Intensive Mentoring Approach to Enhance Qur'anic Literacy and Prayer Memorization in Secondary Schools

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Abstract: *This study addresses the low level of Qur'anic literacy and prayer recitation mastery among secondary school students and analyzes the effectiveness of an intensive mentoring approach. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation at STKIP Muhammadiyah Arar Labschool High School. The mentoring was conducted daily before class in small groups with an individual deposit-and-journal system, combined with tajwid micro-sessions and parental as well as TPA support. Findings show significant improvement: students who were initially at the Iqra' stage progressed to fluent mushaf reading, while mastery of prayer recitations increased, with many achieving full memorization. Beyond technical skills, the program fostered motivation, discipline, confidence, and religious character. These results confirm that intensive mentoring is an effective, replicable model for strengthening Qur'anic literacy and worship competence in secondary schools.*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini berangkat dari rendahnya literasi Al-Qur'an dan penguasaan bacaan salat di tingkat sekolah menengah serta menganalisis efektivitas pendekatan bimbingan intensif. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi di SMA Labschool STKIP Muhammadiyah Arar. Program bimbingan dilaksanakan setiap pagi sebelum pelajaran melalui kelompok kecil dengan sistem setoran dan jurnal individu, ditambah sesi mikro tajwid serta dukungan orang tua dan TPA. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan: peserta didik yang semula berada pada tahap Iqra' berkembang menjadi lancar membaca mushaf, sementara penguasaan bacaan salat meningkat hingga banyak yang hafal secara lengkap. Selain keterampilan teknis, program ini menumbuhkan motivasi, disiplin, percaya diri, dan karakter religius. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa bimbingan intensif merupakan model efektif dan dapat direplikasi untuk memperkuat literasi Al-Qur'an dan kompetensi ibadah di sekolah menengah.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (*Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI*) occupies a strategic role in Indonesia's education system. Beyond being a subject that transfers religious knowledge, it is also a medium for shaping students' moral, spiritual, and intellectual character (Kosim, et al 2023; Nasir & Rijal, 2021). One of the essential components of PAI is Qur'anic literacy, which is the foundation for comprehending, internalizing, and practicing Islamic values in daily life. Zamroni (2024) and Supriadi, et al (2022) emphasizes that the ability to read the Qur'an constitutes a basic competency every Muslim must master as a guide for life. Thus, Qur'anic literacy in schools is not merely an academic skill but a determinant of students' religious identity and worship practices.

Despite this urgency, empirical facts indicate a persistent gap between expectations and reality. Damanhuri et al (2025) and Wulandari et al (2022) reveal that many high school students in Indonesia continue to struggle with reading the Qur'an correctly. This situation is also evident at STKIP Muhammadiyah Arar Labschool High School, Sorong Regency, where internal school data shows that a significant proportion of students across grades X, XI, and XII are still at the Iqra' stage rather than progressing to Qur'anic reading. Such findings highlight the disparity between curriculum objectives and actual student competencies, reinforcing the need for innovative interventions to strengthen Qur'anic literacy.

Previous studies have sought to address this challenge. Mubarok (2021) emphasizes that habitual Qur'anic reading in the morning significantly shapes discipline and consistency in learning. Similarly, Ramadhani and Werdiningsih (2022) highlight the success of structured methods, such as the Ummi approach, in strengthening Qur'an recitation and memorization among students in Islamic institutions. Moreover, Septiana and Utami (2024) demonstrate that comprehensive methods in Qur'an literacy programs at the TPA level accelerate students' mastery of tajwid and recitation. These findings provide useful insights but remain limited in scope to certain institutions and methods.

Handayani et al. (2024) further argue that tadarus practices and Qur'an-Hadith learning significantly influence Qur'anic literacy through the mediation of reading intentions. While this demonstrates the psychological dimensions of Qur'an literacy, the practical implementation at secondary schools still requires a more systematic, school-based mentoring model. Likewise, Nasaruddin et al. (2024) stress that collaboration between schools and community-based Qur'an institutions (TPA) strengthens outcomes, but this integration is rarely documented in mainstream school practices. Thus, the research gap lies in exploring how structured, intensive mentoring programs can be embedded into daily school routines to address literacy and worship challenges simultaneously.

