



Revitalization of Islamic Education as an Effort to Combat Hijaiyah Letter Illiteracy in Students of Totikum State Vocational High School

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ABSTRAK

This study aims to analyze the revitalization of Islamic education in addressing Arabic hijaiyah letter illiteracy among students at SMK Negeri 1 Totikum. A qualitative method was employed through observation, Qur'an reading tests, interviews, and documentation. The findings indicate that TPA programs and routine Qur'an recitation activities effectively improved students' participation and reading skills. These activities also fostered a more supportive religious atmosphere within the school environment. Continuous practice through TPA sessions and routine Qur'an recitation encouraged students to participate more actively and improved their confidence in reading the Qur'an. The collaboration between teachers, students, and supporting educational activities contributed to strengthening religious literacy and developing consistent reading habits among the learners. Therefore, revitalizing Islamic education through structured religious programs and habituation activities can serve as an effective approach to improving students' ability to read hijaiyah letters and strengthening their Islamic literacy in the school environment

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education has a strategic role in shaping the character and spiritual awareness of students. One of the basic competencies that Muslim students must have is the ability to read the Qur'an according to the rules of the Hijaiyah letters. This ability is not only related to aspects of worship but also serves as a foundation for comprehensively understanding Islamic teachings. However, in practice, the strengthening of Qur'anic literacy at the secondary education level, especially in vocational schools, often does not receive optimal attention so that this basic ability is not yet fully mastered by all Muslim students.

The results of the observations and Qur'an reading tests conducted by the PPL team at SMK Negeri 1 Totikum show that there are still Muslim students who have difficulty in recognizing and reading hijaiyah letters correctly and properly. Some students are able to read but not fluently yet, while others still require intensive guidance. Based on discussions with the Islamic Education teachers, this condition is influenced by various factors, including previous learning backgrounds as well as the dynamics of curriculum implementation which provides fairly wide learning freedom without being balanced with consistent strengthening of guidance and discipline.

Based on these issues, efforts to revitalize Islamic education are needed as a strategic step in addressing illiteracy in Hijaiyah letters in the school environment. This article aims to describe the literacy condition of students in Hijaiyah letters and to formulate strategies for strengthening Islamic education that can be implemented sustainably to improve students' ability to read the Qur'an.

IMPLEMENTATION AND METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a field research method combined with library research. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to provide an in-depth description of students' ability to read Hijaiyah letters as well as efforts to revitalize Islamic education as a solution to these problems. Meanwhile, library research is used to strengthen the theoretical foundation related to Qur'an literacy, Islamic education, and strategies for religious development in the school environment.

The research was conducted on February 3 and 5, 2026, in the classroom of SMK Negeri 1 Totikum as part of the Field Experience Practice (PPL) activities. The research subjects were Muslim students and Islamic Religious Education teachers. Data collection techniques were carried out through direct observation, implementation of Al-Qur'an reading tests to identify the ability to read hijaiyah letters, interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers, and documentation of activities. The data obtained were then analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions, resulting in a systematic description of the condition of hijaiyah letter literacy and efforts to revitalize Islamic education that can be applied sustainably.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted to directly observe the condition of Hijaiyah letter literacy in the environment of SMK Negeri 1 Totikum, particularly the ability to read the Qur'an and efforts to revitalize Islamic education as a solution to the problems found. Research data were obtained through classroom observations, Qur'an reading tests, interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers and supervising teachers, and documentation of activities carried out during the PPL period.



Based on the results of observations and Quran reading tests, there are still a number of students who experience difficulties in reading hijaiyah letters fluently and correctly. This is supported by interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers who explained that some students still often misidentify basic letters, have difficulty with tajwid pronunciation, and lack the frequency of practice outside of formal lesson hours. This finding is in line with previous research which shows that low Quran reading skills among adolescents are often influenced by the lack of consistent reading practice and minimal habituation of daily religious activities in the school environment (Al-Hadi, 2019).

During the implementation of the research, teachers, the community, and students together carried out development efforts in the form of TPA (Al-Qur'an Education Park) activities and routine Al-Qur'an recitations after the Dhuhr prayer at school. TPA activities focused on basic learning of hijaiyah letters and simple tajwid understanding, guided directly by Islamic Religious Education teachers and students. Meanwhile, the tadarus activities aimed to train students' consistency in reading the Al-Qur'an routinely every day and to foster religious habits outside the formal curriculum.

This effort is related to the theory of religious habituation, which states that religious activities carried out routinely can increase a person's abilities and skills in certain religious aspects. According to Suyanto (2021), systematically habituating in reading the Qur'an can strengthen literacy skills in hijaiyah letters while also instilling discipline in religious learning. Thus, the combination of formal learning (TPA) and routine religious activities (tadarus) can become an effective strategy in overcoming difficulties in reading hijaiyah letters among secondary school students.

