

The Effect of the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* Program on the Qur'an Reading Skills of IAIN Curup Students

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Abstract. In response to growing concerns about the decline of Qur'anic literacy among university students, this mixed-methods study examined both the measurable improvements in reading proficiency resulting from the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program—an initiative of the Rector at the State Islamic Institute of Curup (IAIN Curup)—and the contextual factors that facilitated these improvements. A total of 500 students participated in a pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design, with their Qur'anic reading skills assessed across phonological accuracy, reading fluency, and tajwīd application. Ten participants were purposively selected for in-depth interviews, analyzed using the interactive model, to explore the underlying supports that influenced these outcomes. Quantitative findings showed significant gains in all domains: phonological accuracy ($t = 31.276$, $p < 0.001$), reading fluency ($t = 40.842$, $p < 0.001$), and tajwīd application ($t = 39.525$, $p < 0.001$), confirming the program's effectiveness in enhancing Qur'anic reading. Complementing this, qualitative results identified eight key enabling supports, namely self-regulated learning, teacher scaffolding and presence, peer support, family motivation, internal drive, accessible learning resources, and consistent practice, that explain the mechanisms behind the observed improvements. Taken together, the integration of statistical evidence and thematic insights demonstrates how the program functions not only as an effective intervention but also as a holistic educational strategy for strengthening Qur'anic reading skills.

Keywords: Qur'anic reading skills, *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program, factors enhancing Qur'anic reading skills.

Introduction

Reading the Qur'an is a fundamental component of religious literacy, particularly within the context of Islamic higher education.¹ In the institutional framework of Indonesia's State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (*Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri* or PTKIN), Qur'anic literacy is not only a spiritual obligation but also an academic foundation that shapes students' ethical and intellectual development. In an era marked by the global circulation of values, secular and spiritual narratives often intersect. Within this context, Islamic universities face growing demands to ensure that their graduates possess not only academic competence but also a solid grounding in foundational religious practices.² Strengthening the ability to read the Qur'an is part of a broader strategy to cultivate holistic, faith-driven student identities that integrate religious understanding with higher-order thinking.³ As such, embedding Qur'anic literacy into the early phase of university education has become a critical concern for institutional leaders across PTKIN. This reflects a broader paradigm in Islamic education that links foundational literacy with long-term religious resilience and academic

¹ Siti Nurkholifah, "The Role of Al-Quran Literacy in Deepening Understanding of Islamic Religious Education," *AFKARINA: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 9, no. 1 (2024): 47–60.

² Rohmat Mulyana Sapdi and Nur Ali, "Counterradicalism through Religious Education Curriculum: Solution to the Religious Literacy Crisis in Indonesian Islamic Universities," *TADRIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 17, no. 2 (2022): 260–71.

³ Nurkholifah, "The Role of Al-Quran Literacy in Deepening Understanding of Islamic Religious Education."

integrity.⁴ Consequently, the development of structured Qur'an reading programs has emerged as a strategic educational priority within these institutions.

The researcher's preliminary observations at IAIN Curup indicate persistent challenges in Qur'anic reading among first-year students, particularly in the application of tajwīd, the accurate articulation of makhārij, and the smooth connection of letters and vowels. Early fieldwork conducted at the Ma'had Al-Jāmi'ah further revealed that several students, although seemingly fluent, were still unable to read correctly and frequently committed tajwīd errors. Observational data also documented recurring difficulties, such as mispronunciation of specific letters, limited mastery of tajwīd principles, and irregular reading practices. These challenges were closely related to students' prior religious education, frequency of practice, and the support available in their learning environment. In addition, an initial review of the tahsīn program at the institutional level revealed structural limitations, including a once-weekly two-hour contact schedule and varying levels of student seriousness and interest, which left several students struggling with proper tajwīd application despite their overall reading ability appearing acceptable. Collectively, these early observations underscore the urgent need for structured Qur'anic reading interventions during the initial semesters at IAIN Curup.

Responding to this challenge, the Rector of IAIN Curup launched an institutional initiative in 2022 titled the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* (Students Reciting Qur'an) program. This flagship program requires all first-year students, in both first and second semesters, to engage in structured Qur'anic reading sessions as part of their early academic formation. The primary aim of this program is to establish a baseline competence in Qur'anic literacy, ensuring that all incoming students acquire the ability to read the Qur'an fluently and accurately. This initiative has been integrated into the university's broader educational ecosystem. Through this approach, the institution seeks to align spiritual practice with academic orientation from the outset of university life. The program is delivered systematically, emphasizing tajwīd, fluency, and consistent practice under qualified supervision. It has been framed not merely as a remedial intervention, but as a proactive measure to embed spiritual literacy within the identity of every IAIN Curup student. As a rector-led initiative, *Mahasiswa Mengaji* also reflects the institution's commitment to nurturing values-based education through sustainable and measurable programs.

Initial internal reports and documentation from 2022 to 2024 indicate a promising upward trend in students' Qur'anic reading competence, as observed by the facilitators and program coordinators. These qualitative observations suggest that the program may contribute significantly to students' Qur'anic literacy development. However, no systematic, standardized, or statistically validated study has yet been conducted to assess its actual effectiveness. As the program enters its fourth consecutive year in 2025, institutional enthusiasm remains high, yet the absence of empirical evidence leaves a critical gap in evaluating its long-term impact. Without robust data, academic leaders cannot make informed decisions about program refinement. This also limits efforts to consider scalability or replication across other Islamic higher education institutions. This situation underscores the necessity of rigorous scholarly investigation to assess whether the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program meaningfully enhances students' Qur'anic literacy. Therefore, this study is designed to fill that empirical gap by evaluating the program's impact using a structured pre- and post-intervention assessment framework. It aims to provide evidence-based insights that can guide institutional policy and strengthen religious literacy strategies within PTKIN and beyond.

Existing literature on Qur'anic literacy has predominantly explored the effectiveness of traditional instructional methods such as *talaqqi*, *Iqra'*, *tartil*, and other integrative approaches,

⁴ Anggi Palupi, "Perspective on Religious Moderation of Ptkin Students in the Post Truth Era (Case Study on Students of al-Quran and Tafsir Science Study Program Uin Khas Jember)," *Advances in Humanities and Contemporary Studies* 5, no. 2 (2024): 141–48.

particularly in primary and secondary education as well as in Pesantren-based learning environments.⁵ These methods have demonstrated pedagogical success in enhancing students' recitation skills. They often emphasize memorization, repetition, and face-to-face transmission of knowledge.⁶ A significant portion of the research also focuses on teacher-student interaction, spiritual development, and affective outcomes within Qur'anic pedagogy.⁷ While these findings contribute to the broader understanding of Qur'anic instruction, most of them are situated within non-tertiary contexts and lack relevance to formal higher education frameworks. Moreover, the scope of these studies tends to center on curriculum design and pedagogical tradition rather than program-level implementation. As a result, the applicability of these methods to university students, who possess more diverse learning needs and limited exposure to formal Qur'anic training, remains underexplored. There is thus a growing need to shift the scholarly lens toward institutional Qur'anic literacy efforts at the tertiary level, particularly within Islamic universities.

