

The Transformation of Qur'anic Literacy Culture Among School-Age Children in Simeulue: From Community to Institution

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The culture of Al-Qur'an literacy among school-aged children in Simeulue Regency is currently undergoing a change. It has evolved from a family and community-based learning paradigm to a more formal structure with TPA/TPQs (Al-Qur'an Education Centers), schools, madrasah diniyah (Islamic day schools), pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), Al-Qur'an educational institutions, and government support. **Method:** This study used a descriptive qualitative method using an ethnographic approach. Data was collected through participant observation, ethnographic interviews, documentation, and Focus Group Discussions. Data was then analyzed using interactive methods of analysis such as data condensation, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions. **Results:** There were three major findings from this research. First, the culture of Al-Qur'an literacy begins with the family, Qur'anic educators, the meunasah, and community solidarity. After that, it is institutionalized through TPA/TPQs, schools, pesantren, and religious education networks. Second, the government is helping to strengthen this process by implementing policies, programs, guidance from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, memorization support, STQ/MTQ (Qur'anic recitation competitions) events, and institutional legalization. **Novelty:** Third, this literacy culture is closely connected to developing habits of worship, morals (akhlak), respect for educators, Islamic identity, and spiritual resilience.

INTRODUCTION

Children learn to read and write through many interactions with their families, in schools, and with others in society. From the family literacy perspective, children do not simply develop reading skills from being taught in a classroom; instead, children create reading habits through the way that they interact with their parents, the ways they engage with texts, the ways that they talk about books or other written materials, and the ways that the family gives meaning to the things that happen in their lives. This idea is relevant to studying children's literacy of the Quran. Just like children practice reading, listening, memorizing and understanding parts of the Quran in relation to other people in their lives, children practice reading, listening, memorizing and understanding the Quran in relation to their parents and in relation to the ways that their families establish routines. If reading the Quran is done with adults and is part of the routine of the family, then it has the opportunity to be more than just something that a child does to learn how to read. It can become a habit that is given special religious meaning by the family [1].

A child's developmental path in school-aged years demonstrates how cognitive, linguistic, social, and moral capacities are developed through interrelated experiences. Children during this time period develop through modeling, habituation, feedback, and interaction with adults. Therefore, to define school-aged Quranic education solely as an

exercise in reading text would be extremely limited. Rather, it represents a crucial process in developing religious identity and disposition. Reading and memorizing take on significant meaning when they relate to the practices of worship, social interactions, and behavior development. According to the child development model, children have the best opportunity to convert their experiences into lasting habits when they are consistently exposed to the same environment [2].

The concept of Quranic literacy should also be separated conceptually from being able to decode phonetically. Literacy paradigms used today define literacy as a social process that includes the context, values, identity, and the reason for why a text exists. Thus, if a child can phonetically read the Quran, they are not necessarily on the same literacy level as a child who can understand the meaning of what they have read; relate those meanings to their own life experience; and show evidence of applying the values they learned through action. Using this theoretical framework, researchers can investigate the culture of Quranic literacy as a continuum of processes: from reading, listening, and understanding to reflecting upon, and then practically applying the knowledge [3].

Simeulue represents a paradigm in itself. Quranic education has developed within an island group (archipelago) where multiple languages exist; there have been many migrations in the past; oral traditions exist; and there is a variety of religions practiced. Historical research into Simeulue shows that the social environment of the community and the development of education in Simeulue are parts of a long history. Therefore, changes in Quranic education in Simeulue are connected to the changes taking place throughout the archipelago. Additionally, Sinabang, as the center of government and services, links Sinabang to other villages through the movement of people; through schools; and through programs being distributed strategically [4].

Empirical evidence obtained through the dissertation reveals that historically the family played a major role in teaching children. Parents are depicted by Amran Is and Azkardin as being the main teachers; they would teach after the Maghrib or Isha prayer. Later on, parents began to employ the services of traditional Quranic teachers (*guru mengaji*) and community prayer houses (*meunasah*). This suggests that Quranic education was not only about gaining knowledge, but also about the way families and communities functioned. Examples of good behavior, active mentoring, repetitiveness and oversight created an atmosphere where young children could learn intensely. Thus, the family is the starting point for understanding how Quranic literacy developed culturally in Simeulue [1].

