International Journal of Learning Reformation in Elementary Education
Vol. 5, No. 03, pp. 832-852
journal.iistr.org/index.php/IJLREE
DOI: 10.56741/IISTR.ijlree.002297



School Program Innovation through Quran Reading to Strengthen Educational Quality in a Public Elementary School

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history
Received 15 May 2026
Revised 20 August 2026
Accepted 22 August 2026

ABSTRACT

Improving learning quality is a priority for every educational institution, including public elementary schools. One approach is school innovation that integrates religious values into learning activities. This study aimed to describe the implementation of the Qur'an reading program at SD Negeri 1 Somoroto, Ponorogo Regency, identify implementation challenges, and analyze the strategies adopted to address them. A descriptive qualitative design was employed. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation involving the principal, Islamic education teachers, Qur'an teachers, curriculum coordinator, homeroom teachers, students, and parents. The findings indicate that the program is implemented regularly according to a scheduled morning routine. Its implementation, however, faces several challenges, including limited availability of UMMI-certified teachers, the occasional absence of Qur'an teachers during learning sessions, and unequal student motivation. To overcome these challenges, the school provides mentoring and further training for teachers who have not obtained UMMI certification. Islamic education teachers also redistribute students whose assigned instructors are absent to ensure learning continuity. Students experiencing low motivation receive intensive guidance, although additional assignments may sometimes interfere with regular classroom learning. Overall, the Qur'an reading program contributes positively to students' reading proficiency, religious habits, discipline, and character development. Sustained teacher development, effective scheduling, and systematic monitoring are required to strengthen program consistency, minimize disruption, and

ensure that its benefits are experienced equally by all students.

Keywords
Learning Quality
Public Elementary School
Quran Reading Program
School Innovation

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Introduction

Education plays a strategic role in developing individuals who are intellectually capable, morally responsible, and equipped with the skills needed to participate in society [1]. At the elementary level, education is particularly important because it provides the foundation for students' academic development, character formation, and moral values [2]. Therefore, improving the quality of learning at the elementary school level requires not only attention to academic achievement but also efforts to develop students' attitudes, discipline, and religious values. Education is said to be of high quality if the learning system is able to produce outcomes that are in line with the objectives that have been formulated, both in terms of academic and non-academic achievements [3].

In the context of increasingly diverse educational demands, schools are expected to continuously develop innovations that respond to students' needs and the expectations of parents and communities. Educational innovation is not limited to the use of new teaching technologies or instructional models but may also take the form of school programs that integrate academic, social, and religious values into everyday educational practices. As an open system, a school needs to innovate continuously by involving all school elements to maintain the existence and sustainability of the educational institution [4]. Previous studies have shown that the sustainability of school innovation is influenced by several interconnected factors, including principal leadership, teacher competence, curriculum alignment, student participation, parental support, and the availability of adequate facilities. Key factors that must be considered in supporting the sustainability of educational innovation include the role of the principal, teacher competence, student participation, curriculum relevance, adequacy of facilities, and the sustainability of the program designed so that innovation can be carried out in accordance with the objectives that have been set [5]. These findings indicate that innovation at the school level is a multidimensional process that requires systematic planning, implementation, and evaluation rather than the introduction of a single new activity.

One area that has received increasing attention is the integration of religious and character education into formal schooling. Religious character education in primary schools is increasingly developing through the integration of moral and religious values into the

curriculum and daily learning activities [6]. Previous research has reported that Quran reading activities can contribute to students' religious development, discipline, and character formation. Quran reading programs have also been implemented in elementary schools to facilitate students' development of basic Quran reading skills, including fluency, accuracy, and application of tajwid rules The habit of reading the Qur'an should be instilled from an early age, starting with parental guidance in learning the letters of the Qur'an, followed by assistance from teachers and formal educational institutions, one of which is elementary school. Thus, Quranic education can be instilled optimally and continuously [7]. Reading the Qur'an is a basic skill that students must have because Islamic Religious Education itself is based on arguments and sources derived from the Qur'an and Hadith [8]**.** The main objective of the Qur'an reading learning program in elementary schools is to facilitate students who do not yet have the ability to read the Qur'an, so that they can learn to read fluently, correctly, and in accordance with the applicable rules [9].