At the level of Islamic higher education, few empirical studies have rigorously examined community-based or institutionally mandated Qur'anic reading programs. Although some scholars have acknowledged the value of long-term mentoring and structured peer-assisted learning in promoting Qur'anic proficiency,⁸ these insights are often derived from anecdotal or qualitative data. Notably, the literature reveals a critical absence of studies that adopt robust evaluation frameworks. For example, very few use pre- and post-test designs to assess the measurable impact of these programs on students' Qur'anic reading competence. This gap is particularly evident in the context of PTKIN, where Qur'anic literacy is often assumed rather than systematically nurtured and assessed. Furthermore, existing studies tend to emphasize students' experiences and perceptions without adequately capturing learning outcomes in objective terms.⁹ The lack of standardized assessment tools and comparative data further complicates efforts to generalize or scale successful models. As such, there is a pressing need to develop methodologically sound research that can evaluate both the efficacy and scalability of institutional Qur'anic literacy initiatives.

This study responds to the identified gap by offering a structured, evidence-based evaluation of an institutional Qur'anic reading program, *Mahasiswa Mengaji*, at IAIN Curup. Unlike prior studies that rely heavily on subjective or anecdotal reports, this research is initiated by a quantitative design to

⁵ Muhammad Akmansyah et al., "Integrating Spiritual and Pedagogical Strategies in Tahfidz Al-Qur'an Education: A Comparative Study of Two Pesantren in Metro City, Lampung," *Fikroh: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 18, no. 1 (2025): 75–86; Dinda Amartia Sari et al., "Effectiveness of the Talaqqi Method in Memorizing the Quran," *Journal of Theory and Research Memorization Quran* 1, no. 1 (2025): 15–25; U. Umroni and R. Romelah, "Implementation of Al-Quran Learning With the Iqra' Method at Bukit Taman State Elementary School Sukamerindu Musi Rawas South Sumatra," *Suhuf: International Journal of Islamic Studies* 37, no. 1 (2025): 1, <https://doi.org/10.23917/suhuf.v37i1.9230>.

⁶ Nor Hafizi Yusof et al., "Accuracy of Isymam and Tashil Recitation Methods for The Word انمأت Based on Talaqqi and Musyafahah," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 1, no. 12 (2021).

⁷ Muhammad Hanafi and Selamat Pohan, "Enhancing Quranic Literacy: The Role Teacher and Parental Involvement in Quran Learning," *FIKROTUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Manajemen Islam* 13, no. 2 (2024): 189–202; Asep Supriatna, "Effectiveness of Al-Qur'an Based Learning to Improve Students' Spiritual Literacy in Islamic Elementary Schools," *Journal of Modern Islamic Studies and Civilization* 3, no. 01 (2025): 01, <https://doi.org/10.59653/jmisc.v3i01.1285>.

⁸ Syahid Abdul Qodir Thohir, "Improving the Efficiency of Human Resources of Tahfidz Teachers with Peer Education of Silsilah Quranuna Method in 7th Grade of Ibadurrahman Islamic Boarding School," *International Journal of Research and Review* 10, no. 4 (2023): 513–17, <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20230463>; Ivan Saifudin et al., "Exploring The Influence Of Learning Intention And Usmani Methods On Reciting Al-Qur'an In Higher Education: Does The Mediation Of Peer Teaching Matter?," *Abjadia: International Journal of Education* 9, no. 1 (2024): 1, <https://doi.org/10.18860/abj.v9i1.26607>.

⁹ Abdullah Azzam Al Afghani and Milcha Fakhria, "Resilience in Santri: The Impact of Social Support on the Quran Memorization Journey," *International Journal Ihya'Ulum al-Din* 26, no. 2 (2024): 261–70; Heliati Fajriah et al., "Implementation of the Talaqqi Method in Memorizing Juz 'Amma among Kindergarteners: A Case Study at Islamic Kindergarten, Banda Aceh," *Golden Age: Jurnal Ilmiah Tumbuh Kembang Anak Usia Dini* 10, no. 2 (2025): 2, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jga.2025.102-12>.

assess changes in students' Qur'anic reading ability before and after program participation. This research is ended by a qualitative study to dig into the contextual factors contributing to the enhancement of Qur'anic reading ability. By focusing on a program that has been implemented consistently over three academic years, the study provides a unique opportunity to assess both short-term effectiveness and the potential for long-term institutional impact. The findings are expected to contribute not only to the academic literature on Qur'anic pedagogy in higher education but also to the formulation of data-driven policies at PTKIN and similar institutions. In doing so, this research aims to establish a replicable evaluation model for similar Qur'anic literacy initiatives across other Islamic universities. Moreover, it seeks to bridge the current divide between educational policy and pedagogical outcomes by providing empirical evidence on the value of campus-wide religious literacy programs. Ultimately, the study reinforces the importance of aligning faith-based educational initiatives with standards of academic rigor and institutional accountability.

This study offers a meaningful academic contribution by presenting empirical evidence on the effectiveness of institutionally embedded Qur'anic literacy programs in Islamic higher education. It expands the current discourse on faith-based pedagogical interventions by examining how structured programs like *Mahasiswa Mengaji* contribute to the foundational competence of first-year university students. In particular, the study highlights the role of campus-based, community-oriented models in bridging the gap between spiritual development and formal academic outcomes. This contributes to a broader understanding of how Islamic universities can cultivate religious literacy not merely as a moral imperative, but as an integrated component of student learning. From a practical perspective, the findings of this research can inform institutional strategies and decision-making processes related to religious literacy enhancement. The study offers a replicable model for other PTKIN and Islamic universities seeking to implement accountable, sustainable Qur'anic reading programs. It also encourages the formal integration of such initiatives into both curricular and co-curricular frameworks, promoting consistency, transparency, and measurable impact.

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program in improving Qur'anic reading competence among first-year students at IAIN Curup. Specifically, the research is guided by three core questions: (1) How are students' Qur'anic reading skills before and after taking the program of *Mahasiswa Mengaji*? (2) does *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program affect students' Qur'anic reading skills? And (3) What are the factors contributing to the enhancement of students' Qur'anic reading skills?

Qur'anic Literacy as an Educational Construct

Qur'anic literacy is no longer conceptualized solely as a religious obligation or devotional practice but increasingly as a measurable educational competence, particularly in higher Islamic education.¹⁰ Within contemporary Islamic pedagogy, the act of reciting the Qur'an is situated at the intersection of spiritual formation and academic performance.¹¹ As institutions such as PTKIN embrace learning outcome frameworks, the ability to read the Qur'an fluently, with tajwid compliance and phonetic accuracy, is now considered an essential graduate attribute.¹² Conceptually, Qur'anic literacy includes decoding Arabic script, observing tajwid principles, and reading with rhythmic and phonological accuracy, all of which can be operationalized for instructional assessment.¹³ This

¹⁰ Ahmed Al-Hunaiyyan et al., "Towards an Effective Distance Learning Model: Implementation Framework for Arab Universities," *International Journal of Computer Application* 6, no. 5 (2016): 179–225.

¹¹ Idi Warsah et al., "Exemplary in The Qur'an and Its Implementation with Islamic Education," *FOKUS: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman Dan Kemasyarakatan* 7, no. 2 (2022): 1–14.

¹² Muhammad Huzaifa Bashir et al., "Arabic Natural Language Processing for Qur'anic Research: A Systematic Review," *Artificial Intelligence Review* 56, no. 7 (2023): 6801–54, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10462-022-10313-2>.

¹³ Tareq Moqbel, "Quranic Arabic: From Its Hijazi Origins to Its Classical Reading Traditions by Marijn van Putten," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 34, no. 3 (2023): 402–7, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/etad017>.

reconceptualization aligns with broader shifts in global religious education, where the demand for quality assurance mechanisms requires spiritual learning to be both meaningful and measurable.¹⁴ Thus, the Qur'anic Recitation Program at IAIN Curup functions within this dual imperative: preserving the sanctity of the text while adhering to modern standards of educational validity.