In addition, studies on religious character development emphasize the link between Qur'an learning and broader moral-spiritual outcomes. Komariah and Nihayah (2023) show that strengthening Islamic Religious Education enhances personality character, while Badriyan et al. (2024) underline the importance of prayer mastery as part of continuous religious awareness. However, limited research has investigated how Qur'an literacy mentoring and prayer memorization

programs can work hand in hand to support both cognitive skills and spiritual formation in secondary school students.

The novelty of this study lies in its integration of Qur'anic literacy improvement with prayer memorization through an intensive mentoring approach carried out systematically within the school setting. Unlike most previous studies that emphasize either Qur'an reading or prayer memorization separately, this study positions both as complementary pillars of worship competency. The program combines habituation, tajwid reinforcement, and memorization in a consistent routine before formal learning hours, ensuring that literacy development is not fragmented but holistic.

Furthermore, this research contributes by highlighting the collaboration between formal school structures, teachers' mentoring roles, and students' habit formation. It shows how schools can institutionalize religious skill-building without neglecting academic schedules, thereby offering a replicable model for other institutions facing similar challenges. By contextualizing the mentoring approach within a secondary school, this study advances existing literature with a more comprehensive, practice-based framework.

The objective of this study is to analyze the effectiveness of the intensive mentoring approach in enhancing students' Qur'anic literacy and memorization of prayer recitations at the secondary school level. The research specifically examines the process, strategies, and outcomes of the program implemented at STKIP Muhammadiyah Arar Labschool High School in Sorong Regency.

The argument underpinning this study is that structured, consistent, and individualized mentoring in Qur'an learning can significantly reduce students' literacy gaps while simultaneously strengthening their mastery of prayer recitations. Such an approach not only improves technical competencies but also fosters motivation, discipline, and religious character development, as previously suggested by Mubarok (2021) and supported by Komariah and Nihayah (2023).

This research is important both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it enriches the body of knowledge on Qur'anic literacy and worship skills by introducing an integrative school-based mentoring model. Practically, it provides a reference for educators and policymakers in designing effective religious programs that balance cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects of learning. Ultimately, the study contributes to shaping a generation of students who are academically competent, spiritually rooted, and capable of practicing Islamic worship correctly in their daily lives.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design with a descriptive approach, which is intended to explore and understand the meaning behind a social phenomenon in its natural context (Maruster & Gijsenberg, 2013; Lim, 2025). The descriptive approach was selected because it was aligned with the research objective, namely to describe in detail both the process and the outcomes of the

Qur'an literacy and prayer memorization mentoring program at Labschool STKIP Muhammadiyah Arar High School in Sorong Regency.

The research was conducted at Labschool STKIP Muhammadiyah Arar High School in Sorong Regency during the period of October–November 2024. This location was purposively selected because the school had been consistently implementing an intensive Qur'an reading and prayer memorization program every morning before the start of formal learning activities, making it directly relevant to the focus of this study. The research subjects included the school principal, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, and students from grades X, XI, and XII. Participants were chosen purposively to represent different perspectives: the principal to provide managerial insights, teachers to describe the pedagogical strategies used, and students to reveal their experiences and progress. The student participants also represented varying levels of Qur'anic literacy, ranging from those still in the Iqra' stage to those already practicing Qur'anic recitation.

The research procedure was carried out in three stages. The first stage was research preparation, which included obtaining research permits, coordinating with the school principal and PAI teachers, and preparing research instruments such as observation guidelines, interview protocols, and document review checklists. The second stage was data collection, which employed multiple techniques. Direct non-participant observation was conducted during the Qur'an reading and prayer memorization sessions, focusing on the interaction patterns between mentors and students, the mentoring strategies used, and student participation. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the principal, PAI teachers, and selected students. The interviews used a flexible list of open-ended questions, which allowed the researcher to adjust the conversation flow according to field conditions so that the data obtained was richer and more contextual (Raol et al., 2025; Nashrullah et al., 2023). In addition, documentation techniques were used to collect student development records, attendance journals, and progress notes related to memorization achievements.

The third stage was data analysis, which was conducted using the model of Miles and Huberman, consisting of three steps: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification (Monaro et al., 2022). Data from observations, interview transcripts, and documentation were coded thematically, then categorized into key themes such as student progress, challenges in implementation, and the effectiveness of the program. Through this process, findings were systematically organized to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study.