The transformation of educational practice, previously based in the home and/or in local "*meunasah*" (community religious centers), took place as a result of adopting new organizational forms. Institutions such as TPAs/TPQs, LPQs, formal schools, MDTs, and Islamic boarding schools ("*pesantren*") developed highly structured organizational forms that included time-frames for instruction, facilities for learning, trained instructional staff, defined learning outcomes, and evaluative mechanisms. The transitional period described above represents a form of institutionalization -- i.e., a process whereby a

practice develops legitimacy, role differentiation, standardized procedures, and resource allocation mechanisms that allow it to continue reproducing itself. However, it would be incorrect to view this institutionalization as a complete loss of the community-based learning tradition. Instead, institutionalization provides a layer of structure that integrates the traditions of community-based learning into a more stable and enduring form [5].

At the same time, the changes being described here create many new problems. As noted earlier, many of the functions of families and communities are being transferred to formal educational institutions. Also, many parents are turning to private tutors to provide their children with instruction. Finally, advances in technology have created new types of learning environments and sources of distraction. Empirical studies suggest that children using mobile phones/devices tend to lose concentration during Quranic recitations and that the traditional role of the *meunasah* (as a center for socializing and learning) has been replaced by virtual spaces. Thus, the transformation of Quranic literacy culture needs to be examined from an ecological perspective rather than simply as an increase in the number of institutions [6].

Existing research on the role of digital literacy in Islamic education suggests that technology has the potential to enhance learning if teachers have the skills necessary to use technology as an effective tool for teaching and learning. The availability of technology-based resources such as *murattal* (audio recitations), instructional resources, digital Quranic applications, and improved communication channels among educators, students, and parents provide many opportunities for teachers to utilize these resources. However, it is essential that teachers receive adequate support and direction regarding how to integrate these resources into their classroom practices. This paradigm is especially significant to the context of Simeulue, where a traditional literacy culture based primarily upon print media must currently evolve toward a more technologically-based environment [7].

Therefore, the main focus of my research goes above and beyond the simple question of whether children in Simeulue learn about the Quran; it explores how this cultural tradition (Quran learning) develops, is passed down, and changes when children's learning environments move away from family-based/communal systems to more formal educational institutions. I find an analytical void because there have been few studies which concurrently examine the genealogy of a community, the process of institutionalization of that community's traditions, the effect of government policies on those traditions, and children's religious experience within one archipelagic socio-cultural setting. My research will help to illustrate the processes of both continuity and change. The overall objective of my research is to describe the Quranic literacy culture among school-aged children, determine what part the government played in the development of that culture, and explain how that culture has influenced subsequent Islamic practices and broader religious life in the Simeulue community.

RESEARCH METHOD

The methodology used in this study is based on a descriptive qualitative design that uses an ethnographic approach. The choice of this methodological design was made due to the fact that the study wants to look at Qur'anic literacy practices as a social phenomenon that takes place in a natural setting and not as individual variables. The researcher looked at the customs, interactions, underlying meanings, changes in the learning environment, and relationships between the participants. Qualitative designs allow researchers to get a deeper understanding of the subject's experiences and the social context surrounding them. Ethnography allows researchers to see the practices as part of the overall culture of the group being studied [8].

The primary tool of the research was the researcher themselves; this was accomplished through having a physical presence in the field. The purpose of being present in the field was to develop genuine connections with the people who reside there and to see how they used literacy on a regular basis. Observations took place in many locations, such as homes, meunasah, schools, TPA/TPQ, LPQ, MDT, pesantren, mosques, village administrative offices, etc., which are all examples of other types of social spaces. Qualitative research allows for researchers to have a close relationship with the setting where they collect data. Having a close relationship with the setting where you collect data will allow you to obtain information that is very specific to the language used by the participants, their social interactions, and what the participants mean when they describe their experiences [9].

Primary data sources included religious figures, community elders, government officials, school principals, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, school age children, village heads, administrators of LPQ/TPA/TPQ, directors of MDT and leaders of pesantren. Primary data also included field observations, informal conversations and direct monitoring of activities. Secondary data were collected from academic books, scholarly articles, government documents, school records, institutional archives, policy documents and activity reports. These data sources were selected due to their relevance to the three main areas of research and their potential to provide insight into institutional practices and changes [10]. Data collection occurred through participant observation, ethnographic interviews, documentation and focus group discussions (FGDs).

Participant observation was used to observe reading routines, memorization practices, teacher-student interaction, family involvement in education, the use of religious spaces, and patterns of participation. Ethnographic interviews were open-ended and semi-structured so that questions could change as a result of the informants' responses. Documentation was analyzed to determine programs, organizational structure, schedule, policies and records of activities. In addition, FGDs were utilized to combine the views of religious leaders, educators, institutional administrators, government officials and community members to create a complete picture of both differing and similar experiences [11].