This limitation is important because the implementation of a structured Quran reading program in a public school presents different organizational and managerial challenges from those encountered in religious-based schools. Public schools need to accommodate students with diverse backgrounds while maintaining an inclusive educational environment. At the same time, the implementation of a religious program requires appropriate teacher competencies, scheduling, coordination, learning resources, parental involvement, and institutional support. The implementation of the Qur'an reading learning program in public or state schools requires a planned and systematic approach to ensure that learning objectives are achieved effectively [10]**.** Previous studies have emphasized the importance of teachers and school leaders in implementing religious literacy programs. Islamic Education (PAI) teachers have a crucial and strategic role in the process of religious guidance in schools, particularly in guiding students to master the rules of tajwid and developing their ability to read the Qur'an properly and correctly in accordance with the applicable rules [11]. but they have not sufficiently explained how these elements are coordinated as a school innovation and how schools respond to practical challenges during implementation. Thus, there remains a gap in understanding the management and implementation processes through which a public elementary school institutionalizes a Quran reading program as part of its regular educational activities**.**

Furthermore, previous studies have generally focused on the outcomes of religious programs, while fewer studies have explored the processes underlying their implementation. Understanding these processes is essential because the existence of a program does not automatically indicate successful innovation. The sustainability of a school program depends on how the program is planned, integrated into the school schedule, supported by competent

teachers, monitored by school leaders, and accepted by students and parents The success of the learning process is influenced by various interrelated factors, one of which is the leadership role of the principal in determining the direction and quality of education [12]. The teacher's responsibilities include guiding, teaching, and training students to develop interest, enthusiasm, and curiosity in participating in the Qur'an Literacy Program, so that learning objectives can be optimally achieved [13]. Therefore, examining the implementation process, supporting factors, challenges, and strategies for overcoming those challenges can provide a more comprehensive understanding of school-based religious innovation.

This study addresses this gap by examining the Quran reading program at SD Negeri 1 Somoroto, Ponorogo, as a form of school program innovation in a public elementary school. One form of school innovation that is in line with the social and religious values of Indonesian society is the strengthening of character education through the implementation of religious programs, such as the habit of reading the Qur'an at the elementary school level [14]. Unlike studies that primarily examine Quran learning as a component of Islamic religious education, this study focuses on how the program is organized and implemented as a structured school program. The program is integrated into the school's regular learning activities and involves collaboration among school leaders, teachers, Quran instructors, students, and parents. This context provides an opportunity to examine how a public school develops and sustains a religiously oriented program while operating within the broader framework of formal public education. This is interesting because it shows that religious values can be systematically integrated into formal education or public schools [15].

The novelty of this study lies not simply in examining Quran reading in a public elementary school, but in explaining how a religious learning program becomes institutionalized as a school innovation. The study focuses on the organizational mechanisms through which the program is integrated into the school schedule, supported through teacher capacity development, coordinated across school personnel, adapted to teacher absence and differences in student ability, and sustained through stakeholder collaboration. This perspective moves the discussion beyond the existence of religious activities toward the processes that enable a school-based innovation to become part of routine organizational practice.

A second contribution concerns the public-school context. Unlike studies conducted primarily in religiously oriented schools, this study examines how a Quran reading program is organized in a public elementary school that also accommodates students from different religious backgrounds. The school's arrangement for non-Muslim students provides an important dimension of religious inclusion and demonstrates that value-based school innovation needs to be managed alongside principles of educational diversity. This case

therefore contributes to discussions of school innovation, organizational change, and inclusive religious education.

Based on these gaps, the study addresses three questions: (1) How is the Quran reading program institutionalized as a school innovation in a public elementary school? (2) What challenges emerge during its implementation and how does the school adapt to those challenges? and (3) What organizational conditions support the sustainability and inclusive implementation of the program? The study aims to develop an empirically grounded understanding of these processes and to formulate a conceptual model that can inform the adaptation of similar school-based value innovations.

Through this research, the author aims to describe the implementation of a school innovation regarding the Quran reading program at SD Negeri I Somoroto, identify the challenges faced by the school in implementing this innovation, and analyze the strategies and solutions employed to overcome these challenges. Consequently, this research is significant for providing a strategic overview of how public schools can develop programs grounded in religious values to enhance the overall quality of learning, particularly at the primary education level.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature on school innovation by extending the discussion of educational innovation beyond instructional technology and pedagogical models to include the institutionalization of structured religious programs within public elementary schools. It also provides empirical insight into the interaction between school leadership, teacher competence, stakeholder participation, and program sustainability in the implementation of school-based innovation. Practically, the findings are expected to provide school principals, teachers, education policymakers, and other public elementary schools with practical considerations for designing and managing structured Quran reading programs or other value-based school innovations while maintaining systematic implementation, stakeholder collaboration, and program sustainability.

Material and Methods

This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Qualitative research aims to gain a deep understanding of social situations, events, roles, groups, and specific forms of interaction. This process is a form of scientific investigation conducted in stages, in which researchers seek to understand social phenomena through activities such as comparing, replicating, forming concepts, and classifying the objects being studied. The qualitative approach aims to explain phenomena, perceptions, and behaviors and present them according to the facts in the field [16].

