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e-mail: injireadpisi@gmail.com

The Effectiveness of the Qur'anic Reading Guidance Program on Students' Ability to Read the Qur'an

Authors:

¹ Azkia Rahmi Afifah

² Fauziyah Azizah

³ Racmelya Salsabila

Firdausy

⁴ Mokh. Iman Firmansyah

⁵ Ega Nasrudin

Affiliation:

¹²³⁴⁵ Universitas

Pendidikan Indonesia

Corresponding author:

Azkia Rahmi Afifah,

azkiaraaa@upi.edu

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Abstract

The ability to read the Qur'an serves as a fundamental pillar for comprehending Islamic teachings in their entirety. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the Bina Baca Al-Qur'an (BBQ) program organized by UKM BAQI at the Indonesia University of Education in enhancing students' Qur'anic reading skills. Employing a quantitative approach, data were collected from pre-test and post-test results involving 42 student samples, complemented by in-depth interviews with program coordinators. Wilcoxon test analysis revealed a statistically significant improvement, with a p-value of < 0.001 , confirming the program's impact in fostering students' Qur'anic literacy. Key contributing factors include peer-tutoring, teaching strategies, and participants' intrinsic motivation. These findings affirm the value of structured, spiritually grounded interventions within the higher education setting.

Keywords:

Effectiveness; BBQ Program; Reading Ability

Abstrak

Kemampuan membaca Al-Qur'an merupakan fondasi utama dalam memahami ajaran Islam secara utuh. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengukur efektivitas program Bina Baca Al-Qur'an (BBQ) yang diselenggarakan oleh UKM BAQI di Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia terhadap peningkatan kemampuan membaca Al-Qur'an mahasiswa. Menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif, data diperoleh dari hasil pre-test dan post-test sebanyak 42 sampel mahasiswa, serta wawancara mendalam dengan pengelola program. Hasil analisis menggunakan Uji Wilcoxon menunjukkan adanya peningkatan yang signifikan dengan nilai signifikansi $< 0,001$, menandakan efektivitas program dalam mengembangkan kompetensi baca Al-Qur'an mahasiswa. Faktor kunci yang mendukung keberhasilan program ini mencakup strategi pengajaran berbasis peer-tutoring dan kesadaran intrinsik peserta. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya intervensi terstruktur berbasis nilai spiritual dalam lingkungan pendidikan tinggi.

Kata Kunci:

Efektivitas; Program BBQ; Kemampuan Membaca

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Introduction

The Qur'an serves as a guide and source of direction for Muslims in regulating all aspects of their lives. Every Muslim should study the Qur'an without exception, including university students. When reading the Qur'an even short verses it is essential to recite it slowly, attentively, and with full comprehension. However, students often face various challenges in learning how to read the Qur'an. As Baihati and Pramesti noted, a common issue encountered in Qur'anic recitation is the low accuracy of pronunciation, particularly concerning *makbraj* (articulation points) and tajwid (rules of proper recitation) (Baihati & Pramesti, 2020).

Proper Qur'anic recitation is not simply a mechanical act of reading Arabic letters; it requires deliberate pacing (*tartil*), attentive listening, and deep comprehension. As emphasized in Surah Al-Muzzammil verse 4: "*And recite the Qur'an in a measured tone*", recitation is an act of devotion that demands both technical accuracy and spiritual awareness. However, in practice, many students encounter various obstacles in learning how to read the Qur'an correctly. These challenges can stem from limited early exposure, lack of consistent guidance, or insufficient emphasis on foundational skills such as phonetics and tajwid.

Various studies have revealed that university students still exhibit low levels of Qur'anic reading proficiency. Despite years of formal religious education, a significant number of students still struggle with basic elements of proper recitation, which includes pronunciation, rhythm, and application of tajwid rules. For instance, a study conducted by Amin (Amin, 2023) found that 27 out of 131 students continued to make critical errors in differentiating between long and short vowel sounds (*mad thabi'i* and *harakat*), an essential component of correct Qur'anic recitation. This indicates a gap not only in technical mastery but also in foundational training at the pre-university level.

