

**Implementation of the Islamic Studies Club and Qur'an Reading and Writing
Extracurricular Program**

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Abstract

Integration of Islamic values in education is essential for character development, especially amid globalization and technological advancements. Islamic Integrated Schools (*Sekolah Islam Terpadu/SIT*) address this need through structured programs, including the Islamic Studies Club and Qur'an Reading and Writing extracurricular activities. This research aims to analyze the implementation of the program at SMP IT Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa, with a focus on its effectiveness in increasing Al-Qur'an literacy and developing student character. This research used a qualitative descriptive approach to explore in-depth information regarding program implementation and its impact on students. In collecting the data, the researchers collected by observation, interviews, and document analysis to obtain a complete picture of teaching strategies, challenges, and student engagement. In analysis, the data were analyzed by identifying patterns that emerged in observations, interviews and documents to comprehensively describe the effectiveness of the program. The research results showed that the program was successful in improving students' Al-Qur'an reading and writing skills through the Yanbu'a method and a well-structured learning environment. Support from teachers, parents and schools plays an important role in its success. This research concluded that the program has had a positive impact on students' Islamic education, with recommendations to strengthen the availability of teachers, improve learning materials, and improve teaching strategies to produce a Qur'anic generation that has a strong Islamic character.

Keywords: Islamic studies, extracurricular program, reading and writing qur'an

INTRODUCTION

The integration of religious and academic values has become an important concern in the world of education, especially amid the challenges of globalization and the rapid development of technology. Education at every level, from early childhood education (PAUD) to higher education, has the responsibility to form a Qur'anic generation with Islamic character. Ritonga et al. (2021) emphasized that education plays an important role in instilling Islamic values. This demand is increasingly relevant in the midst of the swift flow of digital information that can often affect the mindset and behavior of the younger generation (Akyuni & Prayogo, 2022). However, the rapid development of technology, such as extensive internet access and the increasing use of online games without parental supervision, is a challenge in shaping the Islamic character of the younger generation (Hastasari et al., 2022). As a result, efforts to instill Islamic values in everyday life are increasingly complex and require the active role of educational institutions in guiding students (Kolkailah, 2023).

The need for educational institutions to strengthen character education and defend religious values is becoming increasingly urgent. Education systems around the world are tasked with developing not only academic abilities, but also moral and spiritual values. This responsibility has been highlighted in the context of Islamic education in Indonesia, with schools hoping to foster a generation that upholds Islamic principles while adapting to modern challenges. One prominent solution to these challenges lies in the concept of an Integrated Islamic School (*Sekolah Islam Terpadu/SIT*), which combines the religious knowledge commonly acquired in madrasah or boarding school with general education in one integrated system (Hanafi et al., 2021). This also bridges the dichotomy between religious and general sciences, in line with the idea of an Islamic university that emphasizes scientific integration (Suyadi et al., 2022). Through a combination of a structured curriculum and integrated extracurricular programs, SITs not only provide a conceptual understanding of Islamic values, but also encourage the application of those values in daily life. One of the flagship programs implemented in SIT is tahfiz and tahsin Al-Qur'an. This program is designed to improve students' ability to read, memorize, and understand the Qur'an, while building students' emotional closeness to the holy book as a guide to life (Gumilar, 2023).

One of the strategic efforts in strengthening Islamic values is through extracurricular programs. The government has regulated Islamic Religious Education (*Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI*) learning in the curriculum, including aspects of Al-Qur'an Hadith, Jurisprudence, Islamic Cultural History, and Moral Creed. However, the implementation of this material in the classroom is often not optimal enough to build skills in reading the Qur'an properly and tartil and instill deep Islamic character (Sari, 2022; Toker, 2021). The limited time for formal learning in the classroom is one of the main obstacles. Therefore, many Integrated Islamic Schools have developed excellent tahfiz and tahsin Al-Qur'an programs as a strategy to bring students closer to the Al-Qur'an and strengthen Islamic values in their lives (Gumilar, 2023).