The main problem in this study is the low mastery of hijaiyah letters by some students at SMK Negeri 1 Totikum, which is marked by the lack of fluency in reading the Qur'an and infrequent practice. This finding indicates that Qur'an

learning has not become a strong enough habit within the school environment, both during lesson hours and outside the formal schedule. As explained by the theory of religious literacy, the ability to read the Qur'an is not merely a cognitive skill, but also the result of continuous practice and spiritual habituation (Rahman, 2020).

In addition, interviews with teachers stated that several learning organization factors, such as limited time in the formal curriculum and the lack of mechanisms for religious habituation, also affect the low skills in reading Hijaiyah letters among students. This condition is reinforced by Sumarno (2022) who stated that effective religious learning requires a combination of systematic teaching methods and an environment that supports religious practice outside the classroom.



Through the implementation of TPA and tadarus activities after the Dhuhr prayer, there has been an increase in student participation in consistently reading the Qur'an. These activities not only provide additional practice but also build stronger spiritual habits among students. This shows that efforts to revitalize Islamic education through a combination of formal learning and routine religious activities can contribute to improving literacy skills in Arabic letters at school..

In addition to playing a role in improving technical skills in reading the Qur'an, literacy activities carried out continuously also contribute to the formation of students' religious character. The activity of reading the Qur'an not only functions as a means to learn the hijaiyah letters and tajwid rules, but also becomes a medium for instilling spiritual values in students' daily lives. Several studies show that regular Qur'an reading practices conducted in the school environment can strengthen religious attitudes, improve discipline, and foster students' sense of responsibility toward their worship obligations (Khaerati, Nurhayati, & Sudirman, 2024). Therefore, the implementation of tadarus Al-Qur'an after the noon prayer not only impacts the improvement of reading hijaiyah letters, but also plays a role in building students' religious character.

In addition to the habituation factor, the effectiveness of improving Qur'an literacy is also influenced by the learning methods applied by educators. A systematic and interactive teaching approach can help students recognize the forms of Hijaiyah letters more easily, understand the correct pronunciation, and gradually practice the rules of Tajwid. Other research results show that Qur'an learning accompanied by direct guidance from teachers can improve students'

religious literacy competence because it provides opportunities for more intensive and directed practice (Harahap, 2024). Thus, the active role of teachers in guiding TPA activities becomes one of the key factors in the success of the Islamic education revitalization program in schools.

The phenomenon of low Qur'an reading ability among secondary school students actually does not only occur in certain regions, but is also found in various areas in Indonesia. Several studies reveal that some high school and vocational school students still experience difficulties in reading the Qur'an fluently due to the lack of basic learning in previous educational levels and minimal reading habits in daily life (Triasih & Irawadi, 2025). This condition indicates that efforts to improve Qur'an literacy need to be carried out systematically and continuously through collaboration between schools, families, and the community.

In this context, the implementation of the TPA program in schools can become a fairly effective alternative solution to improve students' ability to read the Qur'an. This program provides students with the opportunity to receive direct guidance in learning the hijaiyah letters, understanding the rules of tajwid, and gradually practicing reading fluently. In addition, this activity also creates a more conducive learning atmosphere because students can provide mutual support and motivation in the Qur'an learning process. This aligns with the view that Qur'anic literacy will develop more optimally if supported by a religious educational environment and continuous learning (Nadhrioh, 2022).

In addition to habituation factors and learning methods, the support of the educational environment is also an important aspect in improving students' Qur'an literacy skills. A conducive and religiously nuanced school environment can encourage students to be more active in practicing religious activities, including reading the Qur'an. When religious activities are made part of the school culture, students will indirectly become accustomed to carrying out these activities as part of their daily routine. Research shows that the formation of a religious culture in the school environment plays a significant role in increasing students' spiritual awareness and participation in religious activities (Adilla, Mubaidillah, Badriah, & Fauziyah, 2024). Therefore, strengthening literacy in Arabic letters (huruf hijaiyah) does not only depend on the learning process in the classroom, but also requires the support of a school environment that can create a positive religious atmosphere.

On the other hand, the involvement of various parties in the process of fostering Qur'an literacy is also an equally important factor. Collaboration between teachers, university students, and the surrounding community can expand the learning space for students. The involvement of university students in mentoring activities, for example through the Field Experience Practice (PPL) program, can provide additional contributions to the Qur'an learning process in schools. The presence of students not only helps the development process technically, but can also motivate students to be more active in participating in religious literacy activities. This shows that cooperation between higher education institutions and secondary schools can be an effective strategy in improving the quality of religious education in schools.

Furthermore, Al-Qur'an literacy learning conducted gradually also needs to consider the differences in abilities possessed by each student. Not all students have the same background in religious education, so the learning approach used needs to adjust to their level of ability. In this case, a differentiated learning strategy can be applied by providing more intensive guidance to students who are still at the stage of recognizing hijaiyah letters, while students who are already able to read the Al-Qur'an well can be directed to improve fluency and understanding of tajwid. This approach is considered more effective because it allows each student to gain a learning experience that is appropriate to their needs and level of ability.

