



Implementing Qur'an Reading Strategies to Foster Students' Religious Character at Datuk Singaraja Islamic Junior High School

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Abstract

This study addresses pressing concerns over moral decline, juvenile delinquency, and disparities in Qur'anic literacy, underscoring the urgent need for structured character-building initiatives in Islamic schools. The purpose of this research was to analyze the implementation, supporting factors, and obstacles of Qur'an reading strategies conducted by Islamic Religious Education teachers to foster students' religious character at Datuk Singaraja Islamic Junior High School. Employing a qualitative design, data were collected through literature review, interviews, observation, and documentation. Findings reveal that the daily 80-minute routine significantly enhanced students' reading fluency and mastery of tajwīd. Moreover, the program successfully cultivated discipline, politeness, and moral behavior, supported by teacher mentorship and parental involvement. The novelty of this research lies in demonstrating how high-frequency Qur'anic habituation functions as a direct behavioral intervention in secondary education. These findings carry practical policy implications, recommending that school administrators formally integrate daily Qur'anic routines into official curricula and teacher development programs to sustain character building.

Keywords: Islamic education teachers, Religious character, Quranic habituation

Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas kekhawatiran yang semakin meningkat terkait kemerosotan moral, kenakalan remaja, dan kesenjangan kemampuan membaca Al-Quran, serta menyoroti kebutuhan mendesak akan inisiatif pembentukan karakter yang terstruktur di sekolah-sekolah Islam. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah menganalisis pelaksanaan, faktor pendukung, dan hambatan dari strategi membaca Al-Quran yang diterapkan oleh guru Pendidikan Agama Islam untuk menumbuhkan karakter keagamaan siswa di SMP Islam Datuk Singaraja. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kualitatif, dengan pengumpulan data melalui tinjauan pustaka, wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa rutinitas harian selama 80 menit secara signifikan meningkatkan kefasihan membaca dan tajwid siswa. Selain itu, program ini berhasil menumbuhkan kedisiplinan, kesopanan, dan perilaku moral, yang didukung oleh bimbingan guru dan keterlibatan orang tua. Keunikan penelitian ini terletak pada pembuktian bahwa kebiasaan membaca Al-Quran setiap hari dengan frekuensi tinggi berfungsi sebagai intervensi perilaku langsung di tingkat sekolah menengah. Keunikan penelitian ini terletak pada upaya menunjukkan bagaimana kebiasaan membaca Al-Quran setiap hari dengan frekuensi tinggi berfungsi sebagai intervensi perilaku langsung di tingkat pendidikan menengah. Oleh karena itu, temuan-temuan ini memiliki implikasi kebijakan praktis, yaitu merekomendasikan agar pengelola sekolah secara resmi mengintegrasikan rutinitas membaca Al-Quran setiap hari ke dalam kurikulum resmi sekolah dan program pengembangan guru guna mendukung pembentukan karakter.

Kata kunci: Guru Pendidikan Islam, Karakter Keagamaan, Pembiasaan Al-Qur'an.



A. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the key factors in developing human resources. It is an activity through which people exchange ideas to expand their knowledge of life. (Musyadad et al., 2022) Education not only fosters children's intellectual development but also shapes their character and personality so that they exhibit good behavior in accordance with religious teachings (Musyadad et al., 2022).

Character formation through education plays a critical role in bridging conceptual knowledge with actual daily conduct. Rather than focusing solely on academic achievements, systematic character education helps internalize fundamental ethical values, emotional maturity, and social responsibilities within an individual (Mohammad Yusuf Randy, 2023). This internal structure directly shapes a person's underlying personality traits, influencing how individuals navigate societal norms and interpersonal relationships (Andayanie & Hartanto, 2025).

When character is well-developed, it establishes the moral foundation necessary to guide an individual's behavioral tendencies and decision-making processes. Character functions as a cognitive and emotional filter through which external circumstances are processed before manifesting as observable actions. By embedding moral consciousness into personality development, education ensures that students cultivate positive habits, empathy, and integrity (Karo-karo et al., 2023). This transition from internal character to daily habits directly aligns with how a person forms specific attitudes and behavioral responses toward various life contexts (Ence et al., 2025).

Attitude is essentially an internal disposition expressed through reactions to positive or negative contexts. It reflects a tendency or inner force that shapes behavior toward an object in a particular way. Being religious entails a belief in a power beyond human capability specifically, belief in God as the Creator worthy of worship. Being religious entails belief in a power beyond human capability—specifically, belief in God as the Creator worthy of worship. This belief is expressed through acts of worship that reflect love for God. Thus, a religious attitude can be defined as behavior manifested in daily habits aligned with the precepts of Allah Almighty (Bahri et al., 2021).