The data analysis was systematically conducted utilizing coding, categorization, thematic development, and interpretation of the collected data. The raw data were

condensed as we extracted only those aspects that were relevant to our research question and then presented in an organized format for us to compare across informants and across locations. We used coding to identify common themes such as; family role modeling, meunasah culture, methodological changes, institutionalization, government support, self reliance among communities, religious effects, and technology distractions. This coding process was done on a continuous basis, with new categories being reviewed and compared to the entire data set each time we added new information [12].

The reliability of the results were developed through continuous involvement in the field; consistent observations; triangulation of sources and techniques; peer review; and member check-offs. The transcripts of interviews were compared to other types of data such as observational and documentary evidence. Accounts provided by multiple informants were then analyzed to identify similar patterns and inconsistencies. A thematic analysis was performed only when codes and categories reached a level of stability that allowed for interpretations to be based upon more than the researcher's initial thoughts. These procedures were designed to create consistency in how raw data, emergent themes, and subsequent interpretations were analyzed throughout the entire research process [13].

The research procedures also met ethical requirements and created a system of tracking the data. Children's responses to questions are considered participant experience and should be represented appropriately, whereas sensitive identity information is not included unless relevant to the analytical objectives of the study. Each interview, observation, and document has been systematically coded so that the relationships between raw data, categories, themes, and conclusions are always visible. Additionally, the researcher separates descriptive data, informant interpretations, and the researcher's own analytical interpretations so that the findings presented in the study do not extend beyond what is supported by the data collected. In qualitative design, maintaining a traceable record of the analytical process, being self-aware of one's role in the research process, and ensuring consistency among research questions, data, and interpretations are key elements of research quality [11].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The Home, Meunasah and Beyond: Towards a Multi-Layered Qur'anic Literacy Ecosystem

The culture of Qur'anic literacy on Simeulue Island has a lineage beginning with the family. Data collected from research identifies fathers and mothers as the early educators before a child enters into formal education. Most of the teaching/learning takes place after either the Maghrib prayer or the Isha prayer; however, it is done over and over again. The family plays a vital role because children learn more than just how to read, they also develop an emotional bond to the Qur'an and a habit of reading it regularly. It appears that culture develops through ongoing actions that are taught and valued by the home. These findings were used in part for the dissertation research findings, which

showed that the family is the foundation for the Qur'anic literacy culture on Simeulue Island [1].

The experience of Amran Is illustrates how the Baghdadi method and the spelling tradition are both basic parts of the foundation training. Before children read the entire Qur'an, they learn to recite the hijaiyah letters; identify diacritical marks; and practice spelling. To do this takes time (repetition); commitment (perseverance); and a close connection with the teacher. In comparison to today's diverse educational systems, these changes demonstrate that the transformation is much larger than just changing textbooks or teaching methods. Rather, the transformation involves a change in the entire pedagogical ecosystem. Today's educational institutions provide many different teaching options; however, they still require extensive foundation training [14].

The physical aspects of learning also appear to be an important component of literacy cultures. Our field work has documented the use of oil lamps ("semprong") and traditional primers ("buku turutan") at times when there was little or no public lighting available. Oil lamps and traditional primers served as more than just mechanical tools; they were closely linked to time discipline, the overall learning environment, and collective experiences of members of the same community. Although there were many material limitations in the communities studied, these limitations were not sufficient to prevent the reading of the Quran. Therefore, our research indicates that even if there are limited material resources in a community, the culture of literacy can continue to develop as long as the community is creative in finding ways to utilize its own resources. In fact, community-based education emphasizes the role that local assets play in developing education for the entire society [15].

The temporal rhythm of educational activities which occur after Maghrib/Isha prayer, has further enhanced the cultural practice of embedding the Quranic instruction into the daily structure of families. The temporal rhythm of these educational activities provides for repeated exposure to Quranic instructions as well as creating a strong connection between religious worship, family involvement, and educational pursuits. However, as educational activities become more institutionalized, the traditional rhythm of the family will most likely be replaced by structured classroom schedules. Although this change in the temporal rhythm will provide a new level of consistency, the maintenance of traditional practices will depend on whether families continue to devote specific times to engage in Quranic activities at home [16].

Quranic teachers in the community phase of education have a unique status since their authority is developed through close association, social recognition, and exemplary behavior. In addition to correcting recitation errors, they also act as role models who relate education to proper behavior (adab) and religious worship. During the institutionalization of education, Quranic teachers are somewhat replaced or supplemented by formal school teachers and institutional educators. Even though institutionalization may enhance professionalization, relational aspects remain vital because children acquire knowledge through interaction with individuals they trust. Research examining the literacy culture of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) reveals

that relationships between educators, traditions and identities are essential components for sustaining the learning culture [17].

