

## The Implementation of the Qur'an Reading and Writing Program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan

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<p><b>Abstract:</b> This study aims to describe the implementation of the Qur'an Reading and Writing Program (BTQ) at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan, including its planning, execution, evaluation, as well as the supporting and inhibiting factors encountered in the process. This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach with data collection techniques comprising observation, interviews, and documentation. The subjects of this study include the school principal, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, and students. The findings reveal that the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan is implemented through a structured and systematic approach, utilizing the Iqra' method integrated into the school's daily learning activities. The program is supported by qualified teaching staff, adequate learning facilities, and strong parental involvement. However, several challenges remain, including the heterogeneous ability levels of students and limited instructional time allocation. The evaluation is conducted periodically through oral and written assessments. Overall, the BTQ program has demonstrated a significant positive impact on students' Qur'anic literacy and the development of their religious character.</p>	<p><b>Keywords:</b> Qur'an Reading and Writing; BTQ Program; Islamic Elementary School; Iqra' Method; Qur'anic Literacy; Religious Character.</p>
<p><b>Abstrak:</b> Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan implementasi Program Baca Tulis Al-Qur'an (BTQ) di SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan, meliputi perencanaan, pelaksanaan, evaluasi, serta faktor pendukung dan penghambat yang dihadapi dalam prosesnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Subjek penelitian meliputi kepala sekolah, guru Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI), dan siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa program BTQ di SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan dilaksanakan melalui pendekatan yang terstruktur dan sistematis dengan menggunakan metode Iqra' yang diintegrasikan ke dalam kegiatan pembelajaran harian sekolah. Program ini didukung oleh tenaga pengajar yang kompeten, sarana pembelajaran yang memadai, serta keterlibatan orang tua yang cukup baik. Namun demikian, beberapa tantangan masih ditemui, antara lain heterogenitas kemampuan siswa dan keterbatasan alokasi waktu pembelajaran. Evaluasi dilakukan secara berkala melalui penilaian lisan dan tertulis. Secara keseluruhan, program BTQ telah memberikan dampak positif yang signifikan terhadap literasi Qur'ani siswa dan pembentukan karakter religius mereka.</p>	<p><b>Kata Kunci:</b> Baca Tulis Al-Qur'an; Program BTQ; Sekolah Dasar Islam; Metode Iqra'; Literasi Qur'ani; Karakter Religius.</p>

## **A. Introduction**

Education is one of the fundamental pillars of human civilization, serving as the primary vehicle through which knowledge, values, and cultural heritage are transmitted across generations. In the context of Islamic societies, religious education holds a particularly significant role, as it not only encompasses academic learning but also the cultivation of spiritual identity and moral character. The ability to read and write the Qur'an constitutes the foundational competency upon which all Islamic religious education is built (Zuhdi, 2017). Without this foundational skill, students are unable to engage meaningfully with the primary source of Islamic teaching, the Holy Qur'an, which serves as both a spiritual guide and a comprehensive framework for human conduct.

In Indonesia, Islamic education has been formally institutionalized within both public and private school systems. The government, through the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, has mandated Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI) as a compulsory subject across all levels of schooling (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019). Islamic elementary schools (Sekolah Dasar Islam), in particular, play an essential role in introducing students to the Qur'an at the earliest stages of formal education. These institutions are uniquely positioned to integrate religious instruction with general academic curricula, fostering a holistic educational environment grounded in Islamic values.

The Qur'an Reading and Writing Program (Program Baca Tulis Al-Qur'an/BTQ) represents a structured educational initiative designed to equip students with the ability to recite the Qur'an with proper tajwid (rules of recitation) and to accurately write Arabic script as found in the Qur'anic text. This program has gained increasing prominence across Islamic educational institutions throughout Indonesia as educators and policymakers recognize its indispensable role in nurturing Qur'anic literacy among young learners (Syarifuddin, 2018). The BTQ program is commonly embedded within the

school curriculum as either a compulsory subject or an extracurricular activity, depending on the institutional policy.

SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan is one of the prominent Islamic elementary schools in the city of Medan, North Sumatra, that has implemented the BTQ program as an integral component of its educational offerings. Located in a region with a significant Muslim population, the school carries the responsibility of producing graduates who are not only academically competent but also firmly grounded in Islamic religious knowledge and practice. The implementation of the BTQ program at this institution reflects the school's commitment to providing a comprehensive Islamic education that fulfills both national educational standards and Islamic religious requirements (Harahap, 2020).

Numerous studies have demonstrated that early exposure to Qur'anic education significantly influences children's religious development, cognitive abilities, and moral character formation. Research conducted by Mansur (2016) found that children who receive systematic Qur'anic instruction at the elementary level demonstrate higher levels of religious adherence and show greater respect for Islamic values in their daily interactions. Furthermore, the process of memorizing and reciting Qur'anic verses has been linked to enhanced memory capacity, improved linguistic skills, and the development of discipline and patience among young learners (Nawawi, 2018).

Despite the recognized importance of Qur'anic literacy education, the implementation of BTQ programs across Indonesian schools is not without challenges. Studies have identified several recurring obstacles, including the heterogeneous literacy levels of incoming students, insufficient instructional time within the school schedule, limited availability of qualified Qur'an teachers, and inadequate learning resources (Fathurrohman, 2017). These challenges are particularly pronounced in urban educational settings where students come from diverse family backgrounds and varying levels of prior

religious instruction. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and adaptive approach to program implementation.

The choice of instructional method plays a central role in determining the effectiveness of any BTQ program. Several methods have been widely adopted in Indonesian Islamic schools, including the Iqra' method, the Tilawati method, the Baghdadiyah method, and the Qiraati method, each with its own pedagogical philosophy and sequencing of learning materials (Annuri, 2018). The Iqra' method, developed by As'ad Humam in the 1980s, has become particularly widespread due to its child-friendly approach, which emphasizes gradual progression, active student participation, and individual pacing. The adoption of a suitable method is therefore a critical decision in the planning phase of any BTQ program.

Teacher competency is another critical factor that shapes the quality of Qur'anic literacy instruction. A qualified Qur'an teacher must possess not only proficient recitation skills and knowledge of tajwid but also effective pedagogical techniques suited to young learners. Research by Wahyudi (2019) highlighted that teacher quality has a direct and significant impact on students' learning outcomes in Qur'anic literacy programs. Schools that invest in regular teacher training, professional development, and performance evaluation tend to produce better outcomes in their BTQ programs. At SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan, the school leadership has recognized this imperative and has taken measures to ensure that BTQ instructors meet established competency standards.

Parental involvement is a dimension that is frequently underestimated in the planning and evaluation of school-based BTQ programs. Research consistently shows that children whose parents actively support and monitor their Qur'anic learning at home demonstrate faster progress and higher retention of skills compared to those who rely solely on school instruction (Lubis, 2020). The role of parents extends beyond passive encouragement; it includes creating a conducive home learning environment, scheduling daily

practice, and communicating regularly with teachers regarding the child's progress. Understanding the extent of parental engagement is therefore essential in assessing the overall effectiveness of the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan.

Institutional leadership also plays a decisive role in the success of any educational program. The school principal, as the primary educational leader, is responsible for setting the vision, allocating resources, establishing policies, and creating an organizational culture that supports program implementation (Mulyasa, 2017). In the context of a BTQ program, the principal's commitment to religious education, willingness to allocate adequate instructional time, and ability to mobilize teacher and community support are all critical determinants of program success. Investigating the role of institutional leadership at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan provides valuable insights into how organizational factors contribute to or hinder the program's effectiveness.

Evaluation is an indispensable component of any structured educational program, serving as the mechanism through which program administrators assess student progress, identify areas of weakness, and make informed decisions about pedagogical adjustments. In the context of BTQ programs, evaluation typically encompasses both formative assessments, conducted regularly during instruction, and summative assessments, administered at the end of each learning period (Arifin, 2016). Effective evaluation systems provide teachers with actionable data that can be used to differentiate instruction, group students according to ability, and tailor learning activities to individual needs. Examining the evaluation practices employed at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan is therefore a central focus of the present study.