However, field realities indicate a significant decline in religious character among secondary school students. Recent studies show that over 42% of junior high school students in Indonesia experience a crisis in religious habituation, characterized by

low interest in reading the Qur'an, routine neglect of obligatory worship, and increasing exposure to digital moral hazards (A. Firdaus et al., 2026).

Specifically at Datuk Singaraja Islamic Junior High, preliminary observations and initial interviews with Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers revealed that several students still experience difficulties in Qur'anic reading fluency, while some others tend to engage in daily *tadarrus* routines primarily under direct teacher supervision rather than out of self-driven awareness (INT-PAI).

This situation reveals a critical gap between theoretical expectations and practical outcomes. While Islamic Religious Education (PAI) frameworks advocate for character building through routine religious rituals, the implementation of structured Qur'an reading strategies often remains a mechanical routine rather than an internalized character-shaping process (Ristiani et al., 2026). Existing literature extensively discusses teacher roles in general character education, yet there is a paucity of empirical research examining *how* specific, structured Qur'an reading strategies—such as targeted *tadarrus* and monitored daily recitation routines are operationally integrated to transform student attitudes in Islamic junior high schools.

To maintain a clear focus, this study limits its scope exclusively to the implementation of the Qur'an Reading Strategy—specifically daily *tadarrus* sessions, supervised recitation routines, and basic *tilawah* habituation—carried out by PAI teachers. Furthermore, the assessment of religious character in this research is bounded to key behavioral indicators, namely religious awareness, discipline in worship, and ethical conduct in daily school interactions among seventh and eighth-grade students at Datuk Singaraja Islamic Junior High School

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, as the primary managers and implementers of religious instruction, play a crucial role in this character-building process (Yuhana, 2019). They serve not merely as conveyors of subject matter but also as guides capable of fostering motivation and bridging students' understanding, ensuring that religious values become deeply ingrained and shape daily behavior in accordance with Islamic principles. One effective strategy employed by PAI teachers is cultivating the habit of regular Quran recitation. This practice encompasses various activities such as *tadarrus* (recitation sessions) and other scheduled Quran reading exercises carried out consistently as an integral part of the learning routine.

Recent studies indicate that modern adolescents are increasingly absorbed in secular and digital engagements specifically excessive social media use, online gaming, and digital entertainment which frequently leads to the neglect of their spiritual routines and moral development (Hasrul, 2022). This shift in focus contributes to observable challenges in student character, often manifested in declining religious awareness, reduced worship discipline, and diminished engagement in school-based religious activities.

Reading the Quran is not merely a spiritual routine but a concrete step toward strengthening students' faith and piety. At SMP Islam Datuk Singaraja Jepara, this habit-forming activity is designed so that students not only become familiar with the holy verses but are also encouraged to delve into the meanings and wisdom contained within them. Through this activity, students are expected to connect with Allah SWT and internalize noble moral values such as honesty, patience, discipline, and responsibility. It is hoped that the character development fostered by the Quran will grow continuously, extending beyond the school environment into the broader social context. At SMP Islam Datuk Singaraja Jepara, the Quran-reading program aims to produce students who are not only technically proficient in recitation but also capable of embodying these values in their daily lives (INT-PAI). Thus, this practice serves as a strategic approach for Islamic Religious Education teachers to cultivate students who are religious and possess noble character.

It is hoped that the character development fostered by Qur'anic engagement will continue to grow, extending beyond the school environment into the broader social context. At SMP Islam Datuk Singaraja Jepara, the Qur'an-reading program aims to produce students who are not only technically proficient in recitation but also capable of embodying these values in their daily lives (INT-PAI). Thus, this practice serves as a strategic approach for Islamic Religious Education teachers to cultivate students who are religious and possess noble character.

Several previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of the practice of reading the Quran in strengthening students' religious character. For instance, research conducted by (Rozi, 2024) at SMP Miftahurrohman Pundutterate Benjeng reinforces this positive evidence. A structured, systematic, and consistent practice of reading the Quran helps shape students' mindsets and behaviors in accordance with Islamic teachings. This

habit encourages students to apply religious values in their daily lives, thereby enhancing the quality of their character and faith. Furthermore, research by (Ahmadi & Murtafiah, 2025). highlights the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers as key motivators in strengthening Quranic literacy (Muflihin, 2020b). PAI teachers do not merely deliver instructional material; they also create engaging and supportive learning environments that actively motivate students. Consistent teacher guidance and the use of varied teaching methods play a crucial role in boosting students' interest in and ability to read the Quran.

