as strengthen social and religious bonds in the school environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the teachers' strategy in overcoming difficulties in reading the Quran among high school students through motivation, exemplary behavior, and habit formation has proven effective in shaping positive reading skills and habits. These findings answer the research objectives by showing that a contextual and sustainable approach can significantly improve Quranic literacy. As an application, schools can integrate the *halaqah* method and the use of digital media into the Islamic Education curriculum, as well as strengthen the role of teachers as spiritual role models. It is recommended that education policies better support practical and routine Quran learning, including teacher training and strengthening religious-based extracurricular programs.

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