The oral tradition has a very significant impact on how education is taught within the context of the present educational system. Because there was a lack of available written material for teaching during early times, the instructional method had to be primarily based upon what was being said by the teacher; repetition, memory, and the student's ability to recall information. It created a very strong teacher-student relationship. Today, technology provides us with many ways to document and repeat learning materials via books and electronic devices. Although we use different methods to teach today than we did in the past, the basic function of using spoken language to provide direction and examples remains unchanged. As with all forms of education related to the Quran, it still requires the direct correction of pronunciation, habit formation, and linking recitation to comprehension. In addition, critical literacy views oral practices, identity, and social context as essential elements of a student's total literacy experience [18].

In addition to the previous point, private Qur'anic tutoring has emerged as another form of educational transformation. Research findings show that some parents hire private tutors to come to their homes. Private tutoring provides flexibility and allows the tutor to adapt his/her teaching methods based on the child's abilities. However, private tutoring changes the nature of literacy from being a collective, communal effort to a private service. This change in focus from the community to the individual is important analytically because it shows that institutions do not have to be large-scale organizations; instead, they can exist through the professionalization of domestic educational services. Existing research on madrasas confirms that institutional dynamics and forms of educational services differ greatly depending upon their respective social environments [19].

The dakwah (Islamic propagation) network shows that the spaces where literacy is practiced are continuously evolving. Jafri's description of dakwah activities evolving from taking place in mosques to taking place in people's houses and other social spaces indicates that religious knowledge is disseminated through interpersonal networks, despite the proliferation of formal institutions. Therefore, the process of transformation should not be viewed as a unidirectional movement from the community to the institution. Rather, there is an ongoing interplay between informal social networks and formal institutional structures. The idea of community literacy suggests that social networks and participatory environments are crucial to sustaining literacy initiatives [15].

Folklore and oral traditions also provide a means through which to transmit values. Research on Simeulue folklore illustrates the embodiment of religious, moral, social and cultural values. Within the context of Quranic literacy, oral traditions can serve as a structure through which children can make connections between their religious values and their local identities. It is essential that institutionalization does not produce educational practices that do not relate to societal life. Rather, the local context can

function as a medium through which to understand values in a manner that relates to children's experiences [4].

The Salur village example illustrates how children can achieve high levels of literacy regardless of how much financial assistance is provided by the village government. While this finding suggests that the village government's contribution to education may not be critical, it does illustrate that the community can find other ways to support education. However, the community's resourcefulness cannot be used as an excuse for failing to provide adequate support to the community's children. Research on child empowerment through Quranic literacy has shown that both the community's resources and the community's involvement in education help facilitate learning opportunities for children [20].

The overall landscape of cultural Quranic literacy in Simeulue is characterized by a multi-actor ecosystem. There are families, meunasah, Quranic instructors, TPA/TPQ, formal schools, MDT, pesantrens, da'wah networks and the government that do not exist separately. Children move from one space to another. Therefore, it may be better to describe the transition from "communal" to "institutional" as a layered and negotiated process, where the institution provides the structural base and the community provides social legitimacy, role models, and a sense of ownership. These findings support the dissertation's conclusion that the Quranic literacy culture in Simeulue has a hybrid nature rather than being a complete paradigm shift from one system to another [3].

The literacy culture in Simeulue becomes clearer when literacy is viewed as a social practice and not just as an individual skill. Children learn through group reading activities, listening to teachers, memorization, everyday use of language and participating in religious routines. From this perspective, the institutional change does not change the social foundation of literacy but rather changes the organizational structure of the practices. Practices that were previously embedded in the family and the meunasah are subsequently placed in formal classrooms, schedules, curricula and evaluation systems. However, this structural change requires a space where reading is assigned value [3].

As a result of family based activities being crucial; early childhood learning experiences can influence a child's attitude towards continuous reading of text. In the context of Simeulue, post-maghrib learning experience, repetition in reading and parental support forms a repetitive pedagogical pattern. After the pattern transitions to TPA or formal school, children will experience a new organization structure. The results show that the institutional transition does not eliminate family based practice, but must be continuous. The quality of institutionally managed Qur'anic education program is enhanced when parents continue to receive information regarding the objectives of the program, instructional method used, and development of their child [21].