Children's closeness to the Qur'an is believed to have a positive impact on the formation of their Islamic character. The Qur'an is not only a guide to life but also a shifa' (medicine or antidote) and ith'mainnul Qulub (pacifier of the heart), which contributes to the formation of noble morals, inner peace, and other positive attitudes (Alkouatli et al., 2023). Thus, learning tahfiz and tahsin Al-Qur'an not only aims to improve the ability to read and write the Al-Qur'an but also to form a stronger Islamic character (Nur & Aryani,

2022). To achieve this goal, students not only need to understand the laws of recitation (tajweed), but also memorize, live, and practice the contents of the Qur'an in their lives. In the Islamic context, reading the Qur'an is an inherent obligation throughout life, because the Qur'an is a guide to life for every Muslim ((Khilmiyah & Wiyono, 2021). However, the challenge faced at the primary and secondary education levels is that there are still many students who are not proficient in reading the Qur'an properly. PAI teachers often face time constraints in formal learning that are insufficient to guide students to read the Qur'an tartil (d'Angelo et al., 2023). Therefore, additional extracurricular activities are needed that can reinforce Qur'anic learning outside of regular class hours.

To overcome this problem, parents usually enroll their children in additional Qur'anic learning, such as at the Qur'anic Education Park (*Taman Pendidikan Qur'an/TPQ*), mosque recitation, or other recitation institutions (Assingkily, 2019). These programs are usually organized outside of school time and aim to complement the religious education that has been provided formally at school. However, the main challenge of this approach is the lack of integration between formal and non-formal education, which often leads to a lack of consistency in the learning process. In addition, parents' limited time and ability to accompany their children to study outside of school hours is often an obstacle to the success of these programs. In response to these challenges, Sekolah Islam Terpadu (*Sekolah Islam Terpadu/SIT*) comes with a more comprehensive approach. By providing Qur'anic education programs that are integrated directly into the school curriculum, SIT offers an effective solution for parents who want a more systematic and structured religious education. In this environment, students do not just get Qur'anic education as an add-on, but as an integral part of their daily learning. The program is supported by a dedicated time allocation designed to guide students in reading, memorizing and understanding the Qur'an, which is often difficult to achieve in non-formal education settings. The presence of teachers who are competent in the Qur'an is an important factor in ensuring the program runs well (Assingkily et al., 2020)

Hence, one of the most prominent initiatives in this regard is the Islamic Study Club and the Quran Reading and Writing Program which serve as complementary platforms to reinforce Islamic values beyond formal classroom lessons. These programs are designed to address the gap in Quranic education by providing structured, consistent, and engaging learning experiences that foster students' ability to read, write, and understand the Quran while nurturing their Islamic character. Extracurricular programs such as the Islamic Studies Club and Qur'an Reading and Writing at SMP IT Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa are important initiatives in supporting the formation of a Qur'anic generation with Islamic character. The Islamic Studies Club provides a space for students to explore various Islamic topics and the application of Islamic values in daily life. This program not only enriches students' religious insights, but also encourages them to actively discuss and internalize Islamic values in character building. On the other hand, the Read and Write Qur'an program focuses on strengthening the ability to read the Qur'an with tartil and improving Arabic writing skills as part of religious literacy. This approach is designed to ensure that students are not only able to read the Qur'an technically, but also understand its content and meaning.

Research on Quran learning in schools has been conducted in various aspects. Some studies discuss the application of behavioristic learning theory in learning the Qur'an (Murniyati & Suyadi, 2021), the use of specific learning methods such as the al-Hira method (Ikbal & Pratami, 2022) and Qiro'ati (Faturohman & Kultsum, 2021), and the strategy of habituation to reading the Qur'an in elementary schools (Umami et al.,

2020). Other research also examines memorization methods (Imtihana, 2016), online learning of the Qur'an (Amalia et al., 2023), and implementation of Hijaiyah letters learning applications (Purwanti, 2013). In addition, research on the cultivation of character values through the habituation of reading the Qur'an and learning management of Islamic material in schools has been widely conducted by Forster & Fenwick (2015); Muspiroh (2020).