The research was conducted at SD Negeri 1 Somoroto, Kauman District, Ponorogo Regency, East Java, Indonesia. The school was selected as the research site because it

implements an Al-Qur'an reading program as part of its educational activities. The program is conducted as a structured school activity and involves teachers and students from several grade levels. The research was conducted from September to November 2025.

The participants were selected using purposive sampling. This technique was employed to select informants who had direct knowledge, experience, and involvement in the implementation of the Al-Qur'an reading program. The criteria for selecting informants included: (1) having direct involvement in planning, implementing, coordinating, or participating in the program; (2) having sufficient knowledge of the implementation of the program; and (3) being willing to provide information relevant to the research objectives. The informants consisted of one principal, one curriculum coordinator, one religious teacher, two Quran teachers, two homeroom teachers, two third-grade students and two fifth-grade students and one parent. Thus, the total number of informants was twelve people. The number of informants was determined based on the relevance and adequacy of the information obtained during the research process.

Data collection was conducted through three main techniques: interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide to obtain detailed information regarding the planning, implementation, supporting factors, obstacles, and strategies related to the Al-Qur'an reading program. The interviews involved the principal, curriculum coordinator, religious teachers, homeroom teachers, Quran teachers, students, and parents. Observations were conducted using an observation sheet to directly examine the implementation of the program, including learning activities, teacher-student interactions, teaching methods, student participation, classroom conditions, and the management of the program. Documentation was conducted using a documentation guide to collect relevant written and visual evidence, including program schedules, student reading records, activity photographs, school documents, and other documents related to the implementation of the Al-Qur'an reading program.

The research instruments consisted of the researcher as the main instrument, supported by interview guidelines, observation sheets, and documentation guidelines. The interview guidelines contained questions related to the planning, implementation, supporting and inhibiting factors, and strategies for developing the program. The observation sheet was used to record systematically observed activities and conditions during the implementation of the Al-Qur'an reading program. Meanwhile, the documentation guide was used to identify and collect relevant documents and photographic evidence. The instruments were adjusted to the research objectives and developed to facilitate systematic data collection.

Data were analyzed thematically through an iterative process of data condensation, initial coding, categorization, theme development, and interpretation. Interview transcripts,

observation notes, and program documents were compared to identify recurring patterns related to program institutionalization, leadership, teacher competence, stakeholder collaboration, implementation challenges, adaptive strategies, inclusion, and sustainability. The emerging themes were then compared across informants and data collection techniques. This process was used to connect empirical findings with Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations and Fullan's theory of educational change while retaining the meanings expressed by participants.

To ensure data credibility, this study employed source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing and checking the consistency of information obtained from different informants, such as the principal, teachers, students, and parents. Technique triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation. The results were considered credible when consistent patterns of information were identified across different sources and data collection techniques.

Ethical considerations were applied throughout the research process. Before data collection, the researcher obtained permission from the relevant school authorities and explained the purpose, procedures, and scope of the research to the participants. Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed that they could decline to answer questions or withdraw from the research. The researcher maintained the confidentiality of participants' personal information and used the collected data solely for academic and research purposes. Photographs and other documentation involving students were used with appropriate permission, and the identities of participants were protected in reporting the findings.

Results and Discussions

Based on the results of research conducted at SD Negeri 1 Somoroto in Ponorogo Regency, it was found that the implementation of the Al-Qur'an reading program was carried out in the morning and integrated into the daily learning schedule. The implementation of this program was supported by various parties who played a decisive role in its success, including school management, teachers, and parents. However, in its implementation, the Al-Qur'an reading program also faces a number of challenges, both technical and non-technical. To overcome these challenges, the school has formulated and implemented various strategic solutions in an effort to maintain the sustainability and effectiveness of the program in improving students' Al-Qur'an reading skills.

A. Implementation of school innovation in the Al-Qur'an reading program at SD Negeri I Somoroto

The findings show that the Quran reading program at SD Negeri 1 Somoroto has been institutionalized as a structured school program rather than being implemented as an occasional religious activity. The program is integrated into the school’s daily learning

schedule and organized according to students' grade levels and reading abilities. The activities begin at different times according to the school schedule, and students are divided into learning groups based on their ability levels. One Quran teacher generally accompanies approximately 12–15 students. The program also involves the principal, curriculum coordinator, religious teachers, homeroom teachers, Quran teachers, students, and parents.