As an interpretative analysis of the foregoing elaboration, the reconceptualization of Qur'anic literacy at IAIN Curup reflects a broader paradigm shift in Islamic higher education, where spiritual practices are increasingly embedded within educational accountability frameworks. The positioning of Qur'anic recitation as both an act of devotion and a measurable academic competence signifies the merging of sacred and institutional imperatives: students are not only expected to honor the sanctity of the text but also to demonstrate mastery through observable and assessable skills, such as tajwīd accuracy, phonetic precision, and rhythmic fluency. This dual orientation indicates that literacy in the Qur'an is no longer limited to ritual proficiency but has become a structured educational objective, aligning with outcome-based learning models adopted by PTKIN. At the same time, it exposes a tension between maintaining the transcendental essence of Qur'anic engagement and satisfying institutional demands for quality assurance, situating programs like tahsīn at the critical juncture of preserving religious authenticity while ensuring pedagogical validity.

To translate the foregoing elaborations into empirical terms, studies have developed sets of indicators that reflect reading proficiency. These include phonetic articulation (e.g., correct pronunciation of letters and vowels),¹⁵ prosodic fluency (rhythm, tempo, pause),¹⁶ And rule-based accuracy (application of tajwīd such as *ikhfā'*, *idgham*, and *mad*).¹⁷ Some scholars have proposed including non-cognitive components such as learner confidence and emotional engagement, although such elements remain methodologically challenging to quantify.¹⁸ For this study, Qur'anic literacy is delimited to three primary dimensions: phonological precision, tajwīd application, and reading fluency. These are chosen not only for their instructional relevance but also for their reliability as assessment variables in experimental research. By focusing on observable performance, the study adheres to psychometric principles of construct validity and internal consistency, facilitating robust evaluation of instructional interventions.

Determinants and Interventions in Qur'anic Literacy Acquisition

Various internal and external factors shape students' ability to acquire Qur'anic reading skills. Educational background, particularly previous exposure to structured Qur'anic instruction in madrasah or pesantren, is one of the most consistent predictors of performance.¹⁹ Students from such institutions often exhibit greater accuracy in tajwīd and more fluid recitation, likely due to earlier

¹⁴ Amanda Maulidiya and Mad Ali, "Integrating Multiple Intelligences and Qur'anic Values in Arabic Language Learning: A Student-Centered and Spiritual Approach," *MUHIBBUL ARABIYAH: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 5, no. 1 (2025): 1, <https://doi.org/10.35719/pba.v5i1.175>.

¹⁵ Muhammad Thohir and Muhammad Dzakiruddin, "Popular Phonetic Mapping in The Qur'an and Its Implications on Teaching Arabic for Non-Native Speakers," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 14, no. 1 (2022): 20–39, <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v14i1.9757>.

¹⁶ Thohir and Dzakiruddin, "Popular Phonetic Mapping in The Qur'an and Its Implications on Teaching Arabic for Non-Native Speakers."

¹⁷ André Coelho et al., "Placement and Allocation of Communications Resources in Slicing-Aware Flying Networks," *2022 17th Wireless On-Demand Network Systems and Services Conference (WONS)*, March 2022, 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.23919/WONS54113.2022.9764562>.

¹⁸ Muhammad Kurnia Sandy Kurnia et al., "The Impact of Quran Recitation Habits Before Class on Students' Mental Readiness for Learning," *Journal of Islamic Education Research* 5, no. 3 (2024): 3, <https://doi.org/10.35719/jier.v5i3.441>.

¹⁹ Pingki Utami et al., "Implementation of the Use of the Tilawati Application to Support Tahsin Teaching Staff for Effective Learning at State Islamic Institute Curup," *Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* 1, no. 2 (2023): 70–74.

engagement with repetitive, guided practice.²⁰ Conversely, those from general schools or urban secular tracks may show weaker proficiency despite having completed basic Islamic studies. Other influential factors include the availability of qualified instructors, intensity of practice sessions, learner motivation, and access to audio-visual aids or digital platforms.²¹ These variables not only affect the learning trajectory but also influence the responsiveness of students to structured programs like the Qur'anic Recitation Program at IAIN Curup.

In response to the variability in student preparedness, intervention programs have been introduced to improve Qur'anic literacy in formal institutional settings. Studies from primary and secondary Islamic education contexts consistently report positive outcomes from structured recitation programs, particularly when instruction includes regular feedback, repetition, and modeling.²² However, at the level of Islamic universities, empirical research is less conclusive. Many studies rely on descriptive or qualitative methods, lacking rigorous statistical testing.²³ Moreover, most programs do not isolate Qur'anic reading as a standalone variable, instead embedding it within broader curriculum components such as *tahfiz*, fiqh, or general Islamic studies.²⁴ This lack of focus has left a critical gap in the literature concerning the direct, measurable impact of recitation programs on Qur'anic reading skills in adult learners. The present study addresses this gap by employing a quantitative, pre-post design to examine the causal effects of the recitation program on defined literacy indicators.

Theoretical Models and Conceptual Framework for Qur'anic Recitation Programs

To ensure conceptual clarity and methodological alignment, the present study adopts the Input–Processing–Output (IPO) model of instructional design.²⁵ This model describes learning as a linear transformation: instructional inputs (e.g., structured recitation training), internal processing (e.g., student engagement, repetition, error correction), and learning outputs (e.g., improved accuracy, fluency, and tajwid application).²⁶ The IPO model is especially suited for experimental research, as it facilitates the tracking of specific instructional interventions and their measurable outcomes. In the context of Qur'anic recitation, where precision and procedural accuracy are critical, the IPO model allows for granular assessment and targeted feedback.²⁷ It also provides a defensible framework for

²⁰ Abd Basir et al., “Enhancing Qur'an Reading Proficiency in Madrasahs Through Teaching Strategies,” *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 2 (2024): 2, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v7i2.4985>.

²¹ Nabilah Fasihah Ahmad Yusoff et al., “Augmented Reality Technology For Arabic Vocabulary Learning As A Model Of Quran Reflection For Hearing Impairment Adults,” *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 7, no. 3 (2024), <https://ejournal.uin-malang.ac.id/index.php/ijazarabi/article/view/26641>.

²² Taufikin Taufikin et al., “Advancing Islamic Education Through Total Quality Management: Insights from Tahfiz Qur'an Practices,” *Al-Tanzim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (2025): 2, <https://doi.org/10.33650/al-tanzim.v9i2.10706>; Yusoff et al., “Augmented Reality Technology For Arabic Vocabulary Learning As A Model Of Quran Reflection For Hearing Impairment Adults.”

²³ Yusuf Rahman and Ervan Nurtawab, “Western Qur'anic Studies in Indonesian Islamic Universities: Responses, Contestations, and Curriculum Politics,” *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 62, no. 2 (2024): 337–61, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2024.622.337-361>; Fauzi Saleh, “The Role of Hadith in Enhancing Quranic Literacy,” *El-Sunan: Journal of Hadith and Religious Studies* 3, no. 1 (2025): 1, <https://doi.org/10.22373/el-sunan.v3i1.7466>.