To ensure validity and credibility, this study applied triangulation of sources, namely by combining the results of observation, interviews, and documentation (Wiyanda et al., 2024; Khoa et al., 2023). This strategy minimized researcher bias and confirmed that the conclusions drawn were consistent with the actual conditions in the field. The focus of the analysis was not only directed at student achievements in Qur'anic literacy and prayer memorization, but also at the mentoring strategies employed by teachers, the obstacles faced during the implementation, and the students' responses in terms of motivation, discipline, and the development of religious character.

Overall, the qualitative-descriptive method used in this research was expected to provide an in-depth picture of both the effectiveness and the challenges of the intensive Qur'an mentoring program, thereby enriching the scientific discourse on Qur'an learning strategies in secondary schools.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

Initial Conditions of Students' Qur'anic Reading Ability

Initial classroom observations and document review show that students' Qur'anic reading ability at Labschool STKIP Muhammadiyah Arar was low at the start of the program. Of the 39 students examined across grades X, XI and XII, 22 students (22/39; 56.4%) remained at the Iqra' stage rather than having progressed to reading the mushaf. Broken down by grade, 5 of 10 students in grade X, 11 of 17 students in grade XI, and 6 of 12 students in grade XII were still at the basic Iqra' level. Observational notes recorded frequent hesitations, letter-by-letter decoding, and mispronunciations when students read from the mushaf; many students relied on silent lip-mouthing rather than confident aloud recitation during group sessions.

During interviews, multiple informants confirmed and elaborated on these observations. A PAI teacher stated, "*Sometimes I see eleventh-graders still sounding out letters. They can recite a few short surahs, but when asked to read directly from the mushaf they often pause and guess the tajwid.*" The principal added, "*Curriculum expectations assume a certain level of fluency entering high school, but our records show that many students never had sustained, systematic practice in elementary school.*" A student reflected, "*I can read Iqra' comfortably, but when the teacher asks me to read the mushaf I get nervous and make mistakes—so I avoid volunteering.*"

The convergence of observed behavior, attendance records, and informant testimony indicates a systemic gap in prior Qur'anic instruction: many students reached secondary school without the habit or technical grounding needed for confident mushaf reading. The qualitative evidence points to two proximal causes, insufficient early-stage mentoring and a lack of routine, individualized follow-up, which together produce persistent hesitancy and gaps in tajwid application. This baseline situation justifies a focused, school-level intervention that combines skill-building with habit formation.

Implementation of the Intensive Guidance Program

Observations of the program's operation show a deliberately structured routine: activities ran daily for approximately 30 minutes before formal classes (typically 06:45–07:15). Students were organized into small groups of about 10–15; within each group students took turns individually "depositing" (reporting) their recitation or memorization to an assigned mentor. Mentors kept a daily monitoring journal recording each student's reading level, errors in tajwid, memorization status, and attendance. Field notes document clear procedural elements: (1) a short collective opening and intention, (2) individual reading/recitation with real-time correction, and (3) a brief targeted exercise on one tajwid item or one memorization phrase.

Interview data from program actors illuminate both rationale and routine. The principal explained, "*We designed this as a habit-forming slot; the key is consistency and immediate corrective feedback. The journal helps us monitor individual progress so no student gets lost in the crowd.*" A PAI teacher described the mentoring process: "*I listen to each student, mark two or three recurring errors, and give corrective drills. Then I ask the student to repeat the passage three times before signing the journal.*" Students reported initial difficulty but rapid accommodation: "*The first week I was sleepy and reluctant to come earlier; by week two it felt natural and I was glad I could practice in a small group.*"

Implementation evidence shows that three operational design choices are central to program functioning: (1) short daily sessions embedded before classes to guarantee regular participation, (2) individual accountability via monitoring journals, and (3) immediate micro-feedback from mentors. Interview accounts underscore the psychological effect of these choices, regularity reduces initial resistance, and individualized correction builds confidence. Observationally, the journal functioned both as a monitoring instrument and as a motivational device (students asked mentors to sign when they met targets), confirming the program's operational logic: frequent, short, accountable practice produces measurable progress over time.