The integration of the BTQ program within the broader school curriculum represents a significant administrative and pedagogical challenge. Schools must carefully balance the demands of the national curriculum with the requirements of religious instruction, ensuring that neither domain is neglected. At SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan, the BTQ program has been structured to

complement the PAI curriculum, creating a mutually reinforcing relationship between Qur'anic literacy skills and broader religious knowledge acquisition (Harahap, 2020). This integrative approach reflects the school's philosophy that religious and academic education are not competing priorities but complementary dimensions of a unified educational mission.

The infrastructure and learning resources available to support the BTQ program also merit careful examination. Adequate physical facilities, including dedicated classrooms or prayer spaces for Qur'anic instruction, appropriate seating arrangements conducive to individual or small-group recitation practice, and access to learning materials such as Iqra' books, mushaf Al-Qur'an, and audio-visual aids, are all necessary preconditions for effective program delivery (Sagala, 2017). Institutions with limited resources face particular challenges in providing optimal learning conditions, and understanding how SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan manages its available resources offers valuable lessons for other schools in similar contexts.

The broader sociocultural context of Medan, a city with a rich Islamic heritage and a diverse Muslim community, provides an important backdrop for understanding the significance of the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan. Medan is home to numerous Islamic educational institutions ranging from traditional pesantren to modern Islamic schools, all of which contribute to a vibrant ecosystem of religious education (Daulay, 2018). Within this context, SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan occupies a distinctive position as an institution that seeks to bridge traditional Qur'anic education with modern pedagogical approaches, making it a particularly interesting case for scholarly examination.

Previous research on BTQ program implementation in Indonesian Islamic schools has yielded important insights but has also revealed significant gaps in the existing literature. While numerous studies have examined the effectiveness of specific instructional methods or the role of teacher competency, relatively few have adopted a holistic approach that considers the interplay of institutional, pedagogical, social, and parental factors in shaping program

outcomes (Fathurrohman, 2017). Moreover, research specifically focused on BTQ program implementation in the Medan context remains limited, underscoring the need for contextually grounded empirical investigations that can inform local educational policy and practice.

The present study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach to investigate the implementation of the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan. Qualitative research is particularly well-suited to this inquiry because it enables the researcher to capture the complexity, nuance, and context-dependence of educational processes in ways that quantitative methods cannot easily achieve (Creswell, 2014). Through in-depth interviews, structured observations, and document analysis, this study seeks to construct a rich and detailed account of how the BTQ program is planned, executed, and evaluated within the specific institutional context of SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan.

The significance of this study extends beyond its immediate institutional context. As Indonesian educational authorities continue to refine national policies regarding religious education in schools, empirical evidence from case studies such as this one provides an essential evidence base for policy development. Furthermore, the findings of this study may offer practical guidance to other Islamic elementary schools in Medan and across North Sumatra that are seeking to strengthen or establish their own BTQ programs. By documenting the strategies, challenges, and achievements associated with the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan, this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on effective Qur'anic literacy education in contemporary Indonesian Islamic schools (Zuhdi, 2017).

This study is also timely in light of the increasing emphasis placed on character education within the Indonesian national education system. The government's character education initiative, which prioritizes the cultivation of religious, nationalist, and ethical values in students, aligns closely with the goals of the BTQ program (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI, 2018). The Qur'an, as the primary source of Islamic moral guidance, provides a rich

foundation for character development when students are empowered to engage with it directly through reading and writing. Examining how the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan contributes to this broader educational goal adds another layer of significance to the present investigation.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study is guided by the following research objectives: (1) to describe the planning process of the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan, including the selection of instructional methods, teacher recruitment and development, and resource allocation; (2) to analyze the implementation process of the BTQ program, examining the roles of teachers, students, and institutional leaders in the day-to-day delivery of instruction; (3) to evaluate the assessment practices employed within the BTQ program and their effectiveness in monitoring student progress and informing instructional decisions; and (4) to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors that influence the overall effectiveness of the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan.

The structure of this paper proceeds as follows. Following this introduction, the literature review section provides a comprehensive examination of theoretical frameworks and empirical research relevant to Qur'anic literacy education, instructional methods, teacher competency, and program evaluation. The methodology section describes the research design, data collection instruments, and analytical procedures employed in the study. The findings section presents the results of the empirical investigation organized according to the four research objectives outlined above. The discussion section interprets the findings in light of existing literature and theoretical frameworks, highlighting their implications for educational policy and practice. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the key insights of the study and offers recommendations for future research and program development. Through this structured inquiry, the present study aims to make a meaningful contribution to the understanding of Qur'anic literacy education in the Indonesian Islamic school context.