The way that third party agencies (TPA) operate shows how the institutionalization process will result in the development of formal organizational structures. This means that such agencies will have administrators, teachers, daily/weekly/monthly schedules, separate classrooms, administrative

guidelines/policies, and systems for evaluating performance. In addition to being developed based on the needs of the communities they serve, some of the agencies identified in Simeulue were created as a direct result of social relations. As more people join the agency, the social relations used to create the agency must be transformed into formal organizational governance. It is possible to effectively manage an agency while maintaining many of the characteristics found in families. In fact, if the agency is managed properly, the characteristics of families can be maintained by delegating responsibilities among members of the agency and creating processes for passing responsibility down from one generation of administrators to another [22].

Throughout the entire process of transformation, reading skills continue to be essential. Although institutional change does not eliminate the need for children to practice phonological awareness, read accurately, recognize punctuation, and make a habit out of reading, research on reading skills related to the Quran has demonstrated that in order for children to improve their reading skills, they must participate in regular practice and receive guidance from mentors. Research from Simeulue demonstrates that traditional and modern teaching methods should not be used as opposites; instead, the focus should be on creating effective pedagogical models that support the high level of practice required of the students while at the same time enhancing the administrative organization of the educational system [23].

The results concerning children's experience show us that institutional changes can be seen in a clearer way when we look at them in relation to the child's learning process. For example, a child can begin their educational journey at home, then go to a meunasah or TPA (Qur'anic Education Center), take part in Qur'anic education in the formal school setting, and finally continue with their studies in a pesantren or via private lessons. These examples illustrate how children are part of a multiple literacy environment. The different environments have their own rules, ways of using language, time structures, and forms of interaction. Thus, the success of the transition from one environment to another depends on the ability of each environment to help each other and allow the child to remain on track with their learning experience, as opposed to simply increasing the number of educational options that exist [2].

The Role of Government in Institutionalizing and Strengthening the Al-Qur'an Literacy Ecosystem

The government is actively promoting a culture of Al-Qur'an literacy by developing policies and organizing programs. The 2025-2029 Regional Development Plan has integrated the strengthening of Islamic values and the improvement of educational quality as integral parts of the overall development agenda. From an institutional viewpoint, the policy documents provide the basis for bureaucratic actors to legitimate their activities; therefore, they allow bureaucratic actors to integrate religious education into many initiatives and facilitate cooperation among government agencies. However, just having a policy orientation does not automatically mean that it will be implemented uniformly and effectively throughout every village [5].

The Department of Sharia Islam and Dayah Education has a very important role in advancing education on religion because this department serves as a link between the sharia agenda and the management of dayah education (Islamic boarding school). This shows how the government supports religious education using bureaucratic structures that have the mandate of each sector. Therefore, the process of instituting Al-Qur'an literacy does not only happen in schools, but also in other forms such as policy making by integrating religious institutions into the overall plan for regional development [24].

The "One Village, One Hafizh" (Satu Desa Satu Hafizh) program exemplifies how the memorization of the Koran has evolved from being an individual/family affair to being part of a structured developmental program. The "One Village, One Hafizh" program creates a structured connection between village administration, district government, pesantrens/dayahs, and students. As a model of institutionalization, the paradigm represents a very important shift because memorizing the Koran is no longer just something individuals/families do for themselves; it now has specific objectives, identified implementers, and policy support. Additionally, programs like the "One Village, One Hafizh" show that governments can play an important role as mediators between local communities and educational institutions [19].

The STQ is an educational program and a public venue for demonstrating literacy skills. It is an opportunity for young people to demonstrate their ability to read, memorize, and to some extent, understand and interpret the Quran. From a cultural perspective, the STQ is a symbol that Quranic knowledge has high social value in the community. However, the success of individuals in a competitive environment does not necessarily represent the overall literacy level of all youth in the community. Therefore, competitions like the STQ are best seen as one part of a larger educational system, not as the primary indicator of that system's quality [25].

The Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) provides data on education that is an essential element in the policy environment. Government organizations use data to understand what the educational landscape looks like. In addition, when scholars conduct research, educational data provides a background to help evaluate the service delivery that is being given to school-age children. While macro level data does not measure directly how well people can read the Qur'an, it helps to put the problem into perspective relative to the overall educational system. As such, any policies designed to increase Qur'anic literacy should ideally be linked to educational data systems. These systems provide information about regional needs.

Fiscal support and limits of grassroots intervention are two significant findings of this study. Saharmi shows a growing expectation of the state's role, along with a lack of support at the village level, which forces parents to rely upon themselves. These results indicate that institutions developing will not always eliminate the deficits in local capacity. In fact, strong institutions require resource distribution systems that are very responsive to the differences between villages [26].