Figure 1. Morning Qur'an & Iqra' Reading Sessions Program and Memorization of Prayer Recitations in grades X, XI, and XII

Improvement in Students' Reading Fluency and Prayer Memorization

After approximately two months of consistent mentoring, the quantitative patterns evident in the monitoring journals and post-program assessments show clear improvement. Fluency categories recorded after the intervention indicate that 17 of 39 students (43.6%) achieved "fluent" Qur'anic reading, 15 students (38.5%) reached "fairly fluent," and 7 students (17.9%) remained in the "less fluent" category. Regarding prayer recitation, 17 of 39 students (43.6%) were recorded as having fully memorized the target prayer texts, 20 students (51.3%) were in the "starting to memorize" stage, and only 2 students (5.1%) remained "not yet memorized."

Qualitative evidence supports and explains these numbers. Classroom observation documented a shift from halting single-letter decoding to phrase-level recitation with improved length (mad) control and more consistent application of ikhfa and idgham rules during practice sessions. A grade XII student reported, "*I

used to stop at every word; now my teacher corrects one or two sounds and I can read the whole verse more smoothly." A PAI teacher described a typical progression: "*At first a student might only be able to repeat short surahs; after daily drills and focused tajwid corrections, many begin to read with more accurate elongation and fewer assimilation errors.*"

Specific examples from the monitoring records illustrate individual gains: a grade XII student coded DM moved from "fairly fluent / not yet memorized" to "fluent / memorized"; grade XI student JA progressed from "fairly fluent / not yet memorized" to "fluent / memorized"; grade X student D was "fairly fluent / memorized" and improved to "fluent / memorized." Teachers' anecdotal reports echoed these documented changes: "I've started hearing students volunteer to lead short recitations in assemblies; that was rare before."

The combined numeric and narrative data indicate that the program produced both breadth and depth of learning: a substantial share of students attained fluency thresholds and demonstrated measurable memorization gains. The pattern, many students moving to "starting to memorize" while a meaningful portion reached full memorization, suggests that the program accelerated early acquisition and placed the majority on a clear trajectory toward mastery. Observational notes show that fluency gains were not merely speed improvements but included qualitative gains in tajwid application, evidencing both technical and cognitive development.

Table 1. Development of Grade XII Students

No.	Name	Iqra' and Al-Qur'an		Prayer Recitation Memorization	
		Before	After	Before	After
1.	AMJ	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized
2.	ADM	Fairly fluent	Fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized
3.	DM	Fairly fluent	Fluent	Not yet memorized	Memorized
4.	NA	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not yet memorized	Memorized
5.	MR	Fluent	Fluent	Memorized	Memorized
6.	PS	Fairly fluent	Fluent	Not yet memorized	Memorized
7.	RT	Fairly fluent	Fluent	Not yet memorized	Memorized
8.	SA	Not Fluent	Less fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized
9.	SS	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not yet memorized	Starting to memorized
10.	SR	Fluent	Fluent	Memorized	Memorized
11.	SAAB	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized
12.	ZSM	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized

Table 2. Development of Grade XI Students

No.	Name	Iqra' and Al-Qur'an		Prayer Recitation Memorization	
		Before	After	Before	After
1.	AB	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized
2.	HR	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized
3.	IAB	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not yet memorized	Starting to memorized
4.	JA	Fairly fluent	Fluent	Not yet memorized	Memorized
5.	JPR	Not Fluent	Less fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized
6.	JK	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized
7.	JA	Not Fluent	Less fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized
8.	JM	Not Fluent	Less fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized
9.	KM	Fluent	Fluent	Memorized	Memorized

10.	MR	Fluent	Fluent	Memorized	Memorized
11.	MAW	Fluent	Fluent	Memorized	Memorized
12.	MZ	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized
13.	RL	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized
14.	SR	Fluent	Fluent	Memorized	Memorized
15.	SN	Not Fluent	Less fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized
16.	SAR	Fluent	Fluent	Memorized	Memorized
17.	WPCN	Not Fluent	Less fluent	Not memorized	Starting to memorized