This aligns with the findings of (Sudrajat, 2023), reported that approximately 81% of students at a public university in Yogyakarta were only able to read at the level of Juz' 2 and 3—considerably below the expected standard for university students. His findings also highlighted three core areas of deficiency: disjointed recitation that affects fluency (*tartil*), frequent mistakes in reading vowel marks (*harakat*), and inconsistent articulation of long and short vowels, which often alters the meaning of the verses being recited.

Similarly, a study by Supriadi et.al, (2022) revealed that at several universities in West Java, 60–70% of students fell into the pre-basic and basic reading categories, while only 30–40% demonstrated proficiency, and very few reached an advanced level.

Alarmingly, only a small fraction of students demonstrated advanced-level recitation skills. These findings indicate a broader, systemic challenge in Qur'anic literacy that extends beyond individual competence to institutional gaps in Qur'anic education.

If this issue remains unaddressed, it poses a significant threat to the development of a Qur'an-literate and Qur'an-loving Muslim generation. Inadequate recitation skills can impede students' ability to engage meaningfully with the sacred text, both intellectually and spiritually (Halim et al., 2021). Moreover, it may affect their confidence in participating in religious activities, such as congregational prayers, Qur'anic competitions, or public recitation. Over time, this could lead to the weakening of Qur'anic culture in Muslim academic communities. These trends emphasize the urgent need for structured, well-designed Qur'anic reading guidance programs at the tertiary level.

The fact that many university students still lack proficiency in reading the Qur'an has become a central concern among researchers. For example, Yahya and Risman (2023) implemented the *Tahsin Qira'ah* method among the academic community at Muhammadiyah University of Buton. Their findings indicated that this approach significantly enhanced participants' ability to apply *tajwid* rules during Qur'anic recitation. Respondents acknowledged that the *Tahsin Qira'ah* method made it easier for them to read the Qur'an more fluently. Similarly, research conducted by Mustaqim and Jazuli demonstrated that the implementation of the Qur'anic Learning Guidance (*Bimbingan Mengaji*) program at Pamulang University improved students'

Qur'anic reading abilities. Participation in the program is mandatory for all Muslim students (Mustaqim & Jazuli, 2021).

This study seeks to broaden the discussion on university-led initiatives aimed at improving students' Qur'anic literacy. The focus is placed on the Bina Baca Al-Qur'an (BBQ) program at the Indonesia University of Education. Qur'anic literacy is a fundamental competency for Muslim students, not only as a religious obligation but also as an academic requirement in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) courses. In this regard, higher education institutions have a strategic role to play in designing and implementing Qur'anic literacy initiatives that are systematic, sustainable, and student-centered. The BBQ program was developed to provide a platform for students to develop their Qur'anic reading skills and fluency. It is one of the flagship initiatives run by the university's student organization, BAQI (Belajar Al-Qur'an Intensif), and is regularly conducted on weekends as part of the PAI *Tutorial series*, which is mandatory for all students enrolled in Islamic Religious Education courses. The program provides a structured and supportive environment for students to practice, refine, and deepen their ability to read the Qur'an correctly, with proper tajwid and fluency.

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the BBQ program at the Indonesia University of Education in improving students' Qur'anic reading abilities. Given the increasing concern over the declining Qur'anic reading proficiency among university students, assessing the effectiveness of structured interventions like the BBQ program becomes not only relevant but urgent. Findings from this study are expected to contribute to the broader discourse on Islamic education at the tertiary level and offer insights into best practices for designing Qur'anic literacy programs that are both pedagogically sound and spiritually meaningful.