Research findings suggest that the state can be viewed as an ecosystem facilitator, as opposed to a replacement of the community. In this capacity, the state develops

regulatory structures, guides, funds programs and links together different groups of people. On the other hand, the community has provided social capital, local leadership and contextual knowledge. The two roles are necessary; without community-based education, the state's role would become bloated, and formal education systems would have difficulty maintaining operations without community support [27].

Because some villages have better capacity than others to provide services to their residents, we must focus on creating equity in access to those services. Villages with strong traditions and established networks of religious leaders can sustain programs independently. On the other hand, some villages may need more help. Therefore, policy frameworks should take into consideration geographical, social, and institutional differences. Standardized approaches to providing services will ignore the unique needs of archipelagic areas. Research on children's literacy has demonstrated that educational approaches and materials must be developed based upon the characteristics of the learning environment and the individual needs of the learners [28].

Overall, the government's approach to creating a culture of Quranic literacy in Simeulue represents a complex model of how to create change: policies build credibility, programs offer structural support, capacity building efforts improve skills, competitions provide opportunities for community involvement and financial assistance supports the necessary infrastructure. Ultimately, however, the achievement of the goal of establishing the culture of Quranic literacy depends heavily on the participation of families and the wider community. Therefore, the results of this study suggest that establishing sustainability through institution building cannot be solely attributed to the actions taken by the government but is the result of the relationship among the state, institutions and society [29].

A managerial viewpoint suggests that improving the quality of Qur'anic Education Agencies (TPA) requires a more systematic process. Educators who receive training on teaching methods and management can use this knowledge to help create effective instruction plans, evaluate student reading skills, and tailor curriculum based on student cognitive levels. Results from Simeulue show there are differences in the capacity of organizations, so government assistance should focus on developing competencies of organizations as opposed to simply providing materials. Additionally, to ensure that organizational development actually increases the quality of Qur'anic education services [30], management support is critical.

In addition, government-funded programs need to communicate effectively with both families and communities so that the intent of government policies will be carried out beyond the written word. Studies of family literacy indicate that the interests and daily habits of children are greatly affected by the degree of support provided to them in their homes. Ideally, the connection between government, school, and community would create a flow of communication which allows parents to be aware of the programs available through schools; conversely, it would allow schools to have a complete picture of each child's needs. Therefore, when government-funded programs implement policies,

they can do so in a manner which is more consistently applied and therefore more effective [31].

Children's use of digital technologies and cultural negotiations during the Digital Age

The primary effects of learning are the reinforcement of reading skills and memorization abilities. Currently, children can take advantage of various types of education such as family-based education, TPA/TPQ education, formal schooling, Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), and individual private tutoring. The diversity of educational types available today provides children with more opportunities to apply what they learn. From the field observations conducted during this study, we found that as our learning environment changes, so does the types of education we use; however, ultimately the quality of learning outcomes is primarily determined by how much children practice, the teachers' teaching methods, and how consistent parents provide guidance to their children at home [32].

Today, literacy is shifting from simply being able to read text, to being able to understand it as well. According to the research data presented here, there were traditionally many aspects of the meunasah's teaching practices that were integrated into each other. Recitation with tajwid (proper pronunciation of words), translation of texts, understanding the meaning of texts, understanding Islamic law (fiqh) and performing worship rituals were all part of the meunasah's educational process. However, in today's world there is an equally important need for educational practices that help children to understand the message contained within the verses of the Quran, instead of just repeating the verses. This change in focus from repetition to comprehension is extremely important because when children develop meaningful literacy, they will be able to make connections between what they are reading in the text and what they experience in their daily lives [33].

Quranic studies provide a framework for developing discipline. Reciting scheduled Quranic passages, reviewing previously memorized verses, and praying on a daily basis create a routine which requires young people to effectively manage their time. Additionally, research has shown that consistent participation in religious practices can lay the foundation for building strong religious character. In the case of Simeulue, discipline developed through Quranic study is not formed independently, but rather is developed through interactions between educators, parents, institutions and communities [34].

Character development and ethical behavior (adab) represent two major products of these practices. According to empirical studies conducted in the field, there exists a direct relationship between Quranic education and several aspects of character such as respect towards teachers, filial piety, accountability, and general religiosity. However, it should be noted that this study does not claim that Quranic recitation is the only variable that contributes to the development of character. To internalize moral principles requires role modeling by adults, consistent repetition, and an established social environment. Therefore, character development is the result of a total educational environment rather than an isolated practice [35].

