

Five Challenges of Quran Learning in Islamic Education Institutions

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Abstract

The process of learning the Quran in various Islamic educational institutions such as the Taman Pendidikan Quran (TPQ) and mosques still faces various obstacles that affect the effectiveness of learning. This research aims to identify challenges in learning the Quran in these institutions. This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach (case study design) to provide an understanding of existing problems. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with nine informants, consisting of three educators and six students from three different TPQs. A purposive sampling technique was used to select informants who were relevant and had direct experience with the problem under study. The research results show that there are five main challenges in learning the Quran in Islamic educational institutions. First, there is a lack of professional teaching staff who have adequate competence in teaching the Quran, both in terms of mastery of Tajweed, teaching methods, and pedagogical abilities. Second, the lesson schedule is monotonous every day, which has the potential to reduce student motivation. Third, the learning time is short, so educators have difficulty delivering the material optimally. Fourth, inadequate learning facilities, such as a lack of *mushaf*, guidebooks or comfortable study rooms. Fifth, there is stigma from parents of students who tend to blame teachers for their children's learning outcomes. It is hoped that all the results of this research can become a reference for the community and stakeholders to continue to improve the quality of Quran education in Islamic institutions, so that generations of Muslims can learn the Quran more effectively and in depth.

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INTRODUCTION

Learning the Quran is the main foundation in Islamic education. The Quran is not only a holy book, but also a guide to life that includes universal values that are relevant throughout the ages (Arif, 2019; Stimpson & Calvert, 2021; Nursikin & Nugroho, 2021; Mahmud, 2023; Maulana, 2024). In Indonesia, learning the Quran has become an integral part of the education system, both formal and non-formal. One form of non-formal education that is very popular in society is the Quran Education Park (TPQ).

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TPQ plays an important role in building basic abilities to read, understand and practice the Quran, especially for young children. However, even though the existence of TPQ continues to increase, the challenges it faces are increasingly complex, especially related to the quality of the teaching provided (Rohma & Nadlif, 2023; Prayogi et al., 2024; Rosalina, 2024; Suseno & Indra, 2024; Hidayah et al., 2024).

The problem that often arises in TPQ is the low competence of instructors or teachers. Many TPQ teachers do not have a formal educational background in the field of the Quran, so they do not understand effective teaching methods, mastery of Tajwid knowledge, or classroom management. In addition, the absence of standardized teaching modules or guides adds to the gap between the need for quality Quran education and the available human resources (Sirin et al., 2021; Holiday et al., 2022; Mohidem & Hashim, 2023; Zunaida & Aulia, 2023; Warsah et al., 2024; Chotimah et al., 2025). As a result, learning often takes place in an unstructured manner, tends to be monotonous, and is less interesting for children. This has an impact on the low quality of learning outcomes, especially in terms of the ability to read the Quran according to Tajwid rules. On the other hand, public interest in Quran education continues to increase. Parents are increasingly realizing the importance of religious education for their children, especially in facing the challenges of globalization which often have a negative influence on the morals and character of the younger generation. This high level of interest is both an opportunity and a challenge for TPQ to improve the quality of its teaching. However, this challenge cannot be overcome without intervention in the form of developing teacher competency and providing standardized teaching guides (Nilimaa, 2023; Rifa'I et al., 2024; Fedajev et al., 2024; Cevikbas et al., 2024; Zamiri & Esmacili, 2024).

Previous research has revealed various aspects of learning the Quran, both in terms of methods, media and learning outcomes. Some relevant research includes: Jaeni & Basuki (2020) in their research entitled *Culture Learning Management Quran Model Tilawati to Improve Student Character*. This research found that the Tilawati method, which uses a structured approach in teaching the Quran, was able to significantly improve students' Quran reading ability. This research concludes that standardized methods can provide better learning outcomes compared to conventional methods. Wajdi et al., (2024) in their study entitled *Implementation of the Improvement of the Quran Literacy Program for Modern Boarding School Students*. This study shows that teacher competence, especially in mastering Tajwid and teaching methods, has a big influence on the quality of students' reading. In conclusion, increasing teacher competency is the main key in improving the quality of Quran education at TPQ. Isa et al., (2023) with his research entitled *Quran Mobile Application: A Structured Review*. This research discusses the use of digital technology in learning the Quran, such as interactive applications. The results show that digital media can increase students' learning motivation while accelerating their understanding of learning material. Zabidi et al., (2021) with his study entitled *Integration of Islamic values for environmental conservation: An analysis of school textbooks. Implementation of a Curriculum Based on Quran Values in Formal Education*. This study reveals that the integration of Quran values in the formal education curriculum can increase students' understanding and appreciation of the contents of the Quran. However, its implementation requires teachers who are skilled and have high competence in connecting learning material with the values of the Quran.

