

ISSUES IN STUDENT LITERACY FROM AN ISLAMIC EDUCATION PERSPECTIVE (A CASE STUDY AT STATE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL 11 PONDOK SUGUH MUKOMUKO REGENCY)

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Abstract

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This study aims to analyze students' literacy issues from the perspective of Islamic education at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh in Mukomuko Regency. This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design. Research data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, involving the principal, Islamic Religious Education teachers, subject teachers, and students as informants. Data analysis was conducted through the stages of data condensation, data presentation, and the drawing and verification of conclusions. The results of the study indicate that the issues surrounding student literacy include low interest in and habits of reading, difficulty in understanding and summarizing the content of texts, and suboptimal abilities to evaluate and use information. Factors influencing these conditions include weak motivation to read, the learning and family environments, limited exposure to literacy practices, and the use of electronic devices primarily for entertainment. From the perspective of Islamic education, literacy has a strong foundation in the command "iqra'" in Surah Al-'Alaq, verses 1-5; the importance of knowledge in Surah Al-Mujadilah, verse 11; and the principle of tabayyun in Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 6. Strengthening literacy requires fostering a habit of reading, developing Qur'anic literacy, integrating literacy activities into learning, utilizing technology for educational purposes, and fostering synergy among schools, teachers, students, and parents. This study emphasizes that literacy in Islamic education is not only related to the ability to read but also to the ability to understand, evaluate, develop, and apply knowledge responsibly.

Introduction

Literacy is one of the fundamental competencies that plays a strategic role in the educational process because it relates to students' ability to acquire, understand, evaluate, process, and use information to support their learning and

social lives. In the context of 21st-century education, literacy is no longer understood narrowly as the ability to read and write, but has evolved into the ability to understand information, think critically, evaluate various sources, and use information appropriately and responsibly. The OECD defines reading literacy as the ability to understand, use, evaluate, reflect on, and engage with texts to achieve goals, develop knowledge and potential, and participate in society.(OECD, 2023) Thus, literacy skills are one of the key foundations for developing students who are capable of learning independently, thinking critically, and adapting to advances in science and technology.

Literacy remains one of the key challenges in Indonesian education. The results of the 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) show that Indonesian students' reading proficiency remains below the average for OECD countries. Indonesia's average reading score stands at 359, while the OECD average is 476. Furthermore, only about 25% of Indonesian students reach Level 2 or higher in reading proficiency, compared to the OECD average of 74%.(OECD, 2023) The data show that the majority of Indonesian students still struggle to understand written information, identify main ideas, reflect on the content of a text, and use information critically. This situation indicates that literacy issues are not only related to technical reading skills but also to the ability to understand and interpret information in depth.

The Indonesian government has designated literacy as one of the core competencies in the education evaluation system through the National Assessment, specifically the Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM). Reading literacy in the AKM does not merely measure students' ability to read texts; it encompasses the ability to understand, use, evaluate, and reflect on various types of written texts in order to develop individual capabilities and contribute productively to society.(Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2025) Therefore, students' low literacy skills should be understood as a multidimensional issue involving cognitive aspects, motivation, reading habits, the school environment, family support, the availability of reading materials, learning strategies, and the culture of literacy that develops in students' lives.

This issue is also evident in various studies on literacy culture in schools. Ramdhani and Pratama found that a low level of literacy culture can be influenced by students' lack of motivation and reading habits, limited library facilities and reading corners, an unsupportive social environment, and suboptimal school literacy programs.(Ramdhani & Pratama, 2024) The findings show that improving literacy cannot be achieved simply by instructing students to read; rather, it requires fostering a culture that makes reading a habit and an integral part of school life. Research by Jasmine, Sunaengsih, and Syahid also indicates that literacy-promoting programs, such as reading clinics and reading corners, can help increase students' interest in reading.(Jasmine et al., 2024)

From the perspective of Islamic education, literacy has a broader scope because the activities of reading and seeking knowledge are an integral part of Islamic teachings. The concept of literacy in Islam can be traced back to the first revelation received by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), namely Surah Al-'Alaq, verses 1–5, which begins with the command "iqra" or "read." This command can be understood not only as the literal act of reading a text but

also as an encouragement to read, understand, study, and develop knowledge based on an awareness of Allah (Swt). Thus, literacy activities from an Islamic perspective possess both intellectual and spiritual dimensions. Reading is not merely a means of acquiring information but also a path to recognizing the greatness of Allah, advancing knowledge, and building a civilized human life.