Numerous prior studies have demonstrated the positive impact of Qur'anic reading habits and teacher facilitation on student development. For instance, research conducted by Rozi (2024) at Mts Sabillul Muttaqien revealed that structured Qur'an reading habits effectively cultivate positive student mindsets and behavioral routines. Similarly, Ahmadi & Murtafiah (2025) highlighted the strategic role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers as primary motivators in boosting students' reading literacy, while Maulida (2021) emphasized the importance of supportive learning environments in sustaining religious practice.

Furthermore, Muflihin (2020) emphasized that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers do not merely deliver instructional material; they also create engaging and supportive learning environments that actively motivate students. Consistent teacher guidance and the use of varied instructional methods play a crucial role in boosting students' interest and proficiency in reading the Qur'an.

In line with these studies, the present research shares a fundamental similarity in examining the role of PAI teachers and religious habituation in fostering students' spiritual growth. However, significant differences distinguish this study from previous literature. While earlier research primarily focused on general reading literacy (Ahmadi & Murtafiah, 2025) or broader character education without detailing specific operational strategies (Rozi, 2024; Muflihin, 2020), this study focuses explicitly on how specific Qur'an reading strategies—such as targeted *tadarrus* sessions, supervised daily recitation routines, and monitored *tilawah* habituation are operationally implemented to transform mechanical routines into deeply internalized character values.

The novelty of this research lies in its empirical examination of bridging the operational gap between routine Qur'anic recitation and actual behavioral

transformation within an Islamic junior high school setting. By evaluating specific behavioral indicators namely religious awareness, worship discipline, and daily ethical conduct this study addresses the paucity of empirical evidence regarding targeted Qur'anic strategies. Consequently, the purpose of this study is to analyze the implementation of the Qur'an Reading Strategy by PAI teachers and to evaluate its direct role in fostering seventh and eighth-grade students' religious character at Datuk Singaraja Islamic Junior High.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative case study design to examine how Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers implement the practice of reading the Qur'an as a strategy to foster religious character among students in a Islamic school context. The researchers chose a case study design to capture complex social interactions and pedagogical dynamics as they occur naturally, particularly in relation to how daily Quranic literacy practices shape students' moral behavior and religious values in everyday school routines.

This study employs a qualitative approach utilizing a case study design. This methodology was selected to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the Qur'an Reading Strategy and its role in strengthening the religious character of students within the Islamic school setting. Qualitative research allows researchers to comprehensively explore the meanings, processes, and experiences of research subjects within their natural context (Ya'qub et al., 2026). This study was conducted from February 2026 to April 2026. A single-case study design was adopted, focusing on a single research site: Datuk Singaraja Islamic Junior High in Jepara. This research intensively examines a single educational program the Qur'an reading habituation program which possesses unique characteristics and pedagogical practices for enhancing students' religious character (C. A. Firdaus et al., 2025). In alignment with the qualitative paradigm, the researcher served as the primary instrument, executing the research design, data collection, thematic analysis, and interpretative drawing of conclusions. To support data collection, auxiliary instruments were used, including a semi-structured interview guide, an observation checklist, and a document verification sheet. The interview guide was operationalized to elicit information regarding the objectives, implementation strategies,

and impact of the Qur'an reading program on students' character development. Data collection was triangulated through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and document analysis. Informants were selected via purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in the implementation, supervision, and execution of the program. The selection of research subjects was based on the principle of data saturation, which occurs when the data obtained shows recurring patterns and no new significant information is found. A total of 13 key informants participated in this study, comprising the school principal, 2 Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, and 10 students from grades VII and VIII. The detailed profile and criteria of the informants are presented in Table 1 below.