In addition, the use of varied learning media can also be an alternative to increase students' interest in learning Arabic letters. Visual media such as letter cards, interactive whiteboards, and digital media can help students understand the shapes and sounds of Arabic letters more easily. Several studies indicate that the use of creative learning media can enhance students' motivation to learn about Arabic letters because the learning process becomes more interesting and not monotonous (Wasalmi, Mutmainnah, & Nurulista, 2023). Thus, innovation in the use of learning media can be one of the strategies that support the success of the Quran literacy program in schools.

In addition to the learning aspect, the internal motivation of students also affects the success in improving their ability to read the Qur'an. Students who have good religious awareness tend to be more active in participating in tadarus activities and Qur'an learning. Therefore, teachers need to provide positive motivational encouragement to students so that they have enthusiasm in studying the Qur'an. This motivation can be provided through a persuasive approach, giving rewards, or through the exemplary behavior demonstrated by teachers in daily life within the school environment.

The sustainability of the Qur'an literacy program in schools is greatly influenced by the consistency of the activities that have been planned. TPA programs and tadarus activities that have been carried out should not stop as temporary activities during the research or mentoring period, but need to be made a part of the school culture carried out continuously. The habit of regularly reading the Qur'an can strengthen the ability to read hijaiyah letters while also building the students' religious discipline in daily life. Research shows that Qur'an literacy activities that are consistently conducted in educational environments can improve reading skills and at the same time form positive religious habits in students (Hatika, Abu Nawas, Takwim, & Riawarda, 2021).



In addition, the success of the Islamic education revitalization program also demonstrates the importance of a collaborative approach in the process of fostering religious literacy in schools. The involvement of various parties such as teachers, students, and the school environment can create a more dynamic and supportive learning process for learners. Such collaboration provides opportunities for students to receive more intensive guidance in learning the hijaiyah letters and to increase their motivation in participating in Qur'an learning activities. Several studies also state that cooperation among various educational components has an important contribution in improving the quality of Qur'anic literacy in the school environment (Nurhalida, 2024).

In addition, the habituation approach through religious activities carried out in a structured manner has been proven to have a positive impact on the development of students' Qur'an reading skills. Repeated reading exercises through tadarus activities or additional learning programs allow students to gradually improve their ability to read hijaiyah letters. These activities also help students build self-confidence in reading the Qur'an in front of teachers or peers. This aligns with research findings which state that regular Qur'an reading practice can strengthen literacy skills while also increasing student participation in religious activities at school (Akbar, Winoto, & Umam, 2023).

Thus, the revitalization of Islamic education through the strengthening of Qur'an literacy in secondary schools can become an effective strategy in addressing the problem of illiteracy in hijaiyah letters among students. This effort not only focuses on improving the technical ability to read the Qur'an but also plays a role in fostering a positive religious culture within the school environment. Therefore, the implementation of sustainable religious guidance programs supported by various parties is highly needed so that students' Qur'an literacy can develop optimally and continuously (Abdullah, Praptiningsih, Baehaqi, & Kamal, 2024).

CONCLUSION

Based on the background of the research, the main problem found in SMK Negeri 1 Totikum is the still low ability of some students to recognize and read hijaiyah letters accurately and fluently. This condition indicates that religious literacy, especially in the aspect of Qur'an reading and writing, has not yet fully been established as a strong habit in the students' academic life.

The research results through observation, Al-Qur'an reading tests, and interviews with teachers show that these difficulties are influenced by the lack of continuous practice and the suboptimal habituation of religious activities at school. This finding aligns with the habituation theory in Islamic education, which emphasizes that the ability to read the Al-Qur'an cannot be built merely through the delivery of material, but requires regular practice, a supportive environment, and role modeling from educators.

Efforts to revitalize Islamic education carried out through the TPA program and routine tadarus activities after the Dhuhr prayer have proven to have a positive impact on increasing students' participation and confidence in reading the Qur'an. These activities not only function as a means for technical practice in

reading Arabic letters, but also create a more conducive religious atmosphere in the school environment. Thus, it can be concluded that the revitalization of Islamic education through familiarization approaches and collaboration between teachers, students, and the community is a strategic step in addressing illiteracy in Arabic letters at the vocational high school level.

This research shows that the low ability to read Hijaiyah letters among some students at SMK Negeri 1 Totikum is related to the lack of continuous practice in reading the Qur'an as well as the limited learning time in the formal curriculum. This condition indicates that religious literacy in the school environment still requires strengthening through more directed and consistent learning strategies.

The implementation of the TPA program and Al-Qur'an recitation activities after the dhuhur prayer is one form of revitalizing Islamic education that can have a positive impact on increasing students' participation and Al-Qur'an reading skills. These activities not only strengthen the technical ability to read hijaiyah letters, but also build religious habits and enhance students' spiritual awareness in school life.

Thus, strengthening Quranic literacy at the secondary school level requires a continuous approach through the habituation of religious activities, the application of adaptive learning methods, as well as the support of a conducive school environment. Collaboration between teachers, students, and the community becomes an important factor in creating effective development programs so that students' ability to read Arabic letters can develop more optimally and sustainably..

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