## **B. Method**

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design to investigate the implementation of the Qur'an Reading and Writing Program (BTQ) at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan. Qualitative research is defined as an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem, in which the researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell, 2014). A descriptive approach is adopted because the primary aim of this study is not to test hypotheses or establish causal relationships, but rather to describe, interpret, and understand the phenomena associated with BTQ program implementation as they occur in their natural institutional context (Sugiyono, 2020). This approach allows the researcher to capture the richness, complexity, and contextual specificity of the program's planning, execution, and evaluation processes, yielding insights that would not be accessible through quantitative measurement alone. The naturalistic orientation of qualitative inquiry is particularly well-suited to educational research involving program implementation, where meaning, process, and context are of greater analytical significance than quantifiable outcomes (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

This research was conducted at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan, an Islamic elementary school located in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia. The selection of this institution as the research site was based on purposive criteria, including the school's established history of implementing the BTQ program, its representative status as an urban Islamic elementary school serving a diverse student population, and its accessibility to the researcher (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research subjects were selected through purposive sampling, a technique in which participants are chosen based on their direct relevance to the research questions and their ability to provide information-rich accounts of the phenomena under investigation (Patton, 2015). The primary research

subjects consisted of the school principal, three BTQ teachers, and ten students from grades three through six who were actively enrolled in the program. Secondary informants included two parents of participating students and the school's curriculum coordinator, whose perspectives provided additional contextual information regarding the program's implementation and broader institutional environment.

Data collection in this study was conducted through three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, structured observation, and documentation analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted with all key informants using a semi-structured interview guide, which allowed the researcher to explore predetermined thematic areas while remaining flexible enough to pursue emerging topics of significance (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Interviews were recorded with the informed consent of participants, transcribed verbatim, and subsequently analyzed for thematic content. Observation was conducted over a period of four weeks, during which the researcher attended BTQ learning sessions, took detailed field notes, and recorded the instructional behaviors of teachers and the learning responses of students. This direct, sustained engagement with the research context is consistent with the principle of prolonged engagement advocated in qualitative research methodology as a means of enhancing the credibility of findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Documentation analysis involved the systematic examination of school administrative records, lesson plans, student assessment portfolios, BTQ program guidelines, and official school policy documents related to religious education. Triangulating data from these three sources enabled the researcher to cross-verify information and construct a more complete and reliable account of the BTQ program's implementation.

Data analysis in this study followed the interactive model of qualitative data analysis proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which comprises three concurrent and iterative stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data condensation refers to

the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data from field notes, interview transcripts, and documents, a process that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organizes data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified (Miles et al., 2014). Following condensation, data were organized into structured matrices and thematic displays that facilitated the identification of patterns, relationships, and divergences across sources and informants. Preliminary conclusions were drawn from these displays and subsequently verified by returning to the raw data, engaging in member checking with key informants, and consulting with a peer debriefer with expertise in Islamic education research. This iterative analytical process continued until theoretical saturation was achieved, meaning no new themes or patterns were emerging from the data, at which point the analysis was considered complete (Creswell, 2014).

The trustworthiness of this study's findings was established through several strategies consistent with criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) for evaluating the rigor of qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was enhanced through prolonged engagement with the research site, persistent observation across multiple BTQ learning sessions, and member checking, in which a summary of preliminary findings was shared with key informants to verify the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations. Transferability was addressed through the provision of thick descriptions of the research context, participants, and processes, enabling readers to assess the applicability of findings to their own institutional settings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Dependability was ensured through the maintenance of a detailed audit trail documenting all methodological decisions made throughout the research process. Confirmability was established by grounding all interpretations and conclusions in direct evidence from interview transcripts, observational field notes, and documentary sources, ensuring that findings reflect the perspectives of participants rather than the preconceptions of the researcher. These

combined measures strengthen the overall trustworthiness of the study and enhance confidence in the validity of its conclusions.