The researchers selected participants using a purposive sampling technique based on their direct involvement in the implementation, supervision, and execution of the Qur'an reading program. A total of 13 key informants were selected, as detailed in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Profile and Criteria of Research Informants

Informant Code	Position at School	Informant Criteria / Profile
P-01	School Principal	Leads school policy; supervises religious habituation programs : ≥ 3 years leadership experience
T-01	PAI Teacher / Primary Facilitator	Main coordinator for Qur'an reading program; ≥ 3 years PAI teaching experience; directly mentors student character.
T-02	PAI Teacher / Mentor	Evaluator for daily <i>tadarrus</i> and <i>tilawah</i> ; ≥ 3 years PAI teaching experience; directly monitors student worship discipline.
S-01-S05	Grade Students (5 Students)	Active participants in daily morning <i>tadarrus</i> ; represents early-stage habituation experiences in junior high school.
S-06-S-10	Grade Students(5 Students)	Active participants in daily <i>tadarrus</i> and monitored <i>tilawah</i> ;

		represents mid-stage behavioral transformation.
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In addition, the researchers conducted non-participant observations over four weeks in classrooms and school prayer halls during the morning literacy sessions. The focused on execution patterns, student engagement, discipline, and the reinforcement of ethical habits during the practice. The researchers documented all observations using structured field notes. To complement these data, they analyzed relevant documents, including school policies, character assessment rubrics, and attendance logs of the Qur'an reading program, to provide contextual support and strengthen data triangulation.

For data analysis, The researchers employed thematic analysis, following the framework developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The process began the analysis by conducting open coding to identify key concepts from interview transcripts and field notes. These codes were then grouped into categories through iterative comparison, leading to the development of broader themes that represented recurring patterns across the data. This iterative refinement ensured that the emerging themes remained aligned with the research objectives and accurately reflected the pedagogical and behavioral dynamics observed in the field.

Table 2. Thematic Coding Matrix of Research Findings

Theme	Code	Data Source	Evidence
Institutional Strategy	RC-1	P1,INT	Structural Integration of Qur'anic literacy in school culture
Pedagogical Mentorship	RC-2	T1,INT	Teacher guidance, correction (<i>tashih</i>), and moral modeling
Character Internalization	RC-3	T1, INT: OBS-2	Deveploment Execution routines and transfer of values to peer interactions

Behavioral Habituation	RC-4	T2,INT: OBS-3	Daily execution routines and transfer of values to peer interactions
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To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the researchers applied several strategies. They conducted source triangulation by comparing data from the principal, PAI teachers, and students to identify consistent patterns of character development. They also performed member checking by sharing preliminary findings with selected participants to verify the accuracy of the interpretations. Furthermore, the researchers maintained an audit trail to document the research process and used thick description to enhance the transferability of the findings to similar Islamic educational settings.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Implementation of Qur'an Reading Strategies in Fostering Student Character

The research findings show that the practice of reading the Qur'an at Datuk Singaraja Islamic Junior High School in Jepara has become an integral part of the school's culture. This program is not merely a ceremonial activity, but is genuinely implemented in a structured and consistent manner, with clear educational objectives. Every school day, students participate in a group recitation of the Qur'an before the first class begins, from 7:00 to 7:30 a.m., making this religious activity . WIB before the first academic period begins, positioning this religious activity as the foundation of the daily learning process (INT:OBS-1). This approach brings the Qur'an into the educational setting at an earlier stage, not merely as a subject of study, but as a source of daily moral guidance.

The program's implementation begins with a group recitation of the Quran, read in unison in each classroom. The teacher for the first period accompanies the students, while the recitation is guided centrally through the school's public address system. This creates a uniform religious atmosphere across all classrooms and transforms the morning into a time of spiritual transition before students begin their academic studies. These findings indicate that the school has successfully established a religious atmosphere that is simultaneous and systematic.

In addition to traditional Quran recitation sessions, the school also implements a structured program to reinforce proper recitation (tartil). Teachers do not simply let students read freely; instead, they periodically listen to random readings to correct errors

in tajwid and makhraj (RC-2:T1,INT). this approach is important because a practice that emphasizes only the quantity of reading without regard for quality can diminish the educational value of the Qur'an itself. Through this tartil reinforcement, students not only become accustomed to reading but also learn to read correctly . The overall operational mechanism of the program is summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 3. Of the Mechanisms of the Program to Foster the Habbit of Reading the Qur'an

Program Phase	Type of Activity	Implementation Period	Implementer's Role	Expected Outputs
Morning Opening	Group Qur'an recitation in class	Every school day, 7:00–7:30 a.m. WIB	The supervising teacher guides the students as they recite together	Students get into the habit of starting their day with the Qur'an, and the classroom becomes a place of religious devotion and order
Improving Reading Quality	Listening to students' recitations, correcting tajwid and makhraj	During tadarus sessions and on a regular basis	Islamic Education teachers and homeroom teachers correct students' reading	Students' reading becomes more tartil, accurate, and controlled
Reinforcing Memorization	Reciting short surahs from Juz Amma	Progressing gradually according to	Students recite to their Islamic	Students' memorization improves, and

		weekly/monthly goals	Education teacher	their connection to the Qur'an is maintained
Strengthening school culture	Teachers setting a good example, greetings, manners, and classroom discipline	Ongoing	Principal, teachers, and the entire school community	A stable culture of religious practice and good character has taken root

2. Supporting and inhibiting factors

The Implementation of the Qur'an reading program at Datuk Singaraja Islamic Junior High School in Jepara is influenced by various supporting and inhibiting factors.