Table 3. Development of Grade X Students

No.	Name	Iqra' and Al-Qur'an		Prayer Recitation Memorization	
		Before	After	Before	After
1.	AB	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not yet memorized	Starting to memorized
2.	A	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not memorized	Not yet memorized
3.	D	Fairly fluent	Fluent	Memorized	Memorized
4.	GT	Not Fluent	Less fluent	Not yet memorized	Memorized
5.	M	Fluent	Fluent	Not memorized	Not yet memorized
6.	MU	Less fluent	Fluent	Not yet memorized	Memorized
7.	M	Fluent	Fluent	Not yet memorized	Memorized
8.	NI	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not yet memorized	Starting to memorized
9.	RM	Fairly fluent	Fluent	Not yet memorized	Starting to memorized
10.	R	Less fluent	Fairly fluent	Not yet memorized	Memorized

Beyond routine recitation practice, mentors allocated weekly micro-sessions specifically to tajwid and makhraj drills. Observational logs describe these segments as 8–12 minute focused activities in which students performed articulation drills, practiced prolongation (mad), and repeated minimal-pair contrasts to disambiguate similar-sounding letters. Teachers used quick formative checks, asking students to pronounce a set of target letters or short words and immediately providing corrective modeling.

Teachers' interviews clarified pedagogical intent: "*We intentionally separate a short tajwid block so students do not conflate speed with accuracy; mastering makhraj prevents fossilized errors later.*" Several students remarked that targeted makhraj drills changed their awareness: "*Before, I didn't know how to place my tongue for certain letters; now I know where the sound should come from.*"

Focused tajwid/makhraj instruction was instrumental in converting fluency into quality-controlled recitation. Observations show that the program's micro-sessions served as surgical interventions: they located persistent articulation errors and corrected them before they became entrenched. Teacher reflections suggest a preventive logic, early correction of misarticulations reduces later remediation needs, which helps explain the improvements in both fluency and the accuracy dimensions recorded in the monitoring journals.

Figure 2. Tajwid Learning in Grades XII and XI

Non-cognitive Effects

Program records and interviews point to meaningful non-cognitive shifts. Attendance journals used for the morning sessions document a visible increase in punctuality and consistent presence during the 06:45 slot over the eight-week period (qualitative trend logged by mentors). Students frequently described improved study habits: "*Waking up early to read became part of my day; I started practicing at home too.*" Parents corroborated these changes: one parent noted, "*My child now asks me to listen to his recitation after Maghrib; this was not happening before.*"

Teacher reports highlight affective changes: mentors observed reduced anxiety in public recitation, higher willingness to volunteer, and increased peer encouragement. A mentor reflected, "*When one student improves, others become motivated to match that progress. The journal and signing ritual create healthy peer pressure.*" Community ties also strengthened: several students began attending TPA sessions in the evening more regularly, and informal coordination between school mentors and TPA teachers emerged.

Non-cognitive outcomes are central to the program's sustainability: increased motivation and discipline create a positive feedback loop that supports ongoing practice, while parent and TPA involvement extend learning beyond school hours. The evidence indicates that the intervention works not only by changing skill but by altering the ecology of practice (time use, social norms, and inter-institutional collaboration) which together magnify and sustain gains.

Figure 3. Learning Activities at the TPA

This study's contribution is distinctive on three tightly interrelated dimensions: (1) Integrated dual-focus model implemented within the school day. The program deliberately fuses Qur'anic literacy progression (Iqra' → mushaf fluency) with systematic prayer memorization, operating within a short, daily pre-class time slot. Unlike programs that treat reading and memorization as separate tracks, this model uses each morning session to advance both competencies in tandem, thereby leveraging the cognitive synergy between repeated reading and spaced memorization; (2) Operationalized individual accountability via a "deposit-and-journal" system. Mentors recorded each student's recitation and memorization status daily, creating an auditable, incremental record. This operational mechanism converts otherwise invisible practice into measurable micro-achievements and fuels student motivation through visible progress markers (signed journal entries, recorded targets). The study demonstrates how low-cost monitoring artifacts can catalyze individual engagement and teacher responsiveness; and (3) Micro-pedagogical sequencing that couples quick, high-frequency practice with targeted corrective drills. The program's instructional architecture, short daily practice, immediate corrective feedback, and weekly tajwid/makhraj micro-sessions, aligns distributed practice principles with pragmatic classroom constraints. The evidence shows that this sequencing yields both quantitative gains (fluency and memorization percentages) and qualitative gains (improved tajwid accuracy), thereby bridging the technical–affective divide in religious instruction.