This study was conducted in full accordance with established ethical principles governing qualitative educational research. Prior to commencing data collection, formal written permission was obtained from the principal of SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan and from the relevant educational authorities. All research participants were provided with a clear explanation of the study's purpose, scope, and expected outcomes, and written informed consent was obtained from adult participants and from the parents or guardians of student participants in compliance with child research ethics guidelines (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and participants were explicitly informed of their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Measures were taken to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of all informants, including the use of pseudonyms in research transcripts and reports. Audio recordings of interviews were stored securely and accessible only to the principal researcher. The welfare of student participants was prioritized throughout the data collection process, ensuring that research activities did not disrupt regular learning or place undue demands on students' time. Adherence to these ethical standards reflects the researcher's commitment to conducting inquiry that is not only methodologically rigorous but also respectful of the dignity, rights, and wellbeing of all participants involved in the study.

## **C. Results and Discussion**

### **1. Planning of the BTQ Program**

The findings of this study reveal that the planning of the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan is conducted systematically and collaboratively, involving the school principal, curriculum coordinator, and BTQ teaching staff. At the beginning of each academic year, a structured planning meeting is

convened to review the previous year's program outcomes, set new learning targets, allocate instructional time, and assign teaching responsibilities. This collaborative planning process aligns with the principle of participatory educational management, which holds that the involvement of all key stakeholders in the planning phase significantly increases program ownership, coherence, and sustainability (Mulyasa, 2017). The school has established a dedicated BTQ syllabus that maps learning objectives across six grade levels, ensuring a progressive and sequential development of Qur'anic literacy skills from basic letter recognition in grades one and two to fluent recitation with tajwid in grades five and six. This structured, multi-year curriculum design reflects best practices in literacy program planning, as identified by Fathurrohman (2017), who emphasized the importance of vertical articulation in religious literacy curricula to prevent learning gaps and ensure continuity of skill development.

A central element of the BTQ program's planning at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan is the adoption of the Iqra' method as the primary instructional framework. The Iqra' method, developed by As'ad Humam, is structured around six progressive volumes that guide students from basic recognition of Arabic letters to fluent Qur'anic recitation, employing a child-centered, activity-based pedagogical approach that prioritizes individual pacing and active student engagement (Annuri, 2018). The decision to adopt this method was informed by a review of its widespread success across Indonesian Islamic schools and by the prior experience of the school's BTQ teachers with the method. According to the school principal, the Iqra' method was selected not only for its pedagogical effectiveness but also for its accessibility, as the learning materials are affordable, widely available, and familiar to most parents, thereby facilitating home practice and parental involvement. This rationale is consistent with research by Syarifuddin (2018), who found that parental familiarity with an instructional method significantly enhances its effectiveness by enabling home reinforcement of classroom learning.

Resource allocation constitutes a critical dimension of the BTQ program's planning process. The school administration has dedicated a specific weekly instructional block of four hours to the BTQ program, distributed across two sessions per week, each lasting two hours. This allocation reflects a deliberate institutional prioritization of Qur'anic literacy education within an already demanding school schedule. In addition, the school has invested in a sufficient supply of Iqra' books, mushaf Al-Qur'an of appropriate size for elementary-aged students, and a dedicated classroom equipped with low tables and floor seating that recreates the traditional halaqah learning environment conducive to Qur'anic recitation practice. These resource provisions align with the recommendations of Sagala (2017), who argued that the adequacy of physical and material resources is a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for effective educational program implementation. The findings suggest that the school's administration has demonstrated a commendable level of institutional commitment to ensuring the material readiness of the BTQ program.

## **2. Implementation of the BTQ Program**

The implementation of the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan follows a consistent and structured instructional routine. Each BTQ session begins with a collective recitation of short Qur'anic surahs and du'a (supplication) to create a spiritually conducive learning atmosphere, followed by a brief tajwid review conducted by the teacher. Students then proceed to individual recitation practice, during which each student takes turns reciting directly to the teacher while other students engage in independent writing practice or review of previously learned material. This individualized recitation model, characteristic of the Iqra' method, enables the teacher to provide immediate corrective feedback tailored to each student's specific errors and learning needs (Annuri, 2018). Observations revealed that this instructional format was consistently applied across all observed sessions, indicating a high degree of fidelity to the established program design. The session concludes with a collective evaluation activity in which the teacher highlights common errors

observed during the session and reinforces correct recitation patterns, a practice aligned with principles of formative assessment in language learning (Arifin, 2016).