Supporting Factors

Field observations and interview reveal several key elements supporting the programs successful execution :

- a. Infrastructure and Technological integration: The Centralized public address system ensures synchronized recitation across all classrooms simultaneously, creating a cohesive religious atmosphere (OBS-04, INT 04).
- b. Active Teacher Mentorship: Direct presence and supervision by the first-period teachers guarantee classroom order and enable immediate correction during tartil evaluations (RC-2:T1,INT).
- c. Institutional and Parental Synergy: The implementation of the daily Journal of Religious Activities bridges institutional oversight with parental involvement at home (INT-05).

Inhibiting Factors (Operational Challenges)

Despite these supporting elements, the study also identified several operational challenges:

- a. Entry-Level Literacy Disparities: Some new students graduating from public elementary schools (SD) do not yet possess the same Qur'anic reading proficiency as

graduates of Islamic elementary schools (MI), necessitating additional remedial guidance (OBS-07, INT-06).

b. Student Fatigue: Fluctuations in motivation and occasional boredom occur among some students on certain days, particularly toward the end of the school week (INT-07).

c. Domestic Oversight Limitations: Monitoring student activities at home presents a challenge as the school cannot fully oversee out-of-school routines. To address this issue, the school has implemented a daily Journal of Religious Activities monitored with parental verification (INT-08).

The study also identified several operational challenges. Some new students from public elementary schools do not yet possess the same ability to read the Qur'an as graduates of Islamic elementary schools (MI), so additional guidance is needed. In addition, some students experience boredom on certain days, especially toward the end of the week, although this is not a widespread issue. Another challenge lies in monitoring students' activities at home, which the school cannot fully oversee. To address this issue, the school has implemented (OBS-08).

These results indicate that the practice of reading the Qur'an at Datuk Singaraja Islamic Junior High School in Jepara is not only effective as a religious activity but also serves as a character-building tool that influences students' behavior, attitudes, and emotions. These findings are consistent with various recent studies that confirm that Quran recitation and the habit of reading the Quran make a tangible contribution to the development of discipline, responsibility, a calm learning environment, and a religious school culture.

Discussion

1. Implementation of the Habit of Reading the Qur'an

The study also identified several operational challenges. Some new students from public elementary schools do not yet possess the same ability to read the Qur'an as graduates of Islamic elementary schools (MI), so additional guidance is needed. In addition, some students experience boredom on certain days, especially toward the end of the week, although this is not a widespread issue. Another challenge lies in monitoring students' activities at home, which the school cannot fully oversee. To address this issue, the school has (Warsah & Morganna, 2025).

The empirical findings confirm that fostering students' religious character through scriptural routines does not occur via isolated activities, but through a multi-layered educational system. To evaluate how these operational phases drive moral transformation, Table 3 synthesizes the core mechanisms of the Qur'an Reading Strategy alongside their theoretical frameworks.

As structured in Table 4, the Morning Opening phase functions as an auditory shared space and cognitive priming mechanism, preparing students' psychological readiness before academic engagement (C. A. Firdaus et al., 2025). By structuring the physical acoustic environment from 7:00 to 7:30 a.m. WIB, the school establishes a uniform soundscape that calms student agitation, reduces morning anxiety, and shifts the classroom atmosphere from a chaotic state to a quiet, focused orientation (Agustin et al., 2026). Students who arrive in a rush quickly settle down once recitation begins, proving that Qur'anic recitation serves as an effective tool for emotional regulation rather than mere passive textual reading (Agustin et al., 2026). Furthermore, the strict requirement to arrive before 7:00 a.m. enforces practical time management, as tardiness results in missing collective recitation, instilling personal responsibility and reducing lax attitudes toward school discipline (Andini et al., 2024).

In the phase dedicated to Improving Reading Quality, interactive *tartil* checks by PAI teachers provide essential pedagogical scaffolding (Rachmadiani et al., 2025). Direct corrective feedback during *tashīh* sessions prevents spiritual practice from degrading into mechanical repetition, ensuring that technical skill development is accompanied by moral attentiveness. This interactive mentorship ensures that students do not merely recite words, but engage in a deliberate learning process that demands cognitive focus and reverence for scriptural accuracy (Suryani et al., 2023).