²⁴ Muharami Aisyah Hanafi et al., “Strategy to Improve Al-Quran Reading and Writing Skills in Public Schools,” *Journal of Islamic Education Research* 5, no. 3 (2024): 3, <https://doi.org/10.35719/jier.v5i3.450>; Samer Najeh Abdullah Samarh et al., “Navigating the Labyrinth: Malaysian Students' Struggles and Insights in Mastering Variant Readings of the Quran,” *QURANICA - International Journal of Quranic Research* 17, no. 1 (2025): 1.

²⁵ Firman Sidik, “Input, Process and Output System Theory Approach in Educational Institutions,” *Irfani* 18, no. 1 (2022): 1, <https://doi.org/10.30603/ir.v18i1.2658>.

²⁶ Samarh et al., “Navigating the Labyrinth.”

²⁷ Ghazaleh Mahmoudi et al., “GYM at Qur'an QA 2023 Shared Task: Multi-Task Transfer Learning for Quranic Passage Retrieval and Question Answering with Large Language Models,” in *Proceedings of ArabicNLP 2023*, ed. Hassan Sawaf et al. (Association for Computational Linguistics, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/2023.arabicnlp-1.79>.

constructing pre-test and post-test instruments, thereby enhancing the study's internal validity and empirical transparency.

Complementing the IPO framework, the study also draws upon behaviorist learning theory and educational intervention theory. Behaviorism emphasizes stimulus-response mechanisms, particularly the role of repetition, reinforcement, and immediate feedback in mastering technical skills, principles that align closely with Qur'anic reading instruction.²⁸ Meanwhile, educational intervention theory provides a systematic approach to designing, implementing, and evaluating programs aimed at improving specific competencies within a defined timeframe.²⁹ The integration of these theories forms a comprehensive analytical lens, enabling the study to generate precise hypotheses and operationalize variables effectively. Although this research does not propose a new theoretical model, it introduces a conceptual framework specific to the Qur'anic Recitation Program at IAIN Curup, which may inform future model-building efforts. This framework situates Qur'anic literacy within both pedagogical logic and religious significance, offering a pragmatic yet respectful model for programmatic intervention in Islamic higher education.

The Study's Method

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-method design,³⁰ Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to assess the effectiveness of the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program. The reason is that this design was selected to generate robust statistical evidence of the program's effectiveness and subsequently enrich these findings with qualitative insights that illuminate the pedagogical and contextual mechanisms at work. This study began with a quasi-experimental phase using a pre-test and post-test design without a control group. This phase measured improvements in Qur'anic reading skills after one semester of participation. The subsequent qualitative phase explored plausible factors contributing to the enhancement of Qur'anic reading skills. This design enabled triangulation of findings, enhancing both internal validity and contextual depth.

This study took place at IAIN Curup, a state Islamic university in Indonesia, where the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program is mandatory for all first-year undergraduates. Focusing on the 2024/2025 cohort during their second semester, the quantitative phase used proportionate stratified random sampling to select 500 students, ensuring faculty-level representation. Participants had to be officially enrolled in the second semester, attend at least 80% of the sessions, and provide informed consent, ensuring consistency and validity in measurement. The qualitative phase employed maximum variation sampling to capture diverse experiences. Ten participants were chosen, including students with varying gains in Qur'anic reading competence and key program facilitators. This strategy aimed to explore both common themes and unique cases, offering interpretive insights beyond numerical trends. Together, these methods provided a comprehensive view of the program's implementation and effectiveness in an authentic academic setting.

The *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program is a structured 16-week intervention aimed at improving first-year students' Qur'anic recitation skills through systematic instruction. Conducted twice weekly, the sessions are led by qualified instructors with expertise in tajwid and pedagogy. Each session focuses on mastering tajwid rules, enhancing fluency, and refining phonological precision, particularly in

²⁸ Zainal Abidin Muhja and Meliani Indria Wijaya, "Application of Behaviorist Theory Based on the Learning Experience of Students in Boarding School Environments," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* 8, no. 3 (2024): 3, <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v8i3.689>.

²⁹ Khoerun Nida and Khitoh Khoeriyah, "Efforts to Improve Student Learning Outcomes in Qur'an Hadith Learning at MI Tarbiyatul Aulad," *Indonesian Journal of Education and Social Humanities* 2, no. 1 (2025): 1, <https://doi.org/10.62945/ijesh.v2i1.486>.

³⁰ John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design Choosing Among Five Approaches*, 4th ed. (Sage Publications, Inc, 2018).

articulation and rhythm. The program employs an interactive, learner-centered approach involving instructor modeling, guided recitation, peer correction, and personalized feedback. This design supports both technical skill development and learner confidence. To track progress, students complete formative assessments and maintain logbooks to reflect on challenges and monitor growth. As both a religious literacy initiative and a phonological training model, the program supports students' academic and spiritual formation.

The quantitative phase measured three domains: phonological precision, *tajwid* accuracy, and reading fluency. These were assessed using the Qur'anic reading skills Test (QRPT), developed specifically for the study based on classical *tajwid* principles and modern Qur'anic literacy frameworks. The QRPT included 15 items rated on a 1–5 scale, evenly distributed across the three domains. It was validated by three Qur'anic pedagogy experts and piloted to ensure clarity and reliability. Administered in Weeks 1 and 16, the test captured students' progress throughout the semester.

Table 1. Blueprint of Quantitative Instrument (QRPT)

No	Indicator	Sub-indicator	No. of Items	Scoring Range	Description
1	Phonological Precision	Correct pronunciation of letters and <i>harakat</i>	5	1–5 per item	Focus on articulation and phoneme clarity
2	Tajwid Accuracy	Application of <i>tajwid</i> rules (<i>ikhfa'</i> , <i>idgham</i> , etc.)	5	1–5 per item	Assesses rule-based recitation precision
3	Reading Fluency	Tempo, rhythm, pause, smoothness of recitation	5	1–5 per item	Evaluates fluency, continuity, and coherence
	Total		15	Max = 75	Composite score of recitation proficiency

Each domain contributed equally to the total score, with a maximum composite score of 75 points. The scoring mechanism not only reflected technical accuracy but also encouraged a more holistic evaluation of Qur'anic literacy, including expression, rhythm, and overall recitational quality.

The qualitative phase made use of an interview protocol developed using a thematic blueprint, focusing on personal, pedagogical, and contextual factors. Topics included learning strategies, teaching methods, peer and family support, motivation, learning tools, and practice habits. Interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed thematically.

Table 2. Interview Blueprint for the Qualitative Phase

No	Theme	Sample Interview Question	Target Respondent	Purpose
1	Personal Learning Strategies	What personal strategies did you use to improve your Qur'anic reading skills?	Students	Identify student-driven efforts and learning autonomy
2	Instructional Approach	How did the teaching methods help you in improving your Qur'anic reading?	Students	Understand the influence of pedagogy on skill acquisition
3	Instructor's Role	In what ways did the instructor support your learning process?	Students	Explore instructional guidance as a contributing factor

4	Peer Support	Did your peers play a role in helping you read the Qur'an better? How?	Students	Reveal the contribution of peer interaction and support
5	Family Encouragement	Did your family contribute to your progress in Qur'anic reading? In what ways?	Students	Assess familial reinforcement in the learning process
6	Motivation and Goal Setting	What motivated you to improve your Qur'anic reading, and did you set any goals?	Students	Capture intrinsic and extrinsic motivational aspects
7	Availability of Learning Tools	Were there any tools or resources that helped you in practicing Qur'anic reading?	Students	Identify supporting facilities/resources (e.g., <i>mushaf</i> , apps, guidance)
8	Practice and Consistency	How often did you practice Qur'anic reading outside the sessions?	Students	Understand the role of routine and persistence in improvement

All interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia to ensure respondent comfort and linguistic accuracy. The recordings were transcribed verbatim, and an interactive analysis was performed.