This concept suggests that literacy in Islamic education should not be separated from the development of students' character and moral values. Literacy developed in Islamic education should ideally produce students who are not only capable of understanding information but also able to distinguish between true and false information, use knowledge responsibly, and utilize knowledge as a means to draw closer to Allah SWT. In this context, religious literacy is a crucial component that requires attention. The Ministry of Education also includes aspects of faith, noble character, good manners, and religiosity in its character survey as part of the student profile.(Center for Educational Assessment, 2024)

The relationship between literacy and Islamic education is becoming increasingly important amid the development of digital technology. Today's students are confronted with a wide variety of information that is readily available through the internet and social media. The ability to read critically is becoming increasingly necessary so that students are not only able to receive information but also able to evaluate sources, distinguish between facts and opinions, recognize biased information, and use information in accordance with moral and religious values. The OECD emphasizes that reading literacy in the digital age requires the ability to navigate various sources, deal with ambiguous information, distinguish between facts and opinions, and build knowledge based on a variety of information sources.(OECD, 2024–2025) Therefore, literacy education should focus not only on the ability to read printed text, but also on the ability to understand and evaluate digital information.

In the context of Islamic education, literacy can be strengthened by integrating reading activities with Islamic Religious Education (PAI). PAI instruction offers significant opportunities to develop literacy because its curriculum covers the Qur'an, hadith, Islamic history, creed, ethics, fiqh, and various life issues that require the ability to read and understand texts. Research by Putri and Rohman shows that a Qur'an literacy program for middle school students can improve students' understanding of the meaning of verses, Islamic concepts, and their application in daily life.(Putri & Rohman, 2024) Meanwhile, a study by Putra, Sinaga, and Nasution shows a correlation between the Qur'an literacy program and family support and the ability of junior high school students to read the Qur'an.(Putra et al., 2024) These findings reinforce the argument that the development of literacy in Islamic education requires both school involvement and family support.

Another study conducted by Rosyidah and Musawir shows that a culture of literacy can contribute to students' creativity in learning.(Rosyidah & Musawir, 2024) Meanwhile, Hayati found that a culture of literacy linked to religious activities can help shape students' religious character through reading and understanding the Qur'an.(Hayati, 2024) This indicates that literacy can be developed as an educational tool that integrates intellectual abilities with the cultivation of religious character. Thus, from the perspective of Islamic education, literacy is not only focused on improving academic abilities but also on shaping

individuals who are knowledgeable, possess good character, and have spiritual awareness.

This issue is particularly relevant for study at the junior high school level because adolescence is a critical period for the formation of learning habits, thought patterns, character, and attitudes toward knowledge. If low interest and poor literacy skills are not properly addressed, these conditions can affect students' ability to understand instructional material, solve problems, develop critical thinking skills, and acquire knowledge independently. In Islamic Education (PAI) classes, low literacy levels also have the potential to cause students to experience difficulties in understanding the content of Quranic verses, hadiths, and Islamic studies material, as well as in connecting religious values to everyday life issues.

Pondok Suguh State Junior High School No. 11 in Mukomuko Regency serves as an important context for examining this issue in greater depth. Based on the initial findings of the study, issues related to students' low reading habits and literacy skills were still identified. These conditions can be seen in the tendency of some students not to view reading as a learning necessity, their greater interest in using electronic devices and digital entertainment, and their suboptimal use of reading materials as sources of knowledge. (Field observation, August 27, 2026) This issue needs to be studied comprehensively in order to identify the factors contributing to low literacy rates and to determine how Islamic education can offer a perspective and alternative solutions to this problem.