The implementation of this program shows how public schools can provide a more holistic educational environment by integrating academic and spiritual aspects through Quran recitation activities. The implementation of the Quran recitation program is not only a means of expanding religious knowledge, but also fosters enthusiasm for practicing Islamic values in the school environment [17]. This program runs effectively and successfully with the cooperation of the entire school community and various parties. This is in line with Everret M. Rogers' theory of innovation diffusion, which explains how innovations are accepted, adopted, and developed in educational institutions [18].

From the perspective of Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory, the implementation reflects several characteristics of innovation adoption. First, the program offers a relative advantage because it provides a structured continuation of Quran learning within a public elementary school. Second, its compatibility is demonstrated through the use of the UMMI method, which students had previously encountered in kindergarten. Third, the innovation is translated into observable practices through scheduled activities, student grouping, teacher assignments, and individual reading assessments. Thus, the adoption of the program can be understood not merely as the acceptance of a new idea but as the transformation of the idea into an institutionalized practice.

This finding is consistent with previous research emphasizing that educational innovation requires organizational support, teacher competence, curriculum alignment, and stakeholder participation. However, the present finding extends this discussion by showing that innovation in a public elementary school can take the form of a structured religious program. Rather than positioning religious activities outside the core school system, SD Negeri 1 Somoroto integrates the program into its regular educational schedule. This integration represents an important characteristic of the innovation because it makes Quran learning part of the school's organizational routine.

At SD Negeri 1 Somoroto in Ponorogo district, the principal plays a key role in encouraging the implementation of the Al-Qur'an reading program as an effort to improve the quality of learning. Principals play a very important role; they not only carry out administrative tasks but also function as visionary leaders who can set directions, provide inspiration, and motivate the entire school community [19].

This finding can be interpreted through Fullan's theory of educational change, which emphasizes that sustainable change depends on leadership, collaboration, and the development of a supportive organizational culture. The program's implementation does not depend solely on the principal or Quran teachers. Instead, change is distributed across several actors who perform complementary functions. Therefore, the implementation of the Quran reading program demonstrates that school innovation is a collective process rather than an individual initiative.

The following is an excerpt from an interview with the school principal:

> "Recognizing the students' need to improve their Quran recitation skills and to ensure their Quran studies do not cease after kindergarten, the school has implemented a Quran recitation program that serves as a continuation of their kindergarten-level studies. The school selected the Ummi method—which was also used in kindergarten—to ensure continuity. The school collaborates with the Ummi Institute; the curriculum team establishes the lesson schedule, while the religious education teacher serves as the coordinator responsible for the program."

Interviews with the principal revealed that the school organizes a Quran recitation program as an effort to improve students' Quran reading skills and maintain the continuity of Quran recitation learning from kindergarten level. This program uses the Ummi method, which was chosen because it has been implemented in kindergartens, ensuring that learning can take place continuously. In its implementation, the school collaborates with the Ummi Institute as a supporting partner for the program.

The implementation of this program is increasingly effective due to the clear division of tasks. Collaboration between the curriculum, religious teachers, and homeroom teachers is a key factor in the successful implementation of the Al-Qur'an reading program at SD Negeri 1 Somoroto. The curriculum serves as the main guideline that ensures the innovation program runs systematically and sustainably. Proper and optimal curriculum arrangements play an important role in improving the quality of learning [20].

Based on observations and interviews with the curriculum, the implementation of the recitation program is as follows: activities begin at 7:00 a.m. with a special schedule for first grade. Grade 2 starts at 08:00 WIB, Grade 3 starts at 09:15 WIB, and Grades 4-5 start at 13:15 WIB. Students are divided based on their ability level. Grade 1 is divided into 7 groups, Grade 2 is divided into 8 groups, Grade 3 is divided into 9 groups, and Grades 4-5 are divided into 9 groups. One Quran recitation teacher accompanies around 12-15 students. Religious teachers act as program coordinators who set schedules, provide guidance to Quran teachers in implementing the UMMI method, and ensure that facilities are ready. With this role, religious teachers become the main guardians of the quality of program implementation in the field, as well as demonstrating the function of religious teachers as guardians of the quality of innovative program implementation in schools.

Homeroom teachers make an important contribution as mentors to students in daily activities. Based on educational communication theory, homeroom teachers act as the main link between the school, students, and parents. This role is very evident at SD Negeri 1 Somoroto, where homeroom teachers supervise student attendance and participation in Quran recitation activities, reinforce discipline, and maintain intensive communication with parents regarding their children's progress in reading the Quran. In addition, homeroom teachers help maintain a conducive learning atmosphere and support religious teachers in ensuring that recitation activities run orderly.

Recitation teachers play an important role in ensuring that the Quran reading program is carried out effectively and in accordance with its objectives. They are tasked with guiding students in Quran reading activities based on their respective skill levels, starting from letter recognition, makhraj, to fluency in reading. Quran teachers also consistently apply the UMMI method, including classical and individual learning techniques and reading evaluation. In addition, Quran teachers monitor the progress of each student's abilities through daily assignments and learning achievement records. Quran teachers play a very significant role in Quran learning activities for students.