However, research related to the application of extracurricular Islamic Studies Club and Qur'an Reading and Writing as a strategy for Islamic character building at IT Junior High School Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa has not been studied in depth. This research provides a more holistic picture of how a structured extracurricular program can be a comprehensive solution to strengthen Quranic literacy and Islamic character building simultaneously in an integrated Islamic school environment. Therefore, this study focuses on how this extracurricular program is implemented, the extent of its effectiveness in improving Qur'anic literacy skills, and its impact on student character building.

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Islamic Studies Club and Qur'an Reading and Writing extracurricular programs at SMP IT Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa, evaluate their effectiveness in improving students' Qur'an literacy, and explore their impact on students' Islamic character building. The findings of this study are expected to provide practical insights for educators and policy makers in developing similar initiatives to strengthen Islamic education in integrated schools. Based on this background, this study is titled "Implementation of Islamic Studies Club Extracurricular Program and Qur'an Reading and Writing at SMP IT Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa."

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to examine how extracurricular activities in Islamic Studies Club and Qur'an Reading and Writing programs contribute to students' character development at SMP IT Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa. The research focuses on the implementation process, challenges, and effectiveness of these programs in enhancing students' Qur'anic literacy and Islamic values. The population of this study consists of students participating in the extracurricular program, along with the school principal, curriculum coordinator, and supervising teachers. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique to ensure that relevant stakeholders were involved. The research instruments include observations, structured interviews, and documentation analysis. Observations were conducted to assess teaching methods, student engagement, and the overall learning environment. Interviews with key informants provided deeper insights into the program's objectives, implementation, and impact, while documentation studies focused on analyzing school policies, curriculum guidelines, and student progress records.

The data collection techniques involved three main steps: observation, interviews, and document review. The data analysis followed a structured process of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing to identify patterns and key findings. To ensure validity and reliability, a triangulation technique was applied by cross-checking data from different sources. The findings from this study are expected to provide valuable insights into improving extracurricular programs that integrate Islamic education and character-building in other schools.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Islamic values-based learning is an important aspect in building students' Qur'anic character. One form of implementation of these values is through extracurricular activities that are systematically designed to improve students' understanding and skills in reading, writing, and practicing the Qur'an. The Islamic Studies Club and Qur'an Reading and Writing extracurricular program at SMP IT Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa is present as a solution to meet these needs. This program not only aims to improve the skills of reading the Qur'an properly and correctly, but also to form the Islamic personality of students in line with Islamic teachings and the principles of ta'lim and tarbiyah. This section will discuss how this program is implemented, its supporting and inhibiting factors, and its impact on student character building. Research findings obtained from observations, interviews with principals, supervising teachers, and students will be reviewed in depth to provide a more comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of this program in building a Qur'anic culture in the school environment.

Islamic Studies Club Extracurricular Program and Qur'an Recitation at SMP IT Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa

As part of the identity of an integrated Islamic-based school, IT Junior High School Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa also organizes an Islamic Studies Club extracurricular program that aims to deepen students' understanding of Islamic teachings, especially related to Qur'anic interpretation, hadith, Islamic cultural history, and the application of Islamic values in everyday life. This program provides space for students to have in-depth discussions on Islamic issues that are relevant to their lives, and encourages them to internalize Islamic values in their attitudes and actions.