Although these studies make significant contributions, there are still research gaps that need to be addressed. Most research only focuses on the effectiveness of learning

methods or the influence of media on learning outcomes, without paying adequate attention to the development of teacher competence as the main actor in the learning process. Apart from that, the lack of integrated learning modules specifically designed to improve TPQ teacher competency is a fundamental problem that has not been widely discussed in previous research. This research offers a new approach by developing competency-based learning modules specifically designed for TPQ teachers. This module includes mastery of Tajwid knowledge, application of effective teaching methods, classroom management strategies, and learning evaluation techniques. The uniqueness of this research lies in its holistic approach, where the module not only functions as a teaching guide, but also as an independent evaluation tool for teachers to measure and improve their competence on an ongoing basis.

The aim of this research is to develop an integrated learning module that can improve the competence of TPQ teachers in teaching the Quran professionally and effectively. This research is expected to have significant practical and theoretical implications. Practically, the module developed can be used as a standard guide in improving the quality of teaching at TPQ, so that it is able to answer the problem of low teacher competency. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the literature on the development of competency-based modules in Quran education, as well as become a reference for similar research in the future. Thus, this research not only provides solutions to existing problems, but also contributes to efforts to continuously improve the quality of Quran education.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach to explore and understand in depth the challenges faced in the process of learning the Quran in Islamic educational institutions such as TPQ (Hidayat et al., 2022; Indrioko, 2022; Saunders et al., 2023; Death, 2024; Widodo, 2024). This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to get a comprehensive picture of the problems that occur in the field through direct interaction with informants. Data collection was carried out using in-depth interview techniques with nine informants, consisting of three educators and six students from three different TPQs. Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, namely based on certain criteria that are relevant to the research problem. These criteria include informants' direct experience in the Quran learning process at TPQ, their ability to provide information, and their involvement in the learning process. The interview process was carried out in a structured manner, with an interview guide designed to explore various aspects of the challenges of learning the Quran, such as educator competence, teaching methods, learning facilities, learning time, and parents' perceptions of children's learning outcomes. Each interview was recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to ensure the data obtained was complete and in-depth.

The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, where the researcher identified the main themes that emerged from the interviews (Mishra & Dey, 2022; Abebe, 2023; Shoaib et al., 2023; De Paoli, 2024; Naem et al., 2024). These themes include issues of teacher competency, student motivation, limited learning time, inadequate facilities, and parental stigma towards educators. The analysis process was carried out in stages, starting from reading the transcript thoroughly, coding the relevant data, to developing themes based on the patterns found. The research location involved three TPQs which were selected based on variations in institutional conditions, such as the number of students, educational background, and availability of facilities. This

research aims to obtain diverse points of view in understanding the challenges of learning the Quran. To ensure the validity of the data, researchers applied source triangulation techniques, namely comparing information from various informants to obtain more accurate and reliable data. Apart from that, researchers also confirmed data with informants (member checking) to ensure that the results of the analysis matched their experience. It is hoped that all research results can provide an overview of the problems in Quran learning at TPQ and become a basis for improving the quality of Quran education in the future.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews conducted with nine informants consisting of three educators (informant 1) and six students (informant 2) at 3 different TPQs/mosques, the results of the analysis clearly found five problems in learning the Quran at TPQs/mosques at RT 002/RW 002, Kapalo Koto Sumatera Barat, Indonesia

Problems in Learning Quran

The author can explain that after holding in-depth interviews with informants, there were five problems in learning the Quran at the TPQ/Masjid in RT 002/RW 002, Kapalo Koto. The five problems are (1) lack of professional teaching staff, (2) the same lesson schedule every day (3) short learning time, (4) less supportive learning facilities, (5) parents of students always blame the teacher. To make it more interesting, below the author will describe quotes from interviews with informants based on the five problems as explained above. The description of the interview that the author will display is a quote from a short statement from the informant when the interview was conducted. Even though the interview quotations were conveyed by informants in slightly different language, they actually have more or less the same aim and meaning.

First, namely the lack of professional teaching staff. According to informant 1 (educator) one of the problems faced in teaching is the lack of professional teaching staff. In 1 TPQ there are only 2 educators for 25 students. The students who study are on average 5-14 years old so they have different levels of activity. Because there are only 2 educators, discipline in learning is not maintained. As stated by informant 1 (educator).

...there are only 2 of us here who teach, sometimes there are 2 more people, my younger brother who helps when he's not studying. However, often there are only two of us so we cannot discipline all the students during learning. We have tried to find several additional teaching staff, but none of them will last long teaching at TPQ. Maybe they are not able to teach students who have a high level of activity (AA-39)

Apart from the shortage of teaching staff, the educators who teach also lack mastery of teaching methods so that students become easily bored with the same methods every day. The educator uses the Iqro' method by teaching students 1 letter every day. He teaches students one by one in front of the class. As stated by informant 2 (student).