At SD Negeri 1 Somoroto, Quran teachers help maintain a conducive learning environment by giving writing, listening, or other activities to students while other students are reciting. They also coordinate with religious teachers and homeroom teachers in determining student grouping, learning schedules, and handling obstacles that arise during the learning process. Beyond teaching, Quran teachers also motivate students to be enthusiastic about reading the Quran and make this activity part of their daily religious routine. With this comprehensive role, Quran teachers are at the forefront of improving students' Quran reading skills.

Parents play a very important role in supporting the success of the Al-Qur'an reading program at school. Parental support is an external factor that can strengthen the implementation of recitation habits practiced at school. This role is realized through accompanying children while they learn to read the Al-Qur'an at home, providing time for murojaah together, and ensuring that children bring the necessary recitation equipment. Parental involvement is considered to be a valuable practice in promoting children’s educational attainments [21]. Parents need to play an active role in accompanying their children's learning process by creating a conducive environment and providing guidance in reading and writing the Qur'an at home [22]**.** Parental involvement is essential in fostering children's interest in reading the Qur'an, including through direct assistance and monitoring of children's recitation activities at home [23].

This collaboration is in line with Michael Fullan's theory of change. This theory describes that transformation in the school environment takes place through effective leadership,

cooperation between teachers, a supportive school culture, and adequate policy support. This theory examines how the dynamics of change in society impact the education system and, conversely, how reforms in education can drive social change [18].

SD Negeri 1 Somoroto also created a special schedule for non-Muslim students. During Quran recitation activities, they were picked up by their parents and taken to the nearest church to attend religious classes according to their beliefs. SD Negeri 1 Somoroto collaborated with the church, including providing honoraria to non-Muslim teachers who taught religious education to non-Muslim students.

An important finding that extends the discussion of school innovation is the school's arrangement for non-Muslim students. During Quran reading sessions, non-Muslim students were provided with religious learning according to their beliefs through coordination with parents and a local church. This arrangement indicates that the institutionalization of a religiously oriented program in a public school requires not only organizational efficiency but also mechanisms for accommodating religious diversity. In this sense, inclusivity is part of the organizational conditions under which the innovation can be legitimately sustained in a public-school context.

Facilities and support are also factors that greatly determine the success of the Al-Qur'an reading program at SD Negeri 1 Somoroto. The school provides various learning needs such as Al-Qur'an mushaf, UMMI method guidebooks and modules, as well as stationery and worksheets needed during the recitation process. In addition, the learning room used for Al-Qur'an reading activities is arranged in such a way that it is comfortable and conducive, so that students can follow the lessons with more focus. This support also includes the provision of clean classrooms, adequate lighting, and seating that supports teacher-student interaction during reading recitation and practice sessions. This is in line with the theory of change, which describes that transformation in the school environment occurs, among other things, through the existence of a supportive school culture.

In addition to physical facilities, the school also provides non-physical support in the form of schedule readiness, Quran recitation group arrangements, and effective coordination between religious teachers, guidance counselors, and homeroom teachers. The availability of these adequate facilities demonstrates the school's commitment to supporting innovation to improve the quality of learning, particularly in terms of Quran reading skills. With well-managed facilities, the learning process runs more effectively, and students' skills can be developed optimally.

Students also support the success of this program. Based on observations, students appear to be very enthusiastic and happy with the recitation program. They participate in recitation lessons with enthusiasm. This is reinforced by the results of interviews with third and fifth

grade students. Based on the results of interviews with third and fifth grade students, it is known that students feel happy and enthusiastic about the recitation program at school. The Quran recitation program has a positive impact on the ability to read the Quran. Students said that through this program, their recitation has become more fluent. In addition, the teachers' kind and patient guidance has created a pleasant learning atmosphere. These conditions make students feel more comfortable, motivated, and more confident in learning to read the Quran.



Fig. 1. Learning to recite the Quran in the classroom and on the mosque porch

Fig. 1 presents Quran learning activities conducted in the classroom and on the mosque porch. The figure visually demonstrates that the program is implemented through small-group learning rather than through a single large-class activity. This arrangement corresponds with the research findings concerning student grouping according to reading ability and the assignment of Quran teachers to specific groups.

B. Challenges faced by SD Negeri I Somoroto in implementing the Al-Qur'an reading program innovation

Every educational innovation requires a process of adaptation, adjustment, and the involvement of all parties. The Al-Qur'an reading program at SD Negeri 1 Somoroto is an effort by the school to improve the quality of learning while strengthening the religious character of students. However, as with other innovations, the implementation of this program has not been entirely smooth. Implementing innovation in education is not a simple matter, as various obstacles often arise from those involved in the learning process [24].