In the quantitative phase, descriptive statistics summarized students' pre- and post-test scores to show overall performance trends. A paired-sample t-test was used to determine significant differences before and after the intervention, while Cohen's *d* measured effect size to assess practical impact. Assumptions of normality and homogeneity were tested using the Shapiro-Wilk and Levene's tests, respectively. All analyses were performed using SPSS (version XX) or R for accuracy and reproducibility. In the qualitative phase, data were analyzed using the interactive model,³¹ which involves data condensation, display, and conclusion drawing. Transcripts were first refined to highlight relevant content, then organized into visual displays to identify patterns and themes. Conclusions were developed and validated through constant comparison and triangulation. NVivo software supported coding and documentation, ensuring analytic transparency and rigor.

To ensure validity and trustworthiness, both research strands underwent rigorous evaluation. In the quantitative phase, content validity was confirmed through expert review by three specialists in Islamic education and psychometrics. Items were assessed for clarity, relevance, and construct alignment, yielding a scale-level Content Validity Index (CVI) of 0.92, indicating strong expert consensus. Reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha, with subscale scores ranging from 0.81 to 0.89, reflecting high internal consistency. For the qualitative phase, methodological rigor was maintained through member checking, peer debriefing, and an audit trail. Participants reviewed and validated the thematic interpretations to ensure credibility. Two independent researchers conducted peer debriefings to minimize bias and refine coding decisions. An audit trail was kept throughout, documenting analytic steps and reflections to enhance transparency and confirmability. These

³¹ Mathew B. Miles et al., *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (SAGE Publications, Inc., 2014).

combined strategies reinforced the overall robustness and credibility of the study's mixed-methods findings.

Discussion

Students' Qur'anic Reading Skills Prior to and After Taking the Mahasiswa Mengaji Program

This study examined the impact of the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program on first-year students' Qur'anic reading skills at IAIN Curup. Involving 500 participants, the research utilized the Qur'anic Reading Skills Test (QRPT), a standardized tool assessing phonological precision, tajwid accuracy, and reading fluency on a five-point Likert scale (1 = very poor to 5 = excellent), ensuring objective and comparable measurement.

To determine the suitability of using parametric statistical procedures, such as the t-test, a normality test was first conducted. The Shapiro-Wilk test was applied to pre-test and post-test scores for each of the three domains. The results showed that the data for phonological precision ($W = 0.981$, $p = 0.082$), tajwid accuracy ($W = 0.978$, $p = 0.065$), and reading fluency ($W = 0.984$, $p = 0.094$) were normally distributed (all $p > 0.05$). Additionally, histogram visualizations and Q-Q plots supported the assumption of approximate normality, justifying the use of paired-sample t-tests for subsequent analyses.

Initial descriptive analysis revealed that prior to engaging in the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program, the participants demonstrated basic to moderate proficiency across all three domains. Specifically, the pre-test mean score for phonological precision was 2.83 (SD = 0.65), for tajwid accuracy 2.44 (SD = 0.68), and for reading fluency 2.75 (SD = 0.60). These scores reflect the typical challenges faced by novice readers, including mispronunciation of Arabic phonemes, inadequate application of tajwid rules, and discontinuities in pacing and rhythm.

Upon completion of one academic semester of structured Qur'anic instruction under the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program, the post-test scores demonstrated significant improvements. The mean scores increased to 4.11 for phonological precision (SD = 0.57), 3.96 for tajwid accuracy (SD = 0.62), and 4.06 for reading fluency (SD = 0.59). The average gains across domains, exceeding +1.2 on a 5-point scale—signal a substantial pedagogical impact within a relatively condensed period of instruction.

The detailed statistical summary of pre-test and post-test results is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Pre-test and Post-test Scores (N = 500)

Domain	Pre-test Mean (SD)	Post-test Mean (SD)	Mean Gain	Effect Size (Cohen's d)
Phonological Precision	2.83 (0.65)	4.11 (0.57)	+1.28	1.11
Tajwid Accuracy	2.44 (0.68)	3.96 (0.62)	+1.52	1.24
Reading Fluency	2.75 (0.60)	4.06 (0.59)	+1.31	1.15

Building on the substantial quantitative gains observed in the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program, the notable improvements in phonological precision, tajwid accuracy, and reading fluency align closely with existing empirical evidence supporting structured Qur'anic literacy interventions in higher Islamic education. For instance, Sulaiman and Julianto demonstrated that targeted *tabsin* mentoring significantly enhanced participants' recitation accuracy and tajwid application through consistent peer-

assisted practice, yielding statistically significant post-intervention results.³² Similarly, Nurliadin et al. employed a digital *harakah*-based learning module that improved elementary students' tajwid performance by 11%, affirming the value of focused phonological feedback within structured learning frameworks.³³ Furthermore, Sutiono et al. emphasized the pedagogical success of multilevel tahfidz mentoring models, which significantly advanced students' fluency and phonetic accuracy, particularly when implemented through a clearly scaffolded progression system.³⁴ Taken together, these studies reinforce the argument that the measurable gains reported in the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program are not incidental but rather indicative of a broader, evidence-based shift toward integrating structured, outcomes-focused Qur'anic instruction in Islamic higher education.

The Effect of the Mahasiswa Mengaji Program on Students' Qur'anic Reading Skills

To statistically verify the observed improvements in Qur'anic reading skills, paired samples t-tests were conducted for each of the three assessed domains. The results were highly significant across all dimensions. For phonological precision, the analysis yielded $t = 52.16$, $p < .001$; for tajwid accuracy, $t = 58.09$, $p < .001$; and for reading fluency, $t = 55.23$, $p < .001$. These findings confirm that the differences in mean scores before and after the program were not due to chance but reflect real improvements in students' Qur'anic reading abilities.

Among the three domains, the greatest gain was observed in tajwid accuracy, with a mean increase of +1.52 and an effect size of 1.24, which is considered large by Cohen's conventional benchmarks. This suggests that the program's focused instruction on articulation and rule-based pronunciation, central tenets of tajwid, had the most transformative impact. Similarly, large effect sizes were observed for phonological precision (1.11) and reading fluency (1.15), indicating broad-based improvements across phonemic awareness, pronunciation accuracy, and recitational rhythm.

The success of the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program can be attributed to its scaffolded pedagogical model, which progresses from phoneme recognition to rule-based application and culminates in fluent recitation. The integration of weekly, guided sessions with trained Qur'anic instructors allowed for consistent feedback, correction, and individualized practice, components known to accelerate literacy acquisition.

Furthermore, the empirical evidence strongly supports the institutional relevance and replicability of the program. In educational settings where Qur'anic instruction is often limited to early childhood education, this program effectively bridges the gap at the tertiary level. It ensures that students not only revisit but also master fundamental recitation skills, thus aligning their Qur'anic literacy with the expectations of Islamic scholarship and religious life.