Methods

The research method employed in this study was a correlational quantitative approach, with data analyzed using the Wilcoxon test to determine differences between variables. The data consisted of pre-test and post-test scores measuring students' Qur'anic reading abilities in the odd semester of 2023, specifically those enrolled in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) course. According to Creswell dan Creswell, quantitative research aims to test a theory by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to verify its validity through empirical evidence. (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Quantitative research aims to test a theory by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to verify its validity through empirical evidence.

The indicators used to assess Qur'anic reading proficiency included fluency (*fashahah*), demonstrated by the ability to read accurately and smoothly without hesitation; alignment with the principles of *tajwid* to ensure correct pronunciation following Qur'anic recitation rules; and the accuracy of *makhārij al-hurūf*, referring to the precise articulation points of Arabic letters, such as those produced by the tongue, roof of the mouth, teeth, lips, and throat (Mustaqim & Jazuli, 2021).

Taken together, these indicators provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating Qur'anic reading proficiency. They bridge the gap between mechanical skill and spiritual discipline, reinforcing the notion that proper recitation (*tilāwah*) is both an art and a form of worship (*'ibādah*). This integrated approach enables educators and evaluators to holistically assess a student's capacity to interact with the Qur'an in a manner that honors both its form and meaning.

Results

The data used for the pre-test and post-test results were obtained from the Bina Baca Al-Qur'an (BBQ) program conducted at the Faculty of Technology and Vocational Education (FPTK), Indonesia University of Education, during the odd semester of 2023. The results are presented as table 1:

Table 1. Result of *pre-test* and *post-test*

Kategori	<i>Pre-test</i>	<i>Post-test</i>	Keterangan
TPD 1	54	19	Turun 35
TPD 2	195	100	Turun 95
TD	388	352	Turun 36
TT	215	369	Naik 154
TM	36	44	Naik 8
Total	888	888	

To conduct the analysis, the sample size was determined based on the number of academic programs, totaling 14 programs. Among these, the programs categorized under the BBQ initiative fell into the TPD1, TPD2, and TD levels. Therefore, the total sample comprised 42 entries, calculated by summing the number of programs within each level.

Before testing the data, a normality prerequisite was assessed, as presented in the table 2:

Table 2. Normality Test Results

Shapiro Wilk			
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-Test	.901	42	.001
Post-Test	.794	42	<,001

Based on Table 2, the Shapiro–Wilk normality test indicated that the data were not normally distributed, as the significance values were less than 0.05. The Shapiro–Wilk test was chosen due to the sample size being fewer than 50. Given the violation of normality assumptions, the appropriate next step was to apply the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. Furthermore, the data consisted of paired observations, as the pre-test and post-test scores were collected from the same group of FPTK students before and after participating in the BBQ program.

The hypothesis testing was conducted using the Wilcoxon test, processed through SPSS software, and the results are presented in Table 3:

Table 3. Wilcoxon Test

Test Statistics	
	Post Test - Post Test
Z	-4.710
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	< ,001

Based on Table 3, the results of the Wilcoxon test using a 95% confidence interval ($\alpha = 0.05$) showed an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of < 0.001 . Since $0.001 < 0.05$, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. This indicates a significant effect of the BBQ program on students' Qur'anic reading abilities, as measured by the difference between pre-test and post-test scores.

These findings confirm that the implementation of the BBQ program at the Indonesia University of Education has had a measurable impact on the Qur'anic reading skills of FPTK

students. This is evident from the decrease in the number of students in the Pre-Basic Level 1 category in the post-test compared to the pre-test. The post-test results also show improvement across other categories, with students shifting into higher proficiency levels. Notably, both the Pre-Basic Level 2 and Basic Level categories experienced upward transitions. In the Proficient and Advanced Levels, the number of students increased, which reflects progress from the lower levels.

Each reading proficiency category was defined by specific indicators. Students in Pre-Basic Level 1 generally do not recognize Arabic letters with diacritics independently, or they confuse individual letters despite being able to read them in isolation. Students in Pre-Basic Level 2 can read connected Arabic text but do so slowly, hesitantly, or with inaccurate articulation (*makhraj*). In the Basic Level, students read connected text more fluently but still make frequent errors in applying practical *tajwid* rules.