There are three challenges faced by SD Negeri 1 Somoroto in implementing the innovative Quran reading program, including: The first challenge is human resource difficulties (UMMI-certified teachers), as not all teachers have UMMI certificates. Based on interviews with the principal, it is known that the implementation of the Quran recitation program at SD Negeri I Somoroto faces several challenges. One of the main challenges is the limited number of teachers who have UMMI certificates. The principal explained that UMMI certification is an important requirement because it serves to ensure that the Al-Qur'an reading learning process can take place in a conducive, structured manner and in accordance with UMMI method

standards. With certified teachers, the quality of learning is expected to be maintained and the program objectives can be optimally achieved.

Based on research data, there are nine teachers who teach the Al-Qur'an reading program at SD Negeri 1 Somoroto. Of these, four teachers already had UMMI certificates before joining the school, three teachers obtained UMMI certificates after teaching at SD Negeri 1 Somoroto, while the other two teachers do not yet have certification. This situation demonstrates the institution's commitment to maintaining the quality standards of Al-Qur'an reading instruction through support for teacher qualifications. However, the presence of uncertified teachers poses a challenge to efforts to standardize the quality of instruction. Therefore, strategic measures are needed in the form of ongoing training and facilitation of the UMMI certification process to ensure that the program runs optimally, consistently, and continuously.

This finding is important when viewed through Rogers' theory. An innovation is more likely to be implemented consistently when its users understand and possess the competencies required to apply it. In this case, the UMMI method is not simply a label attached to the program; its implementation requires teachers who understand the method and can apply its procedures. Therefore, teacher certification functions as part of the organizational infrastructure required for maintaining the fidelity of the innovation.

The second challenge is teacher absenteeism in the implementation of the Quran recitation program. When a teacher is unable to attend, the learning process must be adjusted or students with varying abilities must be regrouped, requiring intensive assistance. Teacher attendance in elementary schools is a crucial factor that affects the continuity of the learning process and the optimization of student development [25]. Based on observations and interviews with religious teachers, it was found that one of the challenges in implementing the Quran recitation program was the absence of Quran recitation teachers due to leave. In some cases, out of nine Quran recitation teachers on duty, two were unable to attend, resulting in two groups of students not receiving guidance. Given these circumstances, a solution must be found so that both groups continue to receive support, ensuring that learning continues to run smoothly and effectively.

This finding demonstrates that the sustainability of the innovation is dependent not only on program design but also on the availability of human resources. From Fullan's perspective, educational change requires the development of organizational capacity. The school's response to teacher absence demonstrates an adaptive capacity because the program is not stopped when an individual teacher is unavailable; instead, responsibility is temporarily redistributed among available teachers.

The finding also illustrates an important distinction between program implementation and program sustainability. A program may have a clear schedule and organizational structure, but

its continuity can still be disrupted by operational factors such as staff absence. Therefore, sustainability requires contingency mechanisms in addition to routine planning.

Here is an interview with the religious studies teacher:

> "A challenge with this Quran recitation program arises when a teacher takes leave. On one occasion, two out of the nine teachers were absent, leaving a group of students without a supervisor; consequently, I had to assign them to another group."

Interviews with the religious education teacher revealed that one of the challenges in implementing the Quran recitation program is the absence of instructors due to leave. In some instances, two of the nine assigned instructors were unable to attend, leaving two groups of students without supervision. To address this, the religious education teacher reorganized the groups by assigning the affected students to other groups, ensuring the recitation activities could proceed.

The third challenge is the learning process that is not conducive. During the learning process, students waiting for their turn to recite often need additional activities to stay focused and not disturb other groups, which affects the optimization of the program's implementation. One important aspect in realizing quality education is the ability of teachers to manage the class and create a conducive learning environment so that students can follow the learning process optimally [26].

Based on interviews with Quran teachers, it was found that one of the challenges in implementing the Quran recitation program was the lack of a conducive classroom environment during recitation activities. Teachers reported that some students were still noisy, thereby disturbing the concentration of other students who were reciting the Quran. This situation has the potential to affect the smoothness and effectiveness of the Quran reading learning process. This is also supported by the results of the researcher's observations, which show that during the Quran recitation activity, there are still students who are noisy and talking among themselves, creating an unfavorable atmosphere.