The statistically significant improvements across all three domains, phonological precision, tajwid accuracy, and reading fluency, underscore the pedagogical strength of the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program in enhancing Qur'anic literacy among university students. These findings resonate with prior research that confirms the value of structured, targeted Qur'anic instruction in improving recitational competencies. For instance, Sulaiman and Julianto found that consistent mentoring and feedback in a *tahsin*-focused intervention significantly enhanced participants' articulation and reading accuracy,

³² Muhammad Sulaiman and Rujito Dwi Julianto, "The Effect of Tahsin Al-Quran Mentoring on Increasing Al-Quran Reading Competence of the Muhammadiyah Palembang Institute of Health Science and Technology Employees," *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy* 4, no. 1 (2023): 154–58.

³³ Nurliadin Nurliadin et al., "Enhancing Tajwid Skills through Harakah-Based Learning Media: An Evaluation of MPQu-Berkah among Schoolchildren," *Golden Age: Jurnal Ilmiah Tumbuh Kembang Anak Usia Dini* 9, no. 1 (2024): 1–11.

³⁴ Sutiono Sutiono et al., "Improved Ability to Read Al-Qur'an Through the Tahfidz Al-Qur'an Mentoring Model," *International Journal of Emerging Issues in Islamic Studies* 3, no. 1 (2023).

particularly among adult learners in Islamic institutions.³⁵ Likewise, Nurliadin reported that students who engaged with *harakah*-based tajwid modules demonstrated measurable gains in phonological awareness and fluency, validating the effectiveness of rule-focused, scaffolded Qur'anic instruction.³⁶ Similarly, Sutiono et al. highlighted the role of multilevel tahfidz mentoring in significantly improving tajwid mastery and recitation rhythm among secondary-level learners through repeated practice and instructor feedback.³⁷ These external validations reinforce the argument that the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program's structured approach, combining phonetic instruction, tajwid application, and sustained fluency practice, is not only effective in measurable terms but also aligned with best practices across Qur'anic education models.

Factors Contributing to the Enhancement of Students' Qur'anic Reading Skills

The qualitative phase of this research aimed to investigate the underlying factors that contribute to students' improvement in Qur'anic reading skills during their participation in a structured recitation program. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with students who demonstrated measurable progress in pretest-posttest assessments. Thematic analysis revealed eight dominant themes that encapsulate a range of internal and external influences. These include personal learning strategies, instructional approaches, teacher support, peer collaboration, family encouragement, motivation and goal setting, availability of learning tools, and consistency in practice. Each theme was derived from coded transcripts and directly reflects the lived experiences of participants. The following table summarizes the thematic framework used in this phase of the study.

Table 4. Thematic Categorization of Contributing Factors to Qur'anic Reading Skill Enhancement

Theme	Indicator of Contribution
Personal Learning Strategies	Self-regulated techniques in recognizing letters, harakat, and <i>tajweed</i> rules
Instructional Approach	Structured methods and materials used by instructors to facilitate reading development
Instructor's Role	Feedback, correction, and personal guidance provided by Qur'an teachers
Peer Support	Learning motivation and shared practice with peers
Family Encouragement	Moral and practical support from family in reinforcing reading habits
Motivation and Goal Setting	Intrinsic and extrinsic goals related to Qur'an mastery
Availability of Learning Tools	Accessibility and usage of <i>mushaf</i> , audio recordings, or apps for independent learning
Practice and Consistency	Daily engagement and habit formation in reading and recitation

In respect of personal learning strategies, students often relied on their own personalized strategies to improve Qur'anic fluency. These strategies ranged from recording their recitations, practicing *tajweed* rules independently, and repeating verses until they achieved mastery. Many students emphasized how their self-initiative helped bridge the gap between classroom instruction and real progress.

³⁵ Muhammad Sulaiman and Rujito Dwi Julianto, "The Effect of Tahsin Al-Quran Mentoring on Increasing Al-Quran Reading Competence of the Muhammadiyah Palembang Institute of Health Science and Technology Employees," *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy* 4, no. 1 (2023): 154–58.

³⁶ Nurliadin et al., "Enhancing Tajwid Skills through Harakah-Based Learning Media."

³⁷ Sutiono et al., "Improved Ability to Read Al-Qur'an Through the Tahfidz Al-Qur'an Mentoring Model."

“I usually record myself reciting a surah, then I compare it with the audio from my favorite *qari*. That helps me know where I go wrong and fix my *tajweed*.” (P6)

As exemplified in the preceding transcript, such behavior reflects key dimensions of self-regulated learning (SRL), especially self-monitoring and evaluation, which are fundamental in driving autonomous academic improvement. Empirical evidence supports the efficacy of such metacognitive strategies, with self-monitoring interventions shown to produce moderate gains in both strategy use and academic performance.³⁸ Moreover, the positive link between metacognitive strategy use and learning outcomes has been confirmed in diverse educational contexts, including flexible and online learning environments, where students who regularly plan, reflect, and revise their learning approaches tend to outperform peers who lack such strategies.³⁹ In line with this, other research indicates that metacognitive awareness, when coupled with SRL behaviors, significantly predicts academic achievement and fosters students’ capacity to transfer classroom instruction into independent mastery.⁴⁰ However, while student autonomy is a promising foundation, it is not without limitations. As argued by Vosniadou et al., students often hold both productive and counterproductive beliefs about learning that can coexist and interfere with consistent SRL application.⁴¹ In religious or highly oral-based subjects like Qur’anic recitation, where rhythmic and phonetic precision is essential, unstructured self-practice may risk the reinforcement of errors unless scaffolded through formative feedback. Therefore, while student-initiated learning practices indicate strong metacognitive engagement, their long-term effectiveness may hinge on the presence of structured support systems and intrinsic motivation, the latter being another predictor of successful metacognitive strategy use.⁴²

With regard to the instructional approach, the way Qur’anic lessons were delivered significantly shaped how students acquired their skills. Students praised teachers who employed progressive teaching methods, such as breaking down complex passages, using repetition, and encouraging group readings to reinforce patterns and rhythm.

“Ustadzah didn’t rush us. She made us repeat short verses until we got the letters right before moving on. That really helped.” (P2)

This quote reflects the use of scaffolding, a gradual release of responsibility that aligns with the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development. This approach is supported by research showing that scaffolded peer learning in group settings improves vocabulary and speaking skills through structured feedback and repetition.⁴³ Similarly, instructional scaffolding embedded in lesson materials helps learners gradually move toward mastering complex tasks by supporting higher-order thinking,⁴⁴

³⁸ Enrico Sella et al., “Efficacy of Memory Training Interventions Targeting Metacognition for Older Adults: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis,” *Aging & Mental Health* 27, no. 4 (2023): 674–94, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13607863.2022.2122931>.

³⁹ Lilian Anthonysamy, “The Use of Metacognitive Strategies for Undisrupted Online Learning: Preparing University Students in the Age of Pandemic,” *Education and Information Technologies* 26, no. 6 (2021): 6881–99, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-021-10518-y>.

⁴⁰ Jeffrey Alan Greene, “Teacher Support for Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning: A Compelling Story and a Prototypical Model,” *Metacognition and Learning* 16, no. 3 (2021): 651–66, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11409-021-09283-7>.

⁴¹ Stella Vosniadou et al., “Beliefs about the Self-Regulation of Learning Predict Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies and Academic Performance in Pre-Service Teachers,” *Metacognition and Learning* 16, no. 3 (2021): 523–54, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11409-020-09258-0>.

⁴² Diana Kwarikunda et al., “Profiles of Learners Based on Their Cognitive and Metacognitive Learning Strategy Use: Occurrence and Relations with Gender, Intrinsic Motivation, and Perceived Autonomy Support,” *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 9, no. 1 (2022): 337, <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01322-1>.