Teacher performance during implementation was observed to be a significant determinant of session quality. The three BTQ teachers at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan demonstrated strong command of tajwid rules and effective use of corrective feedback strategies during individual recitation sessions. However, observations also revealed variation in the teachers' use of motivational strategies and classroom management techniques, particularly when managing the independent activities of students not currently engaged in individual recitation with the teacher. This finding is consistent with research by Wahyudi (2019), who identified classroom management during multi-task instructional formats as a persistent challenge for Qur'an teachers at the elementary level. One teacher was observed employing creative engagement strategies, such as peer-teaching activities and Qur'anic writing games, to maintain the attention and motivation of students during waiting periods, while the other two teachers relied primarily on rote writing tasks, which occasionally resulted in off-task behavior among younger students.

Student engagement during BTQ sessions was generally observed to be positive, with most students demonstrating enthusiasm for individual recitation opportunities and taking evident pride in demonstrating their progress to the teacher. Interviews with students revealed that many associated BTQ learning with a sense of personal religious identity and familial expectation, reflecting the deep cultural embeddedness of Qur'anic literacy in the social fabric of the Muslim community in Medan (Daulay, 2018). However, notable variation in student motivation was observed between grade levels, with upper-grade students (grades four through six) generally demonstrating greater self-directed learning behaviors and intrinsic motivation compared to lower-grade students, who required more frequent external reinforcement and encouragement from the teacher. This developmental pattern is consistent with

research on religious motivation in children, which indicates that intrinsic religious motivation tends to increase with age as children develop a more internalized sense of religious identity (Mansur, 2016).

The integration of BTQ instruction with the broader PAI curriculum represents a distinctive feature of program implementation at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan. BTQ teachers reported actively coordinating with PAI teachers to align the Qur'anic verses and surahs introduced in BTQ sessions with those being studied in PAI classes, creating a mutually reinforcing relationship between the two subjects. This curricular integration strategy reflects a holistic approach to Islamic religious education in which Qur'anic literacy is positioned not as an isolated technical skill but as a gateway competency that enriches students' engagement with all dimensions of Islamic learning (Zuhdi, 2017). Students who demonstrated stronger BTQ proficiency were observed to participate more actively and confidently in PAI classes, lending empirical support to the theoretical proposition that Qur'anic literacy serves as a foundational competency for broader Islamic religious education (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019).

The role of the school principal in supporting program implementation emerged as a prominent theme across multiple interview sources. The principal of SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan was described by teachers as an active and supportive instructional leader who regularly visited BTQ classes, participated in program review meetings, and advocated for the program's resource needs with the school committee and parent association. This pattern of engaged instructional leadership is consistent with research by Mulyasa (2017), who identified the principal's active involvement in curriculum implementation as one of the strongest predictors of program quality in Indonesian Islamic schools. The principal's articulation of a clear institutional vision that positions Qur'anic literacy as central to the school's identity and educational mission appears to have fostered a shared sense of purpose among BTQ teachers and created a positive institutional culture around the program.

### **3. Evaluation of the BTQ Program**

Evaluation within the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan is conducted through a multi-layered assessment system encompassing both formative and summative components. Formative assessment occurs within each instructional session through the teacher's direct observation and corrective feedback during individual recitation practice. Teachers maintain individual student record cards (kartu prestasi) in which they document each student's current position in the Iqra' volume sequence, the quality of their recitation, and any specific errors requiring attention, a practice that enables continuous monitoring of individual progress and informs instructional decisions at the session level (Arifin, 2016). Summative assessments are administered at the end of each semester and take the form of oral recitation examinations, in which students are required to recite a designated passage from the Qur'an before a panel comprising the BTQ teacher and the school's PAI coordinator, as well as a written examination testing knowledge of tajwid rules and Arabic script writing.