According to an interview with the extracurricular coordinator (SA), this program is designed to accommodate students who want to broaden their Islamic knowledge outside of formal learning:

"We designed this Islamic Studies Club as a place for students to explore Islamic teachings in an applicative manner. In this activity, students not only learn tafsir and hadith, but are also trained to express opinions and exchange ideas on how to apply Islamic values in the modern era. We want to form a generation that not only understands religion theoretically, but is also able to practice it in everyday life." (SA, Interview, 2024)

Islamic Studies Club activities are carried out regularly every week, usually on Fridays after Friday prayers in congregation. Students are divided into small discussion groups guided by supervising teachers or religious mentors who are competent in their fields. Each meeting has a certain relevant theme, such as morals in Islam, the challenges of the young Muslim generation in the era of globalization, or the importance of ukhuwah Islamiyah. In addition, students are also encouraged to share their experiences and ideas, creating an interactive and collaborative learning atmosphere.

The Islamic Studies Club program not only aims to enrich students' religious insights, but also acts as a means of Islamic character building that is applicable. Through interactive discussions and learning activities, students are invited to understand how Islamic values can be applied in various aspects of modern life. The program also serves as a platform to hone students' critical thinking and communication skills, which are essential abilities in today's era. Moreover, the program creates a supportive environment for the formation of a strong Muslim community in the school, where students can share

and support each other in practicing their faith. By integrating spiritual and social aspects, the Islamic Studies Club is an ideal complement to the Read and Write Al-Qur'an (BTQ) program, as both support each other in building a Qur'anic generation with Islamic character.

In addition to supporting a deeper understanding of Islam through the Islamic Studies Club, SMP IT Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa complements this approach with the Read and Write Qur'an (BTQ) Program which aims to guide students to be able to read and write the Qur'an properly and correctly according to the rules of tajweed. According to Hidayah & Hanifiyah (2022) explained that the Read and Write Qur'an (BTQ) Program is a program that is sustainable and involves educators who are competent in their fields so as to produce the goals to be achieved. Apart from improving the skills of reading the Qur'an, this program is also targeted at strengthening students' understanding of Islamic values in everyday life (Luthfi, 2021). So that through this program, the values of the Qur'an can be used as a guide in behaving, acting, and interacting with others.

This extracurricular program has been implemented since the beginning of the establishment of IT Junior High School Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa as part of the identity of an Integrated Islamic-based school. This activity is carried out every day after the learning process is complete, precisely after the students perform Dzuhur prayers in congregation. This program is designed for all grade levels, namely grades VII to IX, with a group teaching system guided by their respective homeroom teachers and supported by special mentor teachers in the field of reading and writing the Qur'an.

Based on an interview with the principal (RA), this program was organized to meet the needs of students who have different backgrounds in reading and writing the Qur'an:

"We see that the ability to read and write the Qur'an among students varies greatly, some are already fluent and some are still having difficulty recognizing the hijaiyah letters. This difference is usually influenced by the background of religious education they received at home or previous institutions. Therefore, we feel that this program is a solution to equalize students' abilities so that all have a good understanding of the Qur'an." (RA, Interview, 2024)

This extracurricular program not only aims to improve students' technical skills in reading and writing the Qur'an, but also as a strategic effort to ensure equal access to Islamic education. This is important given that differences in learners' ability to read the Qur'an can be influenced by their religious education background at home or previous learning experiences. The program is designed to give more attention to students who still have difficulties, without neglecting the development of students who are already proficient. With this program, the school hopes that every learner can have better Al-Qur'an reading skills as part of the basic competencies of a Muslim.

Implementation of Extracurricular Islamic Studies Club and Qur'an Reading and Writing at SMP IT Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa

The implementation of this extracurricular program requires a strategy that is in accordance with the conditions and needs of students. Therefore, the supervising teacher plays an important role in choosing the most effective method so that learning runs optimally. In the implementation of the Islamic Studies Club extracurricular program at IT Junior High School Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa, the strategies used are focused on interactive learning and group discussions that actively involve students. Each meeting is

filled with relevant themes designed to broaden students' Islamic insights, such as Qur'anic interpretation, hadith studies, and discussions on Islamic issues faced by the younger generation. In addition, students are also invited to discuss how to apply Islamic values in everyday life.