A study on student literacy issues at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh is also significant because research on literacy should not view the issue solely from the perspective of general education. The school environment is a space for the development of character, knowledge, and values; therefore, literacy development must be linked to religious values that are an integral part of students' lives. Islamic education can provide a normative and moral foundation that reading, seeking knowledge, thinking, and applying knowledge are part of human responsibility as beings endowed with reason by Allah SWT. Therefore, low literacy can be viewed not merely as a lack of academic ability but also as a learning culture issue that needs to be addressed through integral educational values.

Research on Qur'anic literacy and Islamic education in several schools shows that structured literacy programs can have a positive impact on students' reading skills and religious character. For example, a study by Sinaga and Setiawan shows that a Qur'anic literacy program at SMP Muhammadiyah 57 in Medan can help improve students' Qur'anic reading skills and comprehension. (Sinaga & Setiawan, 2024)

Similarly, research on the implementation of school literacy programs in Islamic Education (PAI) instruction shows that activities such as libraries, reading corners, 15-minute reading sessions, and regular Qur'an recitation can be part of a strategy to strengthen students' literacy skills. (Khoridatunnida & Azhari, 2025)

The Qur'anic Basis for the Importance of Literacy is Surah Al-'Alaq, verses 1–5: The Command to Read (Iqra')

إِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝۱ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۝۲ إِقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝۳ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝۴ عَلَّمَ

الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝۵

Meaning: “Read in the name of your Lord who created. He created man from a clot of blood. Read! Your Lord is the Most Generous, who taught (mankind) with the pen. He taught man what he did not know.” (Quran 96:1–5). (Qur’an, Al-‘Alaq 96:1–5)

The first verse of Surah Al-‘Alaq in the Qur’an begins with the word “iqra’,” which directly lays an important foundation for the act of reading. This series of verses also links the act of reading to the pen (qalam) and the process of acquiring knowledge.

In the context of education, this verse can serve as a basis for the understanding that a culture of reading is not merely an academic requirement but also has a religious dimension. Students are encouraged to read not merely to earn good grades, but to gain knowledge, understand reality, develop their thinking skills, and ultimately come to know more deeply the greatness of Allah SWT.

Thus, the low reading culture among students at Pondok Suguh Public Junior High School No. 11 can be viewed as an issue that is not only related to academic ability but also to the suboptimal implementation of the “iqra’” value in the students’ learning culture.

A very strong hadith supporting the importance of literacy is the hadith narrated by Muslim:

مَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ بِهِ طَرِيقًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ

Meaning:

“Whoever sets out on a path in search of knowledge, Allah will make the path to Paradise easy for him.” (Narrated by Muslim). (Muslim, Hadith 2699a)

This hadith can be linked to literacy activities because reading, studying books, seeking accurate information, discussing, and learning are all part of the process of seeking knowledge.

In the context of students at Pondok Suguh Public Junior High School No. 11, fostering a culture of reading means helping students pursue one path to acquiring knowledge. Thus, literacy activities can be imbued with a spiritual meaning, where reading and learning are carried out as part of the pursuit of knowledge an act that is considered a form of worship when done with the right intention.

Based on the above discussion, there is a need to examine the issue of student literacy in a contextual manner, taking into account school conditions, student characteristics, the role of teachers, the family environment, facilities and infrastructure, as well as the values of Islamic education. This study aims to understand the forms of literacy challenges faced by students, the factors contributing to low literacy levels, and how the perspective of Islamic education can be utilized to understand and formulate efforts to strengthen a culture of literacy in schools. This approach is expected to yield a more comprehensive understanding of literacy as part of the educational process—one that not only builds students’ ability to read and comprehend information but also shapes their character, moral values, and spiritual awareness.