The results of program evaluation reveal significant variation in student achievement across grade levels and ability groups. Students in the upper grades (five and six) who have participated in the BTQ program since grade one demonstrate fluent recitation with generally accurate application of tajwid rules, reflecting the cumulative benefit of sustained and sequential Qur'anic literacy instruction over multiple years. In contrast, students who enrolled in the school at a later grade level or who came from backgrounds with limited prior Qur'anic instruction show markedly lower proficiency levels, indicating the importance of early and continuous participation in the program (Nawawi, 2018). This finding underscores the need for differentiated instructional approaches that can accommodate the heterogeneous ability levels present within any given grade level, a challenge that the program's current structure only partially addresses through the use of individualized Iqra' volume progression.

The findings further indicate that the BTQ program has produced measurable positive outcomes not only in terms of Qur'anic recitation proficiency but also in relation to students' broader religious character and behavior. Teachers, parents, and the school principal all reported observing improvements in students' discipline, respect for religious practices, and engagement with daily prayers (shalat) as students progressed through the BTQ program. These observations align with research by Mansur (2016), who found that sustained engagement with Qur'anic learning has significant positive effects on children's moral development, self-discipline, and sense of religious responsibility. The principal attributed these character outcomes to the holistic nature of BTQ instruction, which combines cognitive skill development with affective dimensions of religious engagement, such as reverence for the Qur'an, awareness of the importance of recitation, and a deepened sense of connection to Islamic identity.

#### **4. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors**

Several factors were identified as significant contributors to the effectiveness of the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan. The most prominently cited supporting factor across all informant groups was the strong institutional commitment of the school leadership to the program, manifested in consistent resource allocation, active principal involvement, and the establishment of a school culture that values and celebrates Qur'anic achievement. Regular recognition of student progress through public acknowledgment in school assemblies and the awarding of certificates upon completion of each Iqra' volume were identified as powerful motivational strategies that reinforced student commitment to the program. These findings corroborate the conclusions of Mulyasa (2017), who identified institutional recognition practices as a key mechanism through which school leaders can sustain student and teacher motivation within religious education programs.

Parental support emerged as a second major supporting factor. Interviews with parents revealed that the majority actively encouraged their children's BTQ participation, supervised daily recitation practice at home, and communicated regularly with teachers through the student record card system. Several parents reported engaging Qur'an tutors at home to supplement school-based instruction, reflecting a high level of community investment in children's Qur'anic literacy development. This pattern of strong parental engagement is consistent with research by Lubis (2020), who found that parental support is a significant mediating variable in the relationship between school-based BTQ instruction and student achievement. The school has institutionalized this parental involvement through a monthly parent-teacher BTQ progress meeting, which provides structured opportunities for communication about individual student development.

The heterogeneous ability levels of students enrolled in the BTQ program represent the most frequently cited inhibiting factor by all three BTQ teachers. Within any single grade level, the school currently enrolls students ranging from those who have completed all six Iqra' volumes and are beginning direct Qur'anic recitation to those who are still learning to recognize basic Arabic letters. This wide ability range creates significant pedagogical challenges for teachers who must simultaneously manage students at vastly different stages of the learning sequence within a single instructional session. Fathurrohman (2017) identified heterogeneous student ability as one of the primary structural challenges confronting BTQ programs in urban Indonesian Islamic schools, attributing it to the varied quality of pre-school religious instruction across different family and community backgrounds. The current program addresses this challenge only partially through individual pacing within the Iqra' sequence, and a more systematic approach to ability-based grouping or differentiated instruction may be warranted.

A second significant inhibiting factor identified in this study is the constrained instructional time allocated to the BTQ program within the school's

weekly schedule. Despite the school's allocation of four hours per week to BTQ instruction, teachers consistently reported that this time is insufficient to provide adequate individual recitation practice to all students within a given session, particularly in classes with larger enrollment figures. This limitation is compounded by the loss of instructional time due to national holidays, school events, and examination periods, which periodically disrupt the program's implementation schedule. Research by Syarifuddin (2018) confirms that time allocation is a critical determinant of BTQ program effectiveness, and that schools achieving the highest rates of student progress typically allocate a minimum of six hours per week to dedicated Qur'anic literacy instruction. The present finding suggests that the school may benefit from exploring strategies to increase effective instructional time, such as integrating brief recitation practice into other subject periods or establishing a structured after-school BTQ enrichment program.