The use of Qur'anic activities for social cohesion can facilitate children, parents, educators, and community leaders interacting together. At the communal level, the social solidarity provided by the community supports the financial cost and needs of the activity. At the institutional level, social relations are maintained through organized programs and digital communication. However, the private provision of services can reduce the amount of interaction occurring between participants. To ensure the long-term sustainability of the culture, both communal spaces and individualized service delivery should exist [36].

In addition to the challenge of changing how parents view themselves as parents; there are other issues that also affect student academic performance. Interviewees said that they have seen less parental examples of what a good parent should be like and more parents giving up their responsibility for educating their children by sending them off to schools. For children to learn effectively, they need to see something as well as hear it. Research has shown that when parents are involved in reading with their children, the child learns better. Thus, family involvement is essential if we want to create an effective school system [37].

The generation of new aspirations through educational mobility allows children to attend higher education at pesantren (Islamic boarding school), join memorization programs, and have private tutors. Educational mobility expands children's educational options and enhances their ability to develop skills. On the other hand, educational mobility also has the potential to distance children from their original communities. It is essential for families and communities to maintain relationships with the children who are advancing educationally/religiously in order to prevent those children from being separated from their primary social identities [38].

The STQ and MTQ provide opportunities to recognize the ability of individuals to use the Qur'an. Competitions create motivation among young people, set goals, and create symbols of success which are valued by society. However, we cannot simply equate literacy culture with competitive achievements. Competitive events only recognize a portion of the young people involved in them, and only a portion of what those young people can accomplish. To develop a sustainable culture, there must be equal opportunity for all young people to read, understand, and live according to the teachings of the Qur'an regardless of whether or not they compete [39].

Resilience is the ability to maintain one's relationship with God's word when the world around you changes. Resilience is not something you are born with; it is developed through constant reading of God's words, memorizing God's words, praying to God, and being in an environment where you can see good examples. When we teach young people how to integrate God's word into their daily lives through Quranic education, we give them the tools to deal with change in their environment and outside influences [16].

The need for digital adaptation is becoming more pressing as children have access to many different types of information outside their formal education environment. In order to develop religious digital literacy, one needs to be able to critically evaluate sources, place the information into context, and check for accuracy of the facts presented.

For example, in the case of teaching the Qur'an to young learners, educators and parents should assist them in being active consumers of religious material on the internet rather than passive recipients. Developing children's digital literacy will contribute to preserving the culture of the community as long as children are guided to use technology responsibly and critically [40].

The persistence of respect for educators remains an enduring and essential outcome regardless of how education systems change. Respect for educators is first evident during the community based phase, where traditional Quranic teachers provide day-to-day instruction to children. During the institutionalized phase, formal school teachers and institutional educators become authorities in the lives of students. Whether through the community based model or the institutionalized model, both require exemplary role modeling and significant interaction with students. Ultimately, the effectiveness of the learning process depends primarily on the quality of the relationship between the educator and the student, rather than simply on instructional methodology [41].

Children's participation in religious practices can be used as a tangible area of demonstration of Quranic values being put into practice. Research has shown that literacy culture is related to discipline regarding prayer and other religious practices, suggesting that Quranic literacy has a distinct practical component. Reading and memorizing take on meaningful significance only when the messages that have been learned are used as a basis for regulating behavior. Therefore, educational assessments should evaluate changes in behavior and practical applications of knowledge rather than just evaluating reading skills [42].

The local language and identity are still relevant to religious practices. Children understand the Quran from the perspective of their own local language and culture; therefore, the message of religion will be more connected to the children's daily life. These contextual aspects should not be removed during the institutionalization process. Pedagogy that is culturally responsive allows schools and Quranic institutions to maintain local identities while at the same time developing broader educational standards [43].

The process of character development is iterative and has to take place within a consistent environment. Quranic Literacy Culture offers a base for developing habits of discipline, responsibility, and respect. However, those habits can be further strengthened if they are practiced as part of other larger religious practices. Studies on Islamic education during the Society 5.0 era indicate there is a need to develop a curriculum that includes both cognitive knowledge and social character. For children living in Simeulue, the connection among learning to read the Koran, praying, behaving ethically and interacting with others socially is an essential element in the child's overall development [42].

Technology has been integrated into many aspects of education as an educational tool to enhance student learning. Audio-visual materials and information technology enable students to repeat reading materials, and help them understand how science

relates to the Quran. Technology-based instruction works best when there are clearly defined educational goals, and technology is used as a means of teaching. Therefore, the widespread use of digital devices in Simeulue should not result in a total rejection of technology, but rather in developing models of usage that support learning [6].