In addition, there are still students who lack enthusiasm in this activity, so they have to repeat it. In this case, the role of the teacher is very important in creating a conducive learning process. The role of the teacher is very decisive in building a supportive and effective learning atmosphere [27]. Based on the results of interviews with Quran recitation teacher 2, it is known that one of the challenges in implementing the Quran recitation program is that there are still students who show a lack of enthusiasm in participating in the activity. This condition has an impact on the reading submission process, where students have to repeat because their reading is not yet fluent. This shows the need for continuous assistance and motivation so that students' involvement and ability to read the Qur'an can be optimally improved. This is also supported by the results of the researcher's observations, which show that during the

recitation activity, there are still students who lack enthusiasm in reciting, so they have to repeat.

C. Strategies and solutions implemented by SD Negeri I Somoroto in overcoming challenges in implementing the Al-Qur'an reading program

Although the implementation of the Al-Qur'an reading program at SD Negeri I Somoroto faced three challenges, the school was able to identify the root causes of the problems and formulate appropriate solutions to ensure the sustainability of the innovation. Therefore, targeted strategies and solutions are needed so that this program can achieve its objectives optimally and provide long-term benefits for students and the school environment.

The school strengthened internal coordination through collaboration between the principal, religious teachers, Quran teachers, and homeroom teachers so that any obstacles could be immediately identified and addressed. The strategies implemented by SD Negeri I Somoroto in overcoming the challenges of implementing the Quran reading program included: First. To overcome human resource difficulties (teachers with UMMI certification), the school provides assistance and further training for Quran teachers who do not yet have UMMI certification. Based on interviews with the principal, SD Negeri I Somoroto has implemented a number of strategic steps to overcome the obstacle of finding teachers with UMMI certification. One of the efforts that can be made is to provide opportunities for new Quran teachers to participate in training and obtain UMMI method certification in stages. In addition, the school also collaborates with the UMMI Foundation to find UMMI-certified Quran teachers. Alternatively, it collaborates with other parties to find UMMI-certified teachers.

This strategy reflects Rogers' concept of the implementation stage, in which adopters translate an innovation into practice and develop solutions to problems encountered during implementation. Teacher certification can therefore be interpreted as an effort to reduce uncertainty and increase the compatibility between the intended method and actual classroom practice.

Second, to overcome teacher absenteeism in the implementation of the Quran recitation program, religious teachers arrange for students who do not have a mentor to be divided into other groups so that the learning process continues effectively and all students continue to receive guidance. Based on interviews with religious teachers, it appears that when a Quran recitation teacher is unable to attend, leaving a group without a mentor, the religious teacher rearranges the groups. Religious teachers, as coordinators, can temporarily transfer the group to another Quran recitation teacher who is still able to accommodate additional students. The school can also prepare substitute teachers who are ready to replace teachers who are suddenly absent.

From Fullan's perspective, this adaptive response reflects the importance of organizational flexibility and collaboration in sustaining change. The continuity of the program is maintained through collective responsibility rather than dependence on one individual. Thus, the findings demonstrate that sustainability is supported by the school's capacity to adjust existing arrangements in response to changing circumstances.

Third, to create a more conducive learning atmosphere, when a student recites, other students are given writing activities and some are assigned to listen to their friends recite. This way, all students remain involved and focused during the learning process. To overcome students' lack of motivation in learning to read the Qur'an, SD Negeri I Somoroto can use a more enjoyable approach that encourages enthusiasm for learning.

Based on interviews with Quran teachers, it was found that in order to create a more conducive learning environment, when one student recites, the other students are given writing activities and some are assigned to listen to their friends recite. This way, all students remain engaged and focused during the learning process. Meanwhile, to overcome students' lack of motivation in learning to read the Quran, SD Negeri I Somoroto can use a more enjoyable approach that encourages enthusiasm for learning. Quran teachers can give appreciation in the form of praise, simple gifts, or a reward system such as stars to foster enthusiasm. Variations in teaching methods can also be implemented, for example through educational games or light memorization challenges to make the class more interesting. In addition, teachers need to build good relationships with students, understand the obstacles they face, and provide more personal guidance so that students feel cared for. With a positive and supportive learning atmosphere, student motivation can increase so that they do not need to repeat the readings often.

These strategies can be interpreted as an attempt to maintain students' active participation throughout the learning process. Rather than treating waiting time as an unavoidable interruption, teachers convert it into another learning activity. This finding strengthens the interpretation that the effectiveness of the program depends on teachers' ability to adapt implementation to classroom conditions.



Fig. 2. Listening to a friend who is making a deposit

Fig. 2 shows students listening to a peer who is submitting a Quran reading. The image provides visual evidence of the strategy used by teachers to keep students engaged while another student receives individual reading guidance. This practice corresponds directly with the finding that students who are waiting for their turn are encouraged to listen to their peers.