The findings were corroborated by the administrators of the Intensive Qur'an Reading Program at the Indonesia University of Education, who affirmed that the BBQ program constitutes the core of BAQI's campus *dakwah* mission. Based on indicators across each proficiency level and the observed post-program improvements, the *dakwah* objective envisioned by BAQI can be considered successfully realized, as the BBQ program has effectively enhanced students' fluency, pronunciation, and application of *tajwid* in Qur'anic recitation.

Further testimony from program organizers highlighted several factors contributing to students improved Qur'anic reading abilities, primarily the instructional methods employed. Since each student possesses unique characteristics, individualized learning approaches proved necessary. The BBQ program utilized peer-led instruction within the Islamic Religious Education tutorial sessions, wherein students with strong Qur'anic reading skills guided their peers. Additionally, students' commitment and motivation were also identified as critical determinants of progress.

In light of these findings, the BBQ program has demonstrably benefited the development of Qur'anic reading proficiency among students at the Indonesia University of Education. While not all participants have reached the desired level of mastery, the majority have shown meaningful advancement, indicating that the program has had a broadly positive impact.

Discussion

The research findings, based on the Wilcoxon test, indicate that participation in the BBQ program significantly improved students' Qur'anic reading skills. This conclusion is supported by statements from BAQI administrators, who affirmed that the program is designed to enhance students' proficiency in reading, articulation, fluency, and application of *tajwid* principles.

First, the effectiveness of the BBQ program is evident in the substantial shift from lower proficiency categories (TPD 1, TPD 2, and TD) to higher ones (TT and TM) following the intervention. *Second*, the sharp decrease in the TPD 2 category (by 95 participants) and the notable increase in the TT category (by 154 participants) suggest a collective improvement in reading ability. *Third*, the Wilcoxon test yielded a *p*-value of less than 0.001, confirming the statistically significant impact of the program and offering strong evidence of the intervention's effectiveness.

Furthermore, these findings underscore the importance of pedagogical transformation in Qur'anic education. A peer-tutoring model where students teach fellow students proved to be an effective strategy for enhancing Qur'anic literacy, particularly in higher education settings. This aligns with the principles of andragogy, which emphasize learner autonomy and active participation as core components of the educational process (Ramli & Sanusi, 2024).

The essential finding concerns the strategic role of extracurricular student organizations in promoting Islamic values on campus. The effectiveness of the BBQ program extends beyond cognitive outcomes (i.e., reading ability) to strengthening the campus *dakwah* function, which lies at the heart of BAQI's mission. As students' mastery of Qur'anic recitation and *tajwid* improves, they are increasingly equipped to serve as agents of *dakwah* in both academic and broader community settings.

This aligns with the findings of Hasanah (2020), who notes that student religious organizations play a pivotal role in sustaining moral and spiritual awareness among peers on campus. Through structured programs like BBQ, these organizations create peer-learning environments that promote both religiosity and social cohesion (Hasanah, 2020). Similarly, Sari and Anwar (2021) argue that religious extracurricular activities act as a reinforcement of formal Islamic education and can significantly influence students' attitudes and behaviors toward Islamic practices.

These findings reinforce prior research on the effectiveness of the BBQ program. Isnaini's study, which applied the *d*-effect size method, found that participants' learning outcomes following the BBQ program reached a score of 0.76—classified as a high category—thus confirming the program's effectiveness in improving Qur'anic reading skills (Isnaini, 2021). In a separate study, Ruslandi and Rochman implemented the *Iqra* method among fifth-grade students, reporting significant progress marked by an average score of 3.6, approaching the “very good” category. This suggests that both the instructional approach and the use of the *Iqra* textbook series—comprising six levels—are key contributors to the development of Qur'anic reading proficiency. Their results were based on a pre- and post-intervention comparative analysis (Ruslandi & Rochman, 2020). Meanwhile, Ridawati's research employed a peer tutoring model to foster Qur'anic reading abilities, with results showing a significant improvement in students' skills after participating in the BBQ program. However, the study also highlighted the need for enhanced tutor training to maximize the program's effectiveness (Ridawati, 2022).