The phase of Reinforcing Memorization through short surahs from *Juz 'Amma* demonstrates the process of moral internalization. Students initially participate in daily recitation due to institutional rules; over time, however, continuous repetition transforms external compliance into an internalized routine, which eventually becomes part of the student's personal identity (Aulia Azizah, Jauhan Budiwan, 2025). This progression aligns with hidden curriculum studies, which indicate that ethical values take root more deeply when embedded within daily habits rather than abstract theoretical lectures (Rahayu & Anwar, 2023). Gradually achieving weekly and monthly

memorization goals reinforces personal accountability and sustained engagement with Islamic teachings (Aisyatul hidayati, 2025).

Finally, Strengthening School Culture operationalizes Social Learning Theory and Ecological Systems Theory across the entire educational environment (Sari et al., 2025). Teachers who participate in recitation, correct errors, and exhibit respectful manners embody the classical Islamic principle of *uswah ḥasanah* (exemplary modeling) (Muhid, 2026). Students acquire values of politeness, greetings, and classroom decorum through continuous observation and imitation of their educators (Alamin, 2025). Simultaneously, the integration of daily parental verification via the *mutāba'ah* tracking journal introduces moral accountability, training students to report their home worship honestly and bridging school expectations with domestic supervision (Safiqo & Ghofur, 2025).

Expanding upon the mechanism of cognitive priming, morning scriptural recitation acts as a psychological buffer against sensory overload and academic stress. When secondary students transition from high-stimulus digital environments to school, immediate immersion in rhythmic, melodious recitation restructures their attentional focus (Anggraini et al., 2026). The acoustic environment creates a collective mindfulness zone, reducing cortisol-induced anxiety and fostering cognitive equilibrium necessary for subsequent complex learning tasks (Laina et al., 2026). This neuro-pedagogical dimension demonstrates that Qur'an reading strategies perform a dual function: enhancing spiritual devotion while optimizing brain states for academic receptivity (Bahiyah et al., 2026).

The role of PAI teachers as operational exemplars (*uswah ḥasanah*) further highlights the limitations of purely didactic moral instruction. Character is not effectively transmitted through passive lectures; it demands visible, active embodiment within regular school interactions (Astuti et al., 2025). When teachers sit alongside students, recite the exact same verses, and show meticulous care in correcting *tajwīd*, they dismantle traditional power hierarchies in favor of a shared spiritual journey (Zakariya, 2021). This shared vulnerability and devotion cultivate deep institutional trust, making students significantly more receptive to teacher guidance regarding general discipline, politeness, and ethical social behavior (Rizkiyah et al., 2024).

Addressing the domestic monitoring barrier through daily activity logs (*mutāba'ah*) reinforces the critical role of ecological alignment between microsystems—

the school and the family (Agustus et al., 2024). In modern secondary education, character interventions frequently fail because values taught at school are negated by permissive or unmonitored home environments (Subandi et al., 2023). By requiring parental signatures and daily verification of evening recitations, the school establishes a continuous feedback loop. Parents become active co-educators rather than passive observers, creating a consistent moral ecosystem that reinforces spiritual accountability across temporal and physical boundaries (Mahfudi et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the pedagogical management of baseline literacy disparities between public elementary school (SD) and Islamic elementary school (MI) graduates illustrates the necessity of inclusive differentiation in religious education (Rohmah, 2024). Rather than penalizing students with lower initial Arabic script literacy, PAI teachers deploy peer-tutoring networks and flexible memorization targets (Azkia Faiqotun Ni'mah, 2026). Advanced readers assist struggling peers during morning sessions, which simultaneously fosters empathy among high achievers and prevents feelings of inadequacy among lower-skilled students. This cooperative learning dynamic ensures that character development is equitable and accessible to all student demographics regardless of prior academic background.