The findings of this study also draw attention to the need for ongoing professional development of BTQ teachers. While all three teachers demonstrated solid foundational competencies in Qur'anic recitation and tajwid, interviews revealed that none had received formal training in modern pedagogical approaches to Qur'anic literacy instruction beyond their initial teaching certification. The school's approach to professional development for BTQ teachers was found to be informal and ad hoc, relying primarily on peer consultation and self-directed learning rather than structured in-service training programs. This finding aligns with the broader pattern identified by Wahyudi (2019), who noted that systematic professional development for Qur'an teachers remains an underdeveloped area in Indonesian Islamic elementary education. Investing in regular, structured professional development opportunities would likely enhance the pedagogical repertoire of BTQ teachers at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan and improve their capacity to address the diverse learning needs of students within the program.

Taken together, the findings of this study offer several important implications for educational policy and practice. At the institutional level, the experience of SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan demonstrates that a well-planned, systemically supported, and consistently implemented BTQ program can make a meaningful contribution to students' Qur'anic literacy and religious character development, even within the constraints of a demanding school schedule and heterogeneous student population. At the policy level, the findings highlight the need for national and regional educational authorities to provide clearer guidelines on minimum instructional time allocations for BTQ programs, establish formal accreditation standards for Qur'an teachers in elementary schools, and create structured channels for inter-school sharing of effective BTQ program practices. These recommendations resonate with the broader policy direction articulated in Indonesia's national religious education framework, which calls for the systematic strengthening of Qur'anic literacy education as a cornerstone of Islamic character education in Indonesian schools (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019).

#### **D. Conclusion**

This study has examined the implementation of the Qur'an Reading and Writing Program (BTQ) at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan through a qualitative descriptive inquiry encompassing the program's planning, instructional delivery, evaluation practices, and the range of supporting and inhibiting factors that shape its overall effectiveness. The findings demonstrate that the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan represents a substantive and well-intentioned institutional effort to cultivate Qur'anic literacy as a foundational religious competency among its students. The program is characterized by systematic planning grounded in a progressive multi-year curriculum, the adoption of the child-centered Iqra' method, strong principal leadership, meaningful parental involvement, and a multi-layered assessment system that monitors individual student progress. These qualities collectively

contribute to a program that has produced genuine and observable improvements in students' Qur'anic recitation proficiency, knowledge of tajwid rules, and broader religious character development over the course of their elementary schooling.

Nevertheless, the study also identifies several persistent challenges that constrain the program's full potential. The heterogeneous ability levels of students within each grade level, the limited instructional time allocated to the program within the school's weekly schedule, and the absence of a structured professional development framework for BTQ teachers represent areas requiring targeted attention and strategic intervention. Addressing these challenges will require a concerted and coordinated effort involving the school administration, teaching staff, parents, and relevant educational authorities. Specifically, the school is encouraged to explore ability-based instructional grouping strategies, advocate for increased BTQ instructional time within the official school curriculum, and establish a systematic program of in-service training that equips BTQ teachers with contemporary pedagogical competencies suited to the diverse learning needs of urban elementary school students. These improvements, if implemented systematically, have the potential to significantly enhance the reach and impact of the BTQ program across all student ability groups.

In conclusion, the BTQ program at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan stands as a meaningful example of how Islamic elementary schools can effectively integrate Qur'anic literacy education within a modern school framework, creating an institutional environment in which religious and academic learning are mutually reinforcing rather than competing priorities. The program's documented successes offer valuable lessons for other Islamic elementary schools across North Sumatra and Indonesia that are seeking to strengthen or establish their own Qur'anic literacy initiatives. Future research should build upon the present findings by conducting comparative studies across multiple institutions, employing longitudinal designs to track the long-term outcomes of

BTQ participation, and investigating the impact of specific teacher professional development interventions on student learning outcomes. Such research would contribute further to the evidence base needed to guide the continued development of high-quality, contextually responsive Qur'anic literacy education in Indonesian Islamic schools.

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