Structured Reading Development Programs show that when targeted interventions have clearly defined goals, are mentored, and evaluated systematically, they can improve reading skills. The results of this study provide a basis for comparison in Simeulue. This indicates that institutionalized educational quality can be improved if the programs are designed with precision to address the needs of each child. Therefore, simply having TPA or formal schools does not guarantee success. Rather, success will be determined by the quality of guidance provided to students, the effectiveness of instructional methods used by teachers, and the ability of teachers to provide positive feedback about student progress [32].

The Magrib Mengaji program is an example of the continued importance of a community's culture to promote habituation. The use of specific time-bound programs, such as Magrib Mengaji, allows for integration of students attending school, reciting the Qur'an and developing moral character. Research on similar programs in rural areas has shown that these types of programs can help improve reading skills and behavior. This understanding of the program helps place the experience of Simeulue within a broader context, showing how the community and institutions are functioning together as one system [44].

Regarding the practice of Islam, the behavioral manifestation of the child's core values does not typically appear immediately after the child participates in reading activity. Internalization is accomplished through repetition, critical reflection and modeling by others. Therefore, if we want to develop Qur'anic literacy programs that have quantitative reading and memorization as their primary goals, then those programs should also provide an opportunity for the child to experience how the verses of scripture relate to his/her daily life. The interpretive pedagogy of the Qur'an requires that the learner move beyond simply reciting the words of scripture to understanding them deeply; then the learner will apply that understanding to his/her actions. The results of the research conducted in Simeulue regarding the relationship among recitation, Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) and worship practices through community based education show that such integrated approaches have long-standing historical traditions in the area [33]. In general, the effect of the Qur'anic literacy culture on school age children in Simeulue exten.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the transformation of Qur'anic literacy culture among school-age children in Simeulue is not simply a shift from traditional community-based learning to formal institutional education, but rather the emergence of a multi-layered literacy ecosystem in which family, meunasah, Qur'anic teachers, TPA/TPQ, formal schools, pesantren, private tutors, and government institutions

interact continuously. The continued importance of family-based practices indicates that institutionalization does not eliminate the social foundations of Qur'anic literacy, because habits developed through parental modeling, repetition, post-Maghrib learning, and close interaction with educators remain central to children's engagement with the Qur'an. At the same time, institutional structures provide more systematic schedules, curriculum, evaluation, professional educators, and organizational continuity, thereby strengthening the sustainability of Qur'anic education. This finding reinforces the view that literacy should be understood as a social and cultural practice rather than merely as technical reading competence. The study also shows that government policies, memorization programs, STQ/MTQ activities, institutional guidance, and organizational support contribute to strengthening the Qur'anic literacy ecosystem, although unequal village-level support indicates that institutional development must be accompanied by responsive and equitable resource distribution. Furthermore, the persistence of community self-reliance suggests that state intervention functions most effectively when it complements, rather than replaces, local social capital and community participation. Another important finding concerns the broader outcomes of Qur'anic literacy. Reading and memorization are connected with worship practices, discipline, moral development, respect for educators, Islamic identity, and spiritual resilience, indicating that Qur'anic literacy functions as both an educational and cultural formation process. However, reduced parental role modeling and the growing influence of digital technology create new challenges. Therefore, the findings support the development of a hybrid community-institutional model in which formal educational structures, family involvement, community traditions, government support, and responsible use of digital technology are integrated to preserve continuity while adapting Qur'anic literacy education to contemporary social change.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : The development of Qur'anic literacy for school-age children in Simeulue represents a shift from a family/community-based educational model to an integrated educational system. The cultivation of Qur'anic Literacy is directly related to the development of worship practices, moral integrity (akhlak), discipline, respect for teachers/educators, Islamic identity, and spiritual resilience. **Implication :** In terms of practice, this study suggests the creation of a hybrid community-institutional model. A hybrid model is one that combines elements of both community-based and institutional-based approaches. Additionally, technology can be utilized to provide supplemental learning experiences, while maintaining the key features of role models, interactions with others, and teacher-student interactions. **Limitation :** However, there are still many inconsistencies in the provision of services at the village level. The main problems facing this system are a reduction in parents being positive role models for their children and the increase in distractions caused by technology. **Future Research :** Future research should examine the implementation and effectiveness of the hybrid community-institutional model across different villages, particularly in relation to

variations in institutional capacity, parental involvement, resource distribution, and the responsible integration of digital technology in Qur'anic literacy education.

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