Thus, this study is titled “Issues in Student Literacy from an Islamic Education Perspective: A Case Study at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh, Mukomuko Regency.” This study is expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of literacy studies in Islamic education, as well as practical

contributions to schools, teachers, parents, and educational stakeholders in designing strategies to strengthen a culture of literacy that aligns with students' characteristics and Islamic values.

Research Methods

Data credibility was strengthened through source, methodological, and temporal triangulation by comparing information from different informants, data-collection techniques, and collection times. This study used a qualitative approach with a case study design to examine student literacy issues from an Islamic education perspective in a real school context.

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh, Mukomuko Regency, Bengkulu. Informants were selected purposively and included the principal, Islamic Religious Education and Indonesian Language teachers, other teachers involved in literacy activities, and students with varied reading abilities and habits. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observation focused on students' reading behavior, literacy activities, and supporting facilities; interviews explored literacy conditions, contributing factors, and school efforts; and documentation provided supporting evidence of literacy programs and activities.

Data were analyzed interactively through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Information from observations, interviews, and documents was compared to identify recurring patterns and themes related to student literacy.

Discussion

The State of Student Literacy at Pondok Suguh Public Junior High School No. 11, Mukomuko Regency

Based on the results of initial observations, interviews with the principal, teachers, and students, as well as documentation of learning activities, it was found that the literacy skills and habits of students at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh still face a number of challenges. These issues are evident not only in the students' low reading habits but also in their ability to comprehend the content of what they read, identify key information, paraphrase what they have read, and use that information to answer learning questions.

Some students have not yet made reading a self-directed learning activity. Reading is more often done when instructed by a teacher or when it is part of a learning assignment. This situation indicates that reading has not yet fully developed into a learning culture that is ingrained in the students.

In an interview, Febri Yopi, an Indonesian language teacher at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh, stated, "Some students can actually read well, but they are not yet accustomed to reading independently. If there is an assignment or they are instructed to read, they will read. However, if they are not directed to do so, some students prefer to talk with friends or use their cell phones." (Yopi, interview, August 27, 2026)

This statement highlights the distinction between technical reading skills and a reading culture. A student may possess the mechanical ability to read but may not necessarily have a strong reading habit. In the context of literacy, the ability to understand, use, evaluate, and reflect on texts is an essential component of reading literacy. This is also consistent with the concept of reading literacy used in the National Assessment.(Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2025)

The results of the observations also showed that when students were given relatively long reading passages, some tended to read hastily and focused only on finding answers they considered directly related to the teacher's questions. Students had not yet optimally engaged in deep reading processes, such as identifying main ideas, connecting information across paragraphs, summarizing the content of the text, and offering opinions on the information obtained.

These findings indicate that the literacy issues at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh cannot be understood simply as a matter of "students being reluctant to read." The problem is more complex because it relates to habits, motivation, the learning environment, learning strategies, reading materials, and students' ability to comprehend information.

Students' Low Interest in and Habit of Reading

The research findings indicate that one of the main issues regarding student literacy is a lack of strong interest in and reading habits. Some students read primarily because of school assignments. Reading to acquire knowledge independently has not yet become a consistent habit.

In an interview with Tri Muhartini, a student at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh, she said, "I read when I have assignments from my teachers. If I don't have any assignments, I usually spend more time on my cell phone or playing with friends."(Muhartini, interview, August 27, 2026)

These findings indicate that some students' motivation to read remains extrinsic that is, driven by teachers' demands or instructions. Meanwhile, intrinsic motivation to read as a means of acquiring knowledge still needs to be strengthened. This situation poses a challenge for schools because a culture of literacy cannot be sufficiently fostered through one-time reading activities. Literacy requires sustained practice so that reading becomes an integral part of students' learning habits.

These findings also need to be viewed within the context of national education. The National Assessment defines reading literacy as the ability to understand, use, evaluate, and reflect on various types of written texts to develop individual capacity and contribute to society.(Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2025) Thus, the culture of reading in schools is not only aimed at enabling students to read texts, but also at enabling them to use reading materials as a source of knowledge.