Based on an interview with one of the Islamic Studies Club supervisors (SH), this activity does not only rely on the one-way lecture method, but also involves students in active discussions and problem solving:

"In the Islamic Studies Club, we use more interactive discussion methods so that students feel involved and can express their opinions. Every meeting, we give a theme that is close to their lives, such as the importance of ukhuwah Islamiyah or how to face challenges as a Muslim in the modern era. In this way, students not only learn theory, but also understand how Islamic values can be applied in real life." (SH, Interview, 2024)

This activity is usually carried out every week after Friday prayers in congregation and is attended by students from various grade levels. To maintain learning continuity, the Islamic Studies Club uses a small group-based approach guided by mentors or supervising teachers. Each group is given the opportunity to present the results of their discussion in front of other groups, thus creating an atmosphere that supports the development of critical thinking and communication skills.

The implementation of the Islamic Studies Club extracurricular program at SMP IT Al-Ikhwān Tanjung Morawa shows an effort to integrate religious education into activities that are interesting and relevant to students. The interactive discussion method not only enriches students' understanding of Islamic values, but also builds their confidence in conveying ideas. In addition, group-based learning provides space for students to support each other and strengthen ukhuwah Islamiyah. This program not only serves as a means of education, but also as an effort to build Islamic character that can be applied in everyday life.

The method used in the Qur'an Reading and Writing program is the Yanbu'a method, which emphasizes gradual teaching starting from the introduction of hijaiyah letters to correct pronunciation with tajweed. This method is designed to help students understand the basics of reading the Qur'an systematically, so that students' abilities can develop optimally and continuously.

Based on an interview with one of the mentor teachers (SW), this method was chosen because it is easier to apply and effective in improving students' abilities:

"The Yanbu'a method does require patience in teaching, but the results are quite significant. We use tools such as large props for teachers and small props for students to make it easier to understand the letters and tajweed. Learning is done gradually, starting with reading together, then individually, so that children can be more confident in reading the Qur'an." (SW, Interview, 2024)

The approach used in this extracurricular activity pays close attention to the level of student understanding and student ability. With tools such as large props for teachers and small props for students, learning becomes more visual and interactive, so that students can understand the material more easily. The gradual learning strategy, which starts from basic introduction to individual practice, not only serves to improve the technical skills of reading the Qur'an, but also plays an important role in building students' confidence. This is very relevant considering the diversity of students' abilities

in reading the Qur'an, ranging from those who do not recognize the hijaiyah letters to those who are able to read fluently.

Supporting and Hindering Factors in the Implementation of the Islamic Studies Club Extracurricular and Reading and Writing the Qur'an

The implementation of this extracurricular activity is influenced by various factors, both supporting and inhibiting. The first supporting factor is the social environment that supports Qur'anic learning. In an interview with the head of curriculum (MH), he said:

"Students in this school are used to an Islamic environment, so they are more easily directed in religious activities. In addition, parents are also very supportive of this program because they want their children to be closer to the Qur'an."
(MH, Interview, 2024)

The interpretation of this quote shows that support from the school and family environment is instrumental in the success of this program. Students who grow up in an environment that supports Islamic values tend to be more motivated to participate in these extracurricular activities with enthusiasm. In addition to social aspects, another supporting factor is adequate facilities. The school provides comfortable classrooms for learning, as well as tools such as manuals, blackboards, and props that support the teaching and learning process. The availability of supervising teachers who are competent in the field of the Qur'an is also an important factor in the success of this program.