The findings can be interpreted as an institutionalization process rather than as a sequence of isolated activities. The program is sustained through the interaction of leadership, teacher capacity, organizational routines, stakeholder collaboration, adaptive responses to operational problems, and religious inclusion.

Fig. 3 illustrates the proposed pathway for institutionalizing the Qur'an reading program. It begins with identified school needs and leadership initiation, followed by curriculum integration, teacher development, ability-based grouping, stakeholder collaboration, adaptive implementation, and evaluation. Operational challenges continually stimulate responsive adjustments, ultimately supporting program institutionalization, continuity, and long-term sustainability effectively.



Fig. 3. Proposed institutionalization pathway

Conclusion

The implementation of school innovation through the Al-Qur'an reading program at SD Negeri I Somoroto has been carried out systematically, planned, and optimally, as demonstrated by clear program planning, the selection of sustainable learning methods, the

preparation of a schedule integrated with the school curriculum, and the appointment of competent and certified teachers as program coordinators. The school has been able to create a supportive religious environment by introducing a recitation program that is included in morning activities, dividing students into study groups according to their abilities, and involving religious teachers as coordinators of the implementation. Through this innovation, the school has been able to improve the students' Al-Qur'an literacy skills. Overall, this program shows that school innovation can be an effective strategy in improving the quality of learning.

Based on the results of the study, the challenges in implementing the Al-Qur'an reading program at Somoroto Public Elementary School I include difficulties in human resources (UMMI-certified teachers), teacher absenteeism in the implementation of the recitation program, classroom conditions that are not yet fully conducive, and students who lack enthusiasm. These challenges indicate that the implementation of the innovative Quran reading program requires adaptive, collaborative, and sustainable management in order to optimally achieve the objectives of improving the quality of learning and instilling religious values.

Based on the results of the study, the strategies for implementing the Al-Qur'an reading program in elementary schools include: schools providing assistance and further training for teachers who are not yet UMMI-certified, strengthening the role of religious teachers as coordinators who ensure the smooth running of activities, including rearranging group divisions when there is a shortage of teachers. To ensure a conducive learning process, when a student is absent, other students are given writing activities and some are assigned to listen to their friends' recitations. For students who lack enthusiasm, teachers use a more enjoyable approach and encourage their enthusiasm for learning. These strategies and solutions demonstrate the school's commitment to ensuring that innovative programs run effectively, inclusively, and sustainably in order to improve the quality of learning.

Theoretically, the findings contribute to the understanding of school innovation by showing that a religious program can function as a form of organizational innovation within a public elementary school. Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory helps explain the adoption and institutionalization of the program, particularly through its compatibility with students' previous Quran learning experiences and its translation into observable school practices. Meanwhile, Fullan's theory of educational change helps explain the importance of leadership, collaboration, organizational capacity, and continuous adaptation in sustaining the innovation. The combination of these perspectives suggests that school innovation is not only concerned with adopting a new program but also with developing the organizational capacity required to implement and sustain it.

Practically, the findings suggest that public elementary schools intending to develop similar value-based programs should pay attention to teacher competence, clear role distribution, flexible program management, stakeholder collaboration, and continuous monitoring. Teacher certification and professional development are particularly important when a standardized learning method is adopted. The findings also suggest that schools need to prepare adaptive arrangements for teacher absence and classroom-management challenges to maintain continuity of learning.

This study has several limitations. First, it was conducted at only one public elementary school, so the findings reflect the specific organizational and social context of SD Negeri 1 Somoroto and should not be generalized to all public elementary schools. Second, the study employed a qualitative descriptive approach, which provides an in-depth understanding of implementation processes but does not quantitatively measure changes in students' Quran reading abilities or learning quality. Third, the findings are based primarily on interviews, observations, and documentation within the research setting. Future research could examine similar Quran reading programs across several public elementary schools to identify patterns across different contexts. Further studies could also employ mixed methods or longitudinal designs to examine changes in students' Quran reading competence, religious literacy, learning attitudes, and the sustainability of school-based religious innovations over time.

The principal theoretical contribution of the study is the proposed institutionalization model, which connects school leadership, teacher capacity, stakeholder collaboration, adaptive implementation, and inclusion in explaining how a value-based program becomes sustainable in a public-school setting. The model provides a process-oriented interpretation of Rogers' innovation adoption and Fullan's educational change perspectives.

Practically, public elementary schools seeking to develop similar value-based programs should establish clear organizational routines, invest in teacher competence and certification, prepare contingency arrangements for staff absence, monitor student engagement and progress, and ensure that religious programming is implemented inclusively. Because this study is based on a single school, the proposed model should be treated as an empirically grounded framework for further testing rather than a universally generalizable model.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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