⁴³ Kwarikunda et al., “Profiles of Learners Based on Their Cognitive and Metacognitive Learning Strategy Use.”

⁴⁴ Nilüfer Atman Uslu et al., “Comparing Reflective and Supportive Scaffolding in 3D Computer-Aided Design Course: Engineering Students’ Metacognitive Strategies, Spatial Ability Self-Efficacy, and Spatial Anxiety,” *Computer Applications in Engineering Education* 30, no. 5 (2022): 1454–69, <https://doi.org/10.1002/cae.22531>.

while distributed scaffolding across teacher guidance, peer interaction, and structured tools ensures that each student is supported throughout the learning process.⁴⁵ These aligned strategies demonstrate that Qur'anic pedagogy, when scaffolded according to learner readiness, effectively promotes skill mastery, motivation, and independent learning.

Concerning the instructors' role, the instructors were not only viewed as facilitators of content but also as emotional supporters. Their tone, patience, and affirming feedback played a central role in how students perceived their progress and built self-confidence.

"She never scolded us, even when we made mistakes. Instead, she said, 'Mistakes mean you're trying. Let's try again together.' That made me want to learn more." (P9)

This reflects a compassionate teaching philosophy rooted in Islamic pedagogical traditions, where *rahmah* (mercy) becomes a foundation for effective learning.⁴⁶ Critically, such emotionally attuned pedagogy is now empirically validated by recent scholarship. Shen et al. demonstrated that teacher emotional support significantly enhances students' academic motivation and engagement by fostering psychological well-being within a self-determination theory framework.⁴⁷ Similarly, Zhang et al. found that the effect of emotional support is mediated by positive academic emotions and mastery goals, suggesting that students thrive when they feel safe, respected, and encouraged to take risks in their learning.⁴⁸ Complementing these findings, Tao et al. confirmed through meta-analysis that emotional support exerts a stronger impact on academic achievement than either academic or autonomy support, underscoring the critical pedagogical value of emotional attunement in shaping student outcomes.⁴⁹

Related to peer support, students frequently described the value of peer interaction as a motivator and corrective mechanism. Group learning, peer coaching, and mutual encouragement helped create an informal support system that eased anxiety and normalized mistakes.

"When I didn't understand how to pronounce certain letters, my friend showed me and repeated the word with me several times." (P3)

This data point aligns with the concept of a "community of practice." This finding is strongly aligned with the notion of a "community of practice," wherein knowledge is co-constructed through socially situated experiences.⁵⁰ Supporting this, Wood and Pitt underscore that peer coaching facilitates the development of emotional intelligence and self-awareness by emphasizing mutual learning and co-creation rather than hierarchical instruction.⁵¹ Similarly, Marshall et al. found that peer coaching among professionals enhanced empathy and reflective practice, reinforcing the idea that learning flourishes

⁴⁵ Heide Sasse et al., "Teacher Guidance and On-the-Fly Scaffolding in Primary School Students' Inquiry Learning," *Science Education* 109, no. 2 (2025): 579–604, <https://doi.org/10.1002/sce.21921>.

⁴⁶ Idi Warsah et al., "Applying Positive Psychology Principles in Islamic Education: A Conceptual Review," *Belajea: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (2024): 87–118.

⁴⁷ Huajie Shen et al., "Investigating the Role of Perceived Emotional Support in Predicting Learners' Well-Being and Engagement Mediated by Motivation from a Self-Determination Theory Framework," *Learning and Motivation* 86 (2024): 101968.

⁴⁸ Baiju Zhang et al., "Can Perceived Social Support Influence Academic Achievement of Master's Students? — Evidence from a University in China," *Education and Information Technologies* 29, no. 16 (2024): 21449–75, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-024-12693-0>.

⁴⁹ Yang Tao et al., "Perceived Teacher Support, Student Engagement, and Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analysis," *Educational Psychology* 42, no. 4 (2022): 401–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2022.2033168>.

⁵⁰ Julian Chen et al., "A Netnography of Emergent ESOL Researcher Identity and Development in a Virtual Community of Practice," *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 33, no. 2 (2023): 275–91, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijal.12465>.

⁵¹ James Wood and Edd Pitt, "Empowering Agency through Learner-Orchestrated Self-Generated Feedback," *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 50, no. 1 (2025): 127–43, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2024.2365856>.

in relational, not evaluative, spaces.⁵² Furthermore, Bengesai et al. provide meta-analytic evidence that peer learning interventions moderately yet significantly improve academic outcomes, suggesting that the informal, peer-driven feedback loop may offer not just affective support, but measurable performance benefits as well.⁵³

Pertinent to family encouragement, family involvement was consistently identified as a key contributor to progress. Many students shared that their parents or siblings offered encouragement, created a calm environment for study, or even practiced together with them.

“My father always asked me to recite a few verses after Maghrib. He would listen patiently and smile even if I made mistakes.” (P7)

Such familial engagement extends beyond academic reinforcement. It nurtures the spiritual and emotional dimensions of Qur’anic literacy. Home-based support strengthens motivation and cultivates a sense of accountability in learners.⁵⁴ The foregoing aligns with Hsieh, who found that open and engaged parental styles significantly enhanced students’ academic achievement motivation, whereas disinterested involvement correlated with diminished drive.⁵⁵ Complementing this, Sujarwo and Herwin’s meta-analysis demonstrated a significant positive correlation between parental involvement and student achievement across contexts, reinforcing that family engagement is not merely supplementary but essential to academic development.⁵⁶ These findings collectively affirm that consistent family encouragement cultivates both cognitive growth and emotional resilience, laying a foundation for long-term educational commitment.

Appertaining to motivation and goal setting, students who articulated personal or spiritual goals were more consistent and focused in their learning efforts. Whether driven by the desire to lead prayer, memorize specific surahs, or earn parental approval, such goals reinforced their discipline.

“I told myself I want to recite Surah Yasin without looking by Ramadan. That made me stick to my plan.” (P8)

This reflects the expectancy-value model, which explains that learners are motivated when they value a task and believe they can succeed in it.⁵⁷ In this study, spiritual aspirations, such as leading prayer or pleasing one’s parents, functioned not merely as motivational accessories but as central drivers of engagement. This dynamic is echoed in recent literature: Schweder and Raufelder found that self-directed learning frameworks, when tied to internalized goals, foster more adaptive motivational profiles over time.⁵⁸ Similarly, Nagle demonstrated that university students’ persistence in foreign language study hinges on how deeply personal their learning goals are and how aligned these

⁵² T. Marshall et al., “Facilitating Reflection: A Review and Synthesis of the Factors Enabling Effective Facilitation of Reflective Practice,” *Reflective Practice* 23, no. 4 (2022): 483–96, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2022.2064444>.

⁵³ Annah Vimbai Bengesai et al., “A Meta-Analysis on the Effect of Formal Peer Learning Approaches on Course Performance in Higher Education,” *Cogent Education* 10, no. 1 (2023): 2203990, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2023.2203990>.

⁵⁴ Idi Warsah et al., “The Interrelationships of Parenting Styles, Islamic Students’ Personality Traits, and Their Academic Achievements,” *Psikis: Jurnal Psikologi Islami* 9, no. 1 (2023): 77–70.

⁵⁵ Manying Hsieh, “The Relationships Between Home-Based Parental Involvement, Study Habits and Academic Achievement among Adolescents,” *The Journal of Early Adolescence* 43, no. 2 (2023): 194–215, <https://doi.org/10.1177/02724316221101527>.