However, there are several inhibiting factors that need to be considered in implementing this program. One of them is the limited number of teaching staff. In an interview with one of the mentor teachers (SW), he stated:

"Currently we still lack teaching staff who are specialized in reading and writing the Qur'an. The number of students participating in this extracurricular activity is quite large, so sometimes we are overwhelmed in providing optimal guidance."
(SW, Interview, 2024)

The interpretation of this quote shows that the limited number of teaching staff is an obstacle in the implementation of this program. With a less than ideal ratio of teachers and students, learning cannot be done optimally for each individual. This finding aligns with the research of Hidayah & Hanifiyah (2022), which highlights that the availability of trained Qur'anic educators significantly influences the success of Qur'an literacy programs in Islamic schools. A study by Luthfi (2021) also found that insufficient human resources in religious education often lead to ineffective learning, particularly in extracurricular Qur'anic literacy programs. Therefore, a solution that can be considered is to increase the number of teaching staff or optimize the small group system so that each student receives more individualized attention.

In addition, another obstacle is the limited learning aids. Based on observation, the available teaching aids are still insufficient, causing students to take turns using tools, leading to delays in the learning process. This challenge is also evident in the study of Bahtiyar et al. (2022), which suggests that inadequate teaching materials and resources hinder effective tahfiz and tahsin learning in schools. Similarly, Habibullah et al. (2021) emphasize that providing structured Qur'anic learning tools can significantly enhance students' engagement and retention in literacy programs. By understanding these supporting and inhibiting factors, schools can formulate better strategies to improve the

effectiveness of the extracurricular Qur'an reading and writing program. Efforts such as adding teaching staff, increasing the availability of learning aids, and improving the student grouping system can be strategic steps in optimizing this program.

Compared to previous studies, this research offers a unique perspective by focusing not only on Qur'anic literacy but also on character development through structured extracurricular programs. While prior research such as Amalia et al. (2023) discusses the effectiveness of online Qur'anic learning methods, our findings emphasize the importance of interactive, in-person learning in shaping Islamic character. Additionally, while Ikbal & Pratami (2022) focused on specific Qur'anic teaching methods like Al-Hira, this study provides a broader analysis by integrating different components of an extracurricular approach.

However, despite its contributions, this research has some limitations. First, it is limited to one educational institution (SMP IT Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa), which may restrict generalizability. Future studies should consider a comparative analysis across multiple Integrated Islamic Schools to identify common challenges and best practices. Second, while this study provides a qualitative insight into program effectiveness, future research could incorporate quantitative methods to measure student improvement in Qur'anic literacy and character formation more objectively.

Overall, the Islamic Studies Club and Qur'an Reading and Writing extracurricular program at SMP IT Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa has made a positive contribution in improving students' Qur'an reading and writing skills and shaping their Islamic character. Although there are some challenges in its implementation, supporting factors such as a conducive environment and appropriate teaching methods have helped the program run smoothly. To improve its effectiveness, the school needs to overcome existing obstacles, particularly in terms of the availability of teaching staff and learning aids.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Islamic Studies Club and Qur'an Reading and Writing extracurricular program at SMP IT Al-Ikhwan Tanjung Morawa plays a crucial role in enhancing students' Qur'anic reading and writing skills while instilling Islamic values. The structured implementation of this program, particularly using the Yanbu'a method, has proven effective in gradually improving students' proficiency in reading and writing the Qur'an, especially in bridging the skill gap between students with pesantren backgrounds and those from general elementary schools. However, challenges such as limited teaching staff and inadequate learning aids hinder the program's optimal implementation. More adaptive teaching methods are needed to accommodate the varying levels of students' Qur'anic proficiency. To further enhance the program's effectiveness, schools should recruit more trained teachers in tajweed and Qur'anic reading and writing while improving the availability and quality of learning aids such as guidebooks, interactive media, and teaching props. Implementing a small-group learning system can ensure that students receive more personalized guidance. Teachers should adopt interactive and engaging teaching strategies to enhance students' motivation, while students are encouraged to participate actively in Qur'anic reading and writing activities beyond class hours to reinforce their learning. Future research should conduct comparative studies across multiple Integrated Islamic Schools and utilize quantitative methods to measure students' progress more objectively. With these improvements, this extracurricular program can continue to positively shape a Qur'anic and Islamic generation.

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