Practically, the study presents a replicable operational blueprint: (1) reserve a short daily pre-class slot; (2) form small practice groups with one mentor per group; (3) employ a simple monitoring journal for daily deposits; (4) integrate weekly tajwid/makhraj micro-sessions; and (5) engage parents and local TPA for after-school reinforcement. Theoretically, the research advances understanding of how habit formation, accountability structures, and focused corrective feedback interact to produce rapid gains in both literacy and ritual text memorization within school contexts.

Implications for replication and scale, because the model relies on minimal resources (time reallocation, small-group mentoring, and a simple journal), it is feasible for broader adoption in similar secondary school settings. The documented percentages of student gains (e.g., 43.6% fluent readers and 43.6% fully memorized within two months, with another 51.3% in early memorization stages) provide benchmark targets for replication studies and local program evaluation.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reinforce the evidence that Qur'anic reading competence, which ideally should have been mastered at the elementary school level, continues to be a significant challenge at the senior high school level. The data showed that more than half of the students were still at the Iqra' stage, indicating a substantial gap between the expected learning outcomes of the Islamic Education curriculum and the actual reality in the classroom. This is consistent with the notion that the curriculum often assumes readiness that does not align with students' previous learning experiences (Moslimany et al., 2024; Thompson & Houston, 2024). The implication is that schools at the secondary level must implement

remedial and supplementary programs to bridge these gaps rather than solely relying on the formal curriculum.

The intensive mentoring program implemented at STKIP Muhammadiyah Arar Labschool demonstrates how consistent routines and structured practices can address these gaps. By allocating 30 minutes before class for Qur'an reading and prayer memorization, the school created a new habit loop that integrates discipline, punctuality, and spiritual sincerity. Observations revealed that students who were initially reluctant gradually adapted to this routine, and interviews indicated a growing sense of responsibility among students. This finding aligns with Handayani et al. (2024), who highlight that regular Qur'an reading practice strengthens not only technical literacy but also students' spiritual intentions. Thus, the study shows that daily habit-forming strategies are not merely supplementary but central to building sustainable Qur'anic literacy.

Another critical component of the program is the explicit instruction of tajwid and makhorijul huruf. Unlike general reading practices, this additional emphasis ensures that students' fluency is not achieved at the expense of accuracy. Tajwid lessons on mad, ikhfa, idgham, and ghunnah, combined with articulation practice, equipped students with the skills to read the Qur'an with both fluency and precision. This finding is supported by Prabaningtyas & Tabroni (2022) and Razali, et al., (2023), who stress that tajwid mastery is essential for maintaining the quality of Qur'anic recitation. Therefore, this study underlines the importance of complementing general literacy programs with focused micro-instruction on pronunciation to prevent persistent errors.

The program's impact extended beyond technical skills to character formation and religious practice. Students developed new habits such as reading the Qur'an outside school hours and voluntarily attending TPA in the evenings. These habits represent an internalization of discipline and responsibility that transcend the classroom, reflecting a strengthening of religious character (Komariah & Nihayah, 2023; Steć & Kulik, 2021). The consistency of practice fostered not only knowledge but also affective and behavioral outcomes, highlighting the holistic potential of Qur'an literacy programs when embedded within daily routines.

The data also confirmed that structured mentoring had a tangible effect on both reading skills and prayer memorization. Students progressed from being limited to reciting Al-Fatihah to fluently performing a full range of prayer recitations, including the iftitah prayer, short surahs, the qunut prayer, and post-prayer supplications. This dual achievement demonstrates that intensive programs can serve as a platform for developing technical competencies in worship while also shaping students' spiritual identity. This supports Badriyan et al. (2024) and Sabaruddin & Mastur (2023), who emphasize that mastery of prayer recitations builds continuous religious awareness in students. The integration of literacy and memorization in a single routine thus emerges as a unique contribution of this study.

Beyond cognitive outcomes, the program fostered non-cognitive gains such as motivation, self-confidence, and discipline. Teachers observed increased punctuality and consistency among students, while interviews revealed growing confidence to recite in front of peers and mentors. These findings align with Nurfuadi (2020), who

argues that intensive assistance in Qur'an learning fosters motivation and sincerity in learning. The emotional bonds that developed between teachers and students further strengthened the learning climate, demonstrating that mentoring has both pedagogical and relational benefits.