Reading the Qur'an is not merely a literal textual activity but also involves understanding and interpreting the meanings it conveys. As the holy scripture of Islam, the Qur'an is written in Arabic and represents divine revelation containing messages from Allah SWT. Qur'anic reading may occur as devotional recitation (*wirid*) or through efforts to comprehend its meanings via *tafsir* and *ta'wil*, which are believed to offer spiritual benefits, including prevention, protection, and healing of internal afflictions (Rahman et al., 2018). Additionally, reading the Qur'an requires proficiency in recognizing and articulating Arabic letters correctly, understanding the elocution of recitation, and grasping the meanings conveyed (Nasrudin et al., 2024). The contextualist approach to Qur'anic reading emphasizes the importance of understanding the socio-historical context of the text to interpret its ethical and legal content in light of evolving needs and circumstances (Saeed, 2008). Thus, Qur'anic reading is a complex process involving linguistic, interpretive, and spiritual dimensions, requiring discipline and consistent practice to achieve deep comprehension and maximum benefit.

The Qur'an must be recited properly, or *tartil*, which refers to reading slowly and following the rules of *tajwid*. Such a reading method is obligatory for every Muslim. Reciting the Qur'an with *tartil* helps avoid errors in pronunciation that could distort the original meanings of Allah's verses (Altamas et al., 2015). Moreover, *tartil* is considered a form of daily worship and spiritual devotion (Makhmud et al., 2022). The rules of *tajwid* contribute to the consistency and beauty of recitation by regulating pronunciation and syllabic length (Muhammad et al., 2012). Beyond technical accuracy, *tartil* also offers a deeply spiritual experience, fostering tranquility, joy, and a closer connection with Allah SWT (Graham & Kermani, 2006). Lastly, proper Qur'anic instruction from an early age establishes a strong religious foundation, with traditional methods such as *talaqqi* and *musyafahah* proving effective for teaching *tawhid* (Ahmad et al., 2018). Therefore, reading the Qur'an in *tartil* is essential to preserve its authenticity, fulfill religious obligations, and attain profound spiritual and educational benefits.

Several effective methods have been identified to enhance Qur'anic reading skills. One proven approach involves the use of interactive applications such as *Ahwah*, which segments words and facilitates better recognition and memorization compared to traditional Qur'anic pages (Hassan, 2025). Additionally, the *Iqro'* method has demonstrated effectiveness in improving Hijaiyah literacy, which forms the foundation of Qur'anic reading. This method incorporates

comprehensive audio assessments to evaluate the accuracy of Hijaiyah letter pronunciation (Brata et al., 2022). Another approach is the *Tilamati* method, which integrates reward-and-punishment strategies along with student collaboration; it has been shown to enhance learners' independence and confidence in reading the Qur'an (Herlina et al., 2021). The implementation of these methods can be further strengthened through the integration of technology, which plays a vital role in developing Qur'anic reading proficiency. Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as *e-BBQ* have yielded significant improvements in reading skills when compared to traditional approaches (Hanafi et al., 2019). Moreover, automatic speech recognition systems programmed with *tajwid* rules can support students in reciting the Qur'an more accurately without the immediate presence of a teacher. In summary, a combined approach involving traditional pedagogies and modern technologies such as interactive apps, audio-based assessments, mental imagery strategies, and automated speech systems can significantly enhance Qur'anic reading competence.