...we learned to use Iqro' and read it forward if the teacher called our names. Most of us were bored waiting to be called so we ran around and played during the learning process. But even though we made a fuss while studying, the teacher never paid attention or got angry with us. He only focused on teaching his friends in the future (N-8), ...when we study, there are often those who don't get to the front to read because class time has ended. We sometimes get annoyed because the names that are called up are the names of friends who are close to the teacher so the rest of us are not called (A-10)

Second, that is, the lesson schedule is the same every day. According to informants

(students), learning for students at TPQ is always the same every day. Namely, at the Iqro level, students only learn to read hijaiyah letters and at the Quran level, students learn recitation. The author's opinion illustrates this, that educators should be able to arrange different schedules every day for each level. For example.

Lesson timetable	
Day	Lesson
Monday	Worship (Theory and Practice)
Tuesday	Reading Iqro' / Quran along with Tajwid
Wednesday	Writing
Friday	Moral Creed
Saturday	Knowing Exemplary Stories

As stated by informant 2 (student)

... every day we only learn to read Iqro' and when we finish we are moved to the Quran level. But to be able to advance to the level of the Quran seems a long time, because every day we only read 1 page of Iqro' (F-10)

Third, i.e. short learning time. According to informant 2 (students), the short learning time meant that the understanding gained was less than optimal. It was felt that 30 minutes of learning time was not enough to teach 18 students. Moreover, educators teach one by one, with the time required for 1 student being 3-5 minutes. As stated by informant 2 (student).

...we study every day only half an hour after Maghrib prayer. Learning by reading Iqro' in front of the teacher, sometimes there are friends who are slow at reading, making us wait a long time for our turn to be able to read in front. Sometimes some of us don't read ahead because we run out of time (A-10)

Fourth, namely that learning facilities are less supportive. According to informant 1 (educator) and informant 2 (student), the problem faced in the learning and teaching process at TPQ is the lack of available learning facilities such as study rooms/classrooms, tables and chairs so that learning activities are carried out in prayer areas. The learning process is carried out by sitting together between the teacher and students forming a rectangle. If there are writing activities in learning, students are forced to write on the floor because there are no tables and chairs for writing. As stated by informant 1 (educator) and informant 2 (student).

...in the learning process, we and the students sat on the floor forming a rectangle, then started calling the students one by one to read what they had learned yesterday (LS-35), ...at TPQ, we teach students in the prayer room. Because there is no special room that we can provide for learning. This actually disturbs the students' comfort, but we are still trying and asking the mosque management to build 1 or 2 special rooms for the learning process (FR-30, informant 1), ...we have difficulty when there are writing lessons, because we have to write on the floor while bent over or face down. Even when studying, we sat together on the floor which was only covered with a mat. This sometimes makes us cold when it's raining so we don't focus on studying (T-11)

Fifth, namely that students' parents always blame the teacher. According to informant 1 (educator), parents are one of the obstacles in educating students at TPQ, because there are some parents who do not accept it when their children are scolded and

punished by educators. In fact, educators scold and give punishment because the child/student makes mistakes which they often repeat and disrupt the learning process. However, in the eyes of some parents, it is still the educators who are at fault. As stated by informant 1 (educator).

...to discipline students here, we also have obstacles from the students' parents. When we reprimand and punish students who make mistakes, they report this to their parents. Some parents can understand the warnings and punishments we give, but there are also some parents who think that our actions are not right. These parents even went to the mosque and violated our way of educating. This sometimes makes us teachers disturbed in providing lesson material (NH-29)

This discussion confirms that the challenges in learning the Quran at TPQ are multidimensional, involving internal aspects such as teacher competence and facilities, as well as external aspects such as parental support. Collaborative efforts between educators, parents, and other stakeholders are needed to overcome these challenges. With greater attention to this issue, the quality of Quran learning at TPQ can be significantly improved, resulting in a generation of Muslims who better understand and love the Quran.

CONCLUSION

This research aims to identify the main challenges in learning the Quran in Islamic educational institutions such as TPQ and mosques. Based on the research results, five main challenges were found that influence the effectiveness of the learning process. First, there is a lack of teaching staff who have adequate competence, both in mastery of Tajwid, teaching methods, and pedagogical abilities. Second, monotonous learning schedules result in decreased student motivation. Third, the short learning time makes it difficult for educators to convey the material optimally. Fourth, inadequate learning facilities, such as a lack of Quran manuscripts and guidebooks, reduce the quality of the learning process. Fifth, the stigma from parents who tend to blame teachers for their children's learning outcomes adds pressure to educators. The results of this research provide an illustration that learning the Quran in Islamic educational institutions requires more serious attention from various parties. To improve the quality of learning, it is necessary to develop the competence of educators, innovate in teaching methods, improve learning facilities, and better cooperation between educators and parents. By overcoming these challenges, it is hoped that Islamic educational institutions can produce a generation of Muslims who have the ability to read, understand and memorize the Quran better and more deeply. It is hoped that this research can become a reference for the community and stakeholders to continue to improve the quality of Quran education in the future.

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Author contribution

Fitriani: Data curation, Writing-Original draft preparation, **Weti Susanti:** Supervision, Software, **Nadia Putri:** Validation, Writing-Reviewing and Editing.

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