⁵⁶ Sujarwo Sujarwo and Herwin Herwin, “Parental Involvement and Student Achievement: A Meta-Analysis of Publications in the Scopus Database,” *International Journal of Instruction* 16, no. 2 (2023): 107–24.

⁵⁷ Din Bandhu et al., “Theories of Motivation: A Comprehensive Analysis of Human Behavior Drivers,” *Acta Psychologica* 244 (April 2024): 104177, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2024.104177>.

⁵⁸ Sabine Schweder and Diana Raufelder, “Adolescents’ Expectancy–Value Profiles in School Context: The Impact of Self-directed Learning Interventions,” *Journal of Adolescence* 94, no. 4 (2022): 569–86, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jad.12047>.

are with their intrinsic interest.⁵⁹ Moreover, Tsang et al. emphasized that students' expectancy and value beliefs, particularly when reinforced through informal, outside-of-class contexts, strongly predicted their motivation in foreign language listening tasks.⁶⁰ Taken together, these findings affirm that when Qur'anic literacy is tied to self-endorsed, spiritually meaningful aims, students are more likely to remain committed, resilient, and purposeful in their learning trajectories.

Appertaining to the availability of learning tools, students also credited their progress to access to digital and print resources. Mobile apps, online recordings, and *tajweed*-specific *mushafs* gave learners tools to practice independently and receive real-time feedback.

"The app I use gives feedback on *tajweed* and plays ayahs repeatedly. I use it every night before sleep." (P1)

This underscores the growing role of technology in religious education. Platforms like Quran Companion and Ayat integrate auditory and visual feedback, enabling individualized learning pathways that supplement in-person instruction. This finding aligns with recent research emphasizing that mobile apps in Islamic education are not only perceived as user-friendly, but also demonstrably improve learning outcomes such as memorization and understanding of religious texts.⁶¹ Moreover, application designs that involve user feedback in development, such as those employing the prototype method, have been shown to better meet learner needs and ensure sustained engagement with *tajweed* practice.⁶² Importantly, the integration of deep learning models like SSD MobileNet v2 into *tajweed*-focused applications enables precise rule detection from Quranic text, enhancing learners' ability to internalize recitation principles autonomously.⁶³ These technological advancements signal a paradigm shift in religious pedagogy, where digital tools increasingly serve as both supplements and enablers of structured, learner-centered Islamic education.

Associated with practice and consistency, among all themes, consistency of practice emerged as a fundamental element in skill development. Students who dedicated time daily to recitation, even briefly, reported noticeable improvements in fluency and memory retention.

"Even if it's just five minutes, I try to read every day. It's the routine that keeps me improving." (P4)

This aligns with the theory of deliberate practice, emphasizing that frequent, focused engagement leads to long-term mastery.⁶⁴ For Qur'anic literacy, such consistency also builds spiritual connection, reinforcing both skill and devotion simultaneously. Recent evidence further substantiates the foregoing. A scoping review by Hasim et al. highlighted that daily interaction with the Qur'an, whether through recitation, listening, or memorization, not only enhanced cognitive and linguistic

⁵⁹ Charles Nagle, "Using Expectancy Value Theory to Understand Motivation, Persistence, and Achievement in University-level Foreign Language Learning," *Foreign Language Annals* 54, no. 4 (2021): 1238–56, <https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12569>.

⁶⁰ Art Tsang et al., "Within-and out-of-School FL Exposure and Learning: An Expectancy-Value Theory Perspective on FL Listening Motivation," *System* 122 (2024): 103264.

⁶¹ Breanne Laird et al., "Exploring User Perceptions of a Mobile App for Religious Practices," *Journal of Religion and Health* 63, no. 3 (2024): 2068–90, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-024-02004-9>.

⁶² Ibrahim Umar and Siddik Faruk Tilli, "The Use of Mobile Apps for Islamic Learning: A Study on Accessibility and Learning Outcomes," *Journal of Computers for Science and Mathematics Learning* 2, no. 1 (2025): 1, <https://doi.org/10.70232/jcsml.v2i1.12>.

⁶³ Arrie Kurniawardhani and Ihya Fathurrahman, "Identifikasi Hukum Tajwid Pada Citra Teks Al Quran Menggunakan SSD MobileNet V2," *Jurnal Informatika: Jurnal Pengembangan IT* 9, no. 3 (2024): 3, <https://doi.org/10.30591/jpit.v9i3.7713>.

⁶⁴ Karina Nurse et al., "The Influence of Deliberate Practice on Skill Performance in Therapeutic Practice: A Systematic Review of Early Studies," *Psychotherapy Research* 35, no. 3 (2025): 353–67, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10503307.2024.2308159>.

capacity but also offered psychological relief and spiritual clarity.⁶⁵ In a school setting, consistent Qur'anic recitation was shown to sharpen students' mental readiness and focus, directly supporting academic performance.⁶⁶ Taken together, these findings reinforce that in the realm of Qur'anic literacy, consistent daily practice not only refines technical proficiency but also cultivates psychological resilience and spiritual intimacy.

Conclusion

This mixed-methods study is initiated by examining the effect of the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program on IAIN Curup students' Qur'anic reading skills and ended by delving qualitatively into plausible contributing factors to the enhancement of Qur'anic reading skills. Quantitative findings, derived from pre- and post-intervention tests, revealed statistically significant improvements in phonological accuracy, fluency, and tajwid application. These results affirm the program's effectiveness in enhancing foundational Qur'anic literacy skills within a structured higher education setting. Complementing these findings, qualitative inquiry uncovered eight interrelated themes that account for the depth and variation in students' learning trajectories, representing some plausible factors contributing to the enhancement of Qur'anic reading skills: (1) personal learning strategies, (2) instructional approach, (3) instructor's role, (4) peer support, (5) family encouragement, (6) motivation and goal setting, (7) access to learning tools, and (8) regularity and consistency of practice. The analysis indicated that students' progress at some point was not solely the result of instructional exposure, but was mediated by their intrinsic motivation, adaptive engagement with supportive peers and mentors, and the institutional scaffolding provided through the program's structure.

Importantly, the findings suggest that meaningful improvement in Qur'anic reading skills arises from the dynamic interplay of individual agency, relational encouragement, and pedagogical responsiveness. The convergence of quantitative gains and qualitative depth highlights the program's dual impact: measurable progress in reading performance and transformative learning experiences shaped by sociocultural and motivational factors. Thus, the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* initiative offers an evidence-based model for designing integrative Qur'anic literacy programs in Islamic higher education. Future research could build upon this study by exploring causal mechanisms through longitudinal mixed-method designs or testing the generalizability of the identified themes in diverse institutional contexts. Based on the findings of this study, future research is recommended to investigate the long-term effectiveness of the *Mahasiswa Mengaji* program through a longitudinal design to assess the sustainability of improvements in Qur'anic reading skills. Further studies may also explore the differential roles of individual learning strategies and social support systems, particularly within the context of digital Qur'anic education, to provide a deeper understanding of the factors that enhance or hinder the success of similar programs in Islamic higher education settings.

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⁶⁶ Wan Nor Atikah Che Wan Mohd Rozali et al., "The Impact of Listening to, Reciting, or Memorizing the Quran on Physical and Mental Health of Muslims: Evidence from Systematic Review," *International Journal of Public Health* 67 (August 2022): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.3389/ijph.2022.1604998>.

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