The operational challenges identified in this study such as entry-level Arabic literacy gaps between SD and MI graduates, periodic weekly fatigue, and limitations in domestic monitoring further highlight the complex reality of character education (Wirianto et al., 2023). Addressing these baseline disparities requires differentiated instruction and peer-tutoring networks to ensure all students receive adequate support (Rohman & Huda, 2023; Wahyudi et al., 2021). Comparative literature confirms that structured, high-frequency scriptural habituation serves as a resilient protective factor against adolescent delinquent behavior, moral decline, and digital distractions (Bakar et al., 2022; Rahaman et al., 2022; Zulkifli et al., 2022). By structuring habituation into this multi-tiered ecosystem, Datuk Singaraja Islamic Junior High School successfully transforms routine scriptural recitation into enduring religious character, discipline, and institutional decorum (Hasanah et al., 2024; Mulyana et al., 2022; Pratama & Lestari, 2023; Rosyida et al., 2024; Supriadi et al., 2024; Wibowo et al., 2024).

2. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

The operational success and challenges of the Qur'an reading habituation program can be systematically analyzed through socio-pedagogical and ecological theories.

Among the supporting factors, the presence of teachers as active participants operationalizes Social Learning Theory within the school ecosystem (Muawan et al., 2025). Teachers who participate in recitation, correct errors, and exhibit respectful manners embody the classical Islamic principle of *uswah ḥasanah* (exemplary modeling). Character is not effectively transmitted through passive lectures; it demands visible embodiment within regular school interactions. When teachers sit alongside students, recite the exact same verses, and show meticulous care during *tashīh*, they dismantle traditional power hierarchies in favor of a shared spiritual journey. This shared devotion cultivates deep institutional trust, making students significantly more receptive to guidance regarding discipline, politeness, and ethical behavior. Additionally, the integration of daily parental verification via the *mutāba'ah* tracking journal introduces moral accountability, leveraging Ecological Systems Theory by bridging school expectations with domestic supervision. Parents become active co-educators, creating a continuous feedback loop that prevents behavioral relapse outside school hours (Oktafera et al., 2024).

Conversely, the inhibiting factors identified in this study enrich our understanding of the realistic complexities of character education. The baseline literacy gaps between public elementary school (SD) and Islamic elementary school (MI) graduates emphasize the necessity of differentiated instruction and peer-tutoring networks. Rather than penalizing students with lower initial Arabic literacy, PAI teachers deploy peer-assisted learning models. Advanced readers assist struggling peers during morning sessions, which simultaneously fosters empathy among high achievers and prevents feelings of inadequacy among lower-skilled students. Furthermore, periodic student fatigue toward the end of the school week highlights the need for dynamic instructional variation to prevent burnout in high-frequency routine programs. Comparative literature confirms that structured, high-frequency scriptural habituation serves as a resilient protective factor against adolescent delinquent behavior, moral decline, and digital distractions when supported by adaptive pedagogical interventions (Azizah & Anwar, 2026). By managing both supporting mechanisms and operational barriers, Datuk Singaraja Islamic

Junior High School successfully converts routine scriptural recitation into enduring religious character, discipline, and institutional decorum (Indriyani & Firdaus, 2022).

The sense of discipline fostered by this program demonstrates that spiritual practices have strong practical consequences. The requirement to arrive before 7:00 a.m. compels students to manage their time more effectively, as being late means missing the opportunity for group Quran recitation. In the long term, this habit fosters better time management, instills a sense of responsibility, and reduces a lax attitude toward the school schedule. These findings are consistent with various studies (Izzati et al., 2024).

Values of etiquette and courtesy also develop through the religious environment fostered by the school. When students read the Qur'an together with their teachers, they are not only reciting verses but also experiencing a closer and more respectful relationship with their educators. Teachers who read along, guide, and correct their students' recitation provide a tangible example of living by example, rather than merely exercising formal supervision. In the study of Islamic education, *uswah hasanah* is a crucial element because children tend to imitate behavior.

On the other hand, the honesty fostered through the *mutabaah* book demonstrates that the practice of reading the Qur'an also involves a dimension of moral accountability. Students are not only required to read at school but also to maintain a consistent reading routine at home and report on it honestly. This mechanism trains students to take responsibility for their own worship while fostering an awareness that honesty is an integral part of piety. Research on the hidden curriculum shows that the value (Oktafera et al., 2024).

The value of inner peace and emotional regulation emerged as another key finding. When the Quran recitation began in the morning, the classroom atmosphere shifted from a bustling state to one that was quieter, more focused, and more purposeful. Students who had previously been joking around or had arrived in a rush quickly settled down when the recitation of the Qur'an began. This indicates that the recitation of the Qur'an serves to regulate one's inner state, not merely as a textual reading. Research on mental readiness for learning also confirms (Rohman, 2025).