Furthermore, this research highlights the significance of synergy between formal school education and non-formal religious institutions such as TPA. Students who engaged in both settings demonstrated faster and more consistent progress, confirming the importance of collaborative networks in religious education. This finding supports the argument of Nasaruddin et al., (2024) and Caldana et al., (2023), who stress the necessity of integrating formal and non-formal education to achieve comprehensive outcomes. Family involvement was also a critical factor, as parents' support reinforced habits developed at school. This collective engagement suggests that Qur'anic literacy is best fostered through shared responsibility among schools, families, and communities.

The implications of this study are twofold. Theoretically, the research contributes to the body of knowledge on Qur'an literacy by demonstrating the effectiveness of an integrated mentoring model that combines literacy, tajwid mastery, and prayer memorization. This approach moves beyond fragmented methods by showing how technical skills and religious character can be developed simultaneously. Practically, the study provides a replicable model for schools to adopt: short daily mentoring sessions embedded before formal lessons, supported by systematic monitoring, targeted tajwid instruction, and collaboration with families and community-based institutions.

The contribution of this research lies in presenting a holistic framework for enhancing Qur'anic literacy at the secondary level. It not only bridges the gap between curriculum expectations and students' actual abilities but also establishes a model that nurtures cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of Islamic education. The program's integration of habit formation, skill development, and character building offers a valuable reference for educators and policymakers seeking to strengthen religious education in contemporary school contexts.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the Qur'anic literacy and prayer memorization program through intensive mentoring implemented at STKIP Muhammadiyah Arar Labschool High School in Sorong Regency has proven effective in addressing the low ability of students in both reading the Qur'an and memorizing essential prayer recitations. The research questions regarding the process of mentoring and its impact on students have been comprehensively answered through the findings that the program successfully transformed students' competencies, from the basic *Iqra'* stage to the ability to read the Qur'an with greater fluency and accuracy, and from limited mastery of prayer recitations to a more complete, structured, and fluent performance.

The success of the program was marked by significant improvements in Qur'anic literacy, where many students progressed from "not fluent" or "less fluent" to "fairly fluent" or even "fluent" readers. Likewise, students who initially could not

recite prayers correctly were able to memorize and recite them with confidence after consistent mentoring. Several factors contributed to this progress, including the systematic and intensive guidance of educators, the application of an individual deposit system that ensured accountability, the integration of tajwid and *makhorijul huruf* instruction, as well as strong collaboration with TPA and continuous parental involvement. Beyond technical skills, the program also nurtured students' discipline, motivation, confidence, and religious character, indicating that the intervention was holistic rather than purely academic.

The study also demonstrates that embedding religious mentoring into daily routines (specifically in the morning before formal lessons) creates sustainable learning habits that positively influence both cognitive and affective aspects of student development. Moreover, the synergy between formal school education, non-formal religious institutions, and family support has been shown to accelerate student progress and reinforce the outcomes of the program. This highlights the importance of collective engagement and shared responsibility in fostering Qur'anic literacy at the secondary school level.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be made. First, schools are encouraged to expand the scope of the program by involving more assistant educators to ensure that guidance is distributed evenly and remains intensive. Second, collaboration with TPA and other religious institutions should be strengthened to guarantee the continuity of Qur'anic learning both in school and in the community. Third, parental support must be enhanced through systematic communication and engagement so that learning at home aligns with what is taught at school. Finally, this intensive mentoring model should be promoted as a best practice for other schools, especially at the senior high school level, to improve Qur'anic literacy and prayer memorization while simultaneously building students' religious awareness and spiritual character.

Thus, the novelty of this research lies in its demonstration of a holistic and integrated mentoring model that effectively combines literacy, tajwid mastery, prayer memorization, and character formation within a structured daily routine. The contribution of this study is not only practical (providing a replicable program for schools) but also theoretical, as it enriches the discourse on Qur'anic education by highlighting the importance of habit formation, teacher-student emotional bonding, and collaboration across formal and non-formal institutions. In this way, the study offers valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers who are committed to producing a generation that excels academically, practices their faith correctly, and upholds strong spiritual values.

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