The success of the Qur'anic reading learning process is undoubtedly influenced by several motivating factors. These driving factors can be categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Intrinsic motivation such as the desire to attain spiritual fulfilment and divine reward plays a key role in encouraging students to read the Qur'an willingly and without coercion (Nasrudin et al., 2023; Hamdi et.al, 2022). Furthermore, intrinsic motivation is more dominant than extrinsic drivers such as recognition or social approval (Nasrudin, et al., 2024; Rambe et.al, 2024). Nevertheless, extrinsic motivation also holds significance, particularly in formal educational settings where elements like grades, acknowledgment, and competition can positively influence students' willingness to learn Arabic texts, including the Qur'an (Ibrahim et al., 2013). Additionally, a blend of traditional and contemporary teaching strategies such as the use of digital and visual tools alongside role-playing exercises can enhance students' engagement and comprehension of the complex rules of *tajwid*. Overall, both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, combined with effective instructional methods, are key factors in fostering students' willingness to develop Qur'anic reading skills.

Based on the findings and discussion, this study presents several important implications. The first is the critical role of strengthening peer-tutoring in religious education within higher education institutions. The finding that student-to-student teaching in the BBQ program enhances Qur'anic reading skills confirms the effectiveness of this approach. This supports the assertions of Topping (2005) and Firmansyah et.al (2023) who highlight that peer-tutoring can improve academic performance and learning motivation in higher education, including in religious instruction.

Another implication is the importance of implementing measurable and validated spirituality-based intervention models. The statistically significant results obtained through the Wilcoxon test ($Z = -4.710; p < 0.001$) reinforce the legitimacy of the BBQ program as an evidence-based Qur'anic development model. This finding underscores the potential of religious programs as systemic strategies that can be integrated into the non-formal curriculum of higher education institutions (Al-Attas, 1991). The third implication is the need to revitalize academic *dakwah* through Qur'anic literacy. This means that the BBQ program not only enhances students' reading abilities but also strengthens the campus *dakwah* ecosystem through a systematic and outcome-driven academic approach. Accordingly, such initiatives can be replicated across other universities as models of character education grounded in Islamic values (Nasution, 2001).

Conclusion

This study evaluated the effectiveness of the Al-Qur'an Reading Program (BBQ) at the Faculty of Technology and Vocational Education (FPTK), Indonesia University of Education, in improving students' ability to read the Al-Qur'an. The results of the study indicate that the BBQ program significantly improved students' Quran reading skills, both in terms of fluency (*fashahah*), accuracy of articulation (*makhruf*), and proper application of *tajwid* rules. This improvement was

supported by Wilcoxon statistical analysis, which yielded a significance value of <0.001 , indicating a statistically meaningful difference between pre-test and post-test scores.

Moreover, the data showed a notable shift in the distribution of students' abilities—from lower categories (Pre-Basic 1 and 2, Basic) to higher ones (Proficient and Advanced). This shift reflects a collective advancement in students' technical reading capabilities. The success of the program can be attributed to several supporting factors, including the use of adaptive and individualized learning strategies, an effective peer-tutoring model, and the high level of student motivation and engagement. Beyond cognitive and technical gains, the BBQ program also played a vital role in supporting the university's *dakwah* (Islamic outreach) mission. As students became more skilled in reciting the Qur'an, they were better positioned to act as agents of Islamic knowledge and outreach within both academic and wider social contexts. This aligns closely with the mission of the student-led BAQI organization, which strives to cultivate a Qur'an-literate and spiritually grounded generation.

This finding is consistent with previous research emphasizing the importance of structured and innovative methods, such as the use of interactive applications or Iqra modules, as well as the need for tutor training to maximize program outcomes. Effective Qur'an education does not only emphasize technical aspects but also understanding the meaning, context, and spiritual dimensions, thereby fostering a deep religious experience and building a strong religious foundation. Overall, the BBQ Program has proven effective in improving students' Quran reading skills and positively contributing to the development of a Quran-literate Muslim generation, both technically and spiritually. However, for more optimal results, it is recommended to strengthen tutor training and develop more varied and contextual learning methods in the future.

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