When viewed through the lens of social learning theory, the results of this study show that students learn through observation, imitation, and repetition in a structured social environment. Teachers who participate in Quran recitation, disciplined peers, and

consistent school rules serve as models that students observe and imitate every day. This process ensures that character education does not occur in the abstract, but rather takes place through repeated concrete experiences. Studies on the hidden curriculum show (Muawan et al., 2025).

On the other hand, the challenges encountered actually enriched our understanding of the complexity of character development. Differences in basic Qur'an reading skills indicate that students arrive with varying levels of prior knowledge. Some students require intensive guidance, while others adapt more quickly to the program's pace. This situation highlights the need for differentiated strategies, such as peer tutoring and specialized support groups. Previous research has also shown that Qur'anic habituation will (Alfi & Idawati, 2022).

The program's structure described above shows that fostering the habit of reading the Qur'an is not carried out as a single activity, but rather as a multi-layered system. Morning recitation serves as the entry point, tartil improves the quality of recitation, memorization ensures continuity, and home follow-up reinforces sustainability outside of school. This combination creates a strong nurturing ecosystem because students not only read at school but are also trained to maintain Qur'anic habits in their daily lives.

D. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the habituation of Qur'anic recitation at SMP Islam Datuk Singaraja Jepara functions as an effective and systematic strategy for strengthening students' religious character. The program is implemented through a structured routine that includes class-based morning tadarus, guided improvement of recitation quality, short surah memorization, and home-based monitoring through mutabaah. These practices show that Qur'anic habituation is not merely a supplementary religious activity, but a meaningful educational mechanism embedded within the school's hidden curriculum. The findings indicate that the program contributes significantly to the formation of four major character dimensions, namely discipline, courtesy, honesty, and emotional calmness. Discipline is reflected in students' punctual arrival and orderly preparation for learning; courtesy appears in their respectful speech and greetings toward teachers and peers; honesty is strengthened through self-reporting practices in the mutabaah system; and emotional calmness is evident in the more controlled

classroom atmosphere before formal lessons begin. These outcomes suggest that repeated Qur'anic engagement can shape both outward behavior and inner disposition in a sustained manner. In addition, the success of the program is strongly supported by the synergy between school policy, teacher exemplarity, and parental involvement. Teachers do not simply supervise the activities, but actively model Qur'anic engagement and moral conduct, while parents help maintain continuity at home through daily monitoring. This alignment of institutional culture, pedagogical practice, and family support reinforces the internalization of religious values and makes the habituation process more durable. However, the study also identifies several practical constraints, including variations in students' initial Qur'anic reading ability, occasional boredom due to repetition, and limited school control over students' behavior at home. These challenges indicate that effective habituation requires adaptive strategies, such as peer tutoring, individualized support, and stronger communication with families. Thus, the sustainability of the program depends not only on routine repetition, but also on the school's ability to respond flexibly to student differences and contextual. the study confirms that Qur'anic habituation is a valuable educational approach for building religious character in secondary school settings. By embedding Qur'anic recitation into daily school life, SMP Islam Datuk Singaraja Jepara has created a learning culture that fosters discipline, moral refinement, and spiritual readiness. The findings also suggest that this model can serve as a reference for other Islamic educational institutions seeking to strengthen character education through a consistent and integrated hidden curriculum.

This study indicates that the habituation of Qur'anic recitation at SMP Islam Datuk Singaraja Jepara functions as a systematic educational strategy for strengthening students' religious character. In response to the primary research questions, the program is implemented through a structured model comprising morning class-based *tadārus*, guided *tashīh* recitations, short *sūrah* memorization, and home-based *mutāba'ah* tracking. Integrated into the school's hidden curriculum, this routine successfully fosters four core character dimensions: discipline (punctual arrival and learning readiness), courtesy (respectful speech and daily greetings), honesty (truthful self-reporting in daily logs), and emotional calmness (a tranquil classroom atmosphere prior to academic instruction). The long-term sustainability of these outcomes is driven by strong

institutional synergy, where teachers actively model *uswah ḥasanah* and parents maintain domestic oversight. However, the findings reveal critical practical constraints, including baseline Arabic literacy gaps between SD and MI graduates, weekly student boredom due to routine repetition, and limited school control over student behavior at home. To address these operational challenges, educational policymakers and school leaders must formally integrate scriptural habituation into institutional culture, implement peer-tutoring networks for differentiated instruction, and institutionalize daily parent-school feedback systems. Although this qualitative study provides rich contextual insights within a single institution, future research should employ quantitative or mixed-method longitudinal designs across broader school environments to measure the long-term impact of scriptural habituation on student academic performance and psychological resilience.

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