Students' Difficulties in Understanding and Retelling the Content of a Reading Passage

The research findings indicate that literacy challenges are not solely related to reading frequency. Some students also struggle to understand the content of

what they read, identify the main idea, draw conclusions, and paraphrase information in their own words. Sari Purnama, an Indonesian language teacher at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh, explained: “There are students who have read a text all the way through, but when asked what the text is about, they still have trouble explaining it in their own words. Usually, they look for answers that are exactly in the text.”(Purnama, interview, August 27, 2026)

These findings indicate that some students’ reading processes are still at the stage of directly extracting information and have not yet fully developed into the ability to interpret and reflect. In fact, reading literacy encompasses the ability to access information, interpret and integrate information, and evaluate and reflect on information.(Center for Assessment and Learning, 2025) This situation has implications for the learning process. Students who have difficulty understanding texts will face obstacles when encountering learning materials that require reading comprehension. This issue arises not only in Indonesian language classes but can also affect the learning of social studies, science, Islamic religious education, and other subjects.

The Impact of Gadget Use on Literacy Culture

The results of interviews and observations indicate that cell phone use is one factor that needs to be considered in students’ literacy culture. Mobile devices actually have positive potential as a learning resource, but in practice, some students use them more for entertainment and communication than for reading educational materials.

Tri Muhartini, a student at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh, said, “I use my cell phone more often for social media or watching videos. As for reading class materials, I usually only do that when I have homework.”(Muhartini, interview, August 27, 2026) These findings indicate that the issue is not merely the availability of technology, but rather the patterns of technology use. Digital devices can serve as a tool for strengthening literacy if they are used to read e-books, look up references, read educational articles, access digital versions of the Qur’an, and conduct critical information searches. From a modern literacy perspective, the ability to read must also be accompanied by the ability to evaluate information. This is crucial because students are not only exposed to printed books but also to vast amounts of digital information.

Factors Contributing to Low Student Literacy

Based on the research findings, the factors contributing to low student literacy can be categorized into internal and external factors.

1. Internal Factors

Internal factors include low interest in reading, a lack of reading habits, unstable motivation to learn, varying reading comprehension abilities, a tendency to choose activities considered more enjoyable than reading, and a lack of awareness that reading is a necessity for learning.

Differences in students’ abilities require teachers to adopt different approaches. Students with stronger reading skills can be provided with more complex reading materials, while students who are still struggling need guidance and reading materials appropriate to their skill level.

2. External Factors

External factors identified include a family environment that has not yet fully established a reading habit, the availability of reading materials that do not fully align with students' interests, school literacy activities that need to be conducted more consistently, the use of electronic devices for entertainment, limited reading time during the learning process, and the suboptimal integration of literacy across various subjects. Thus, low literacy is a multidimensional issue. Resolving it requires cooperation among schools, teachers, students, and families.

Efforts by Teachers and Schools to Improve Literacy

The research findings indicate that schools and teachers have made several efforts to foster a culture of literacy. These efforts include assigning reading assignments, encouraging students to make use of books, integrating reading activities into instruction, and posing questions that require students to comprehend the content of the text. Teachers also strive to develop literacy activities through reading materials related to the lesson content. This approach is important because literacy should not be treated as an activity separate from learning but rather integrated into the learning process.

Febri Yopi, a teacher at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh, stated, "We try to get students into the habit of reading before class begins or before the lesson material is presented. After reading, students are asked to summarize the content so that the teacher can determine whether they truly understand what they have read". This strategy demonstrates that reading activities can be developed through the stages of reading, understanding, summarizing, and reflecting. This strategy is more meaningful than simply asking students to read for a set amount of time

Qur'anic Literacy as Part of Strengthening Students' Literacy Skills

From the perspective of Islamic education, literacy can be strengthened through Qur'anic literacy. Based on the results of observations and interviews, reading the Qur'an can serve as a means of fostering a habit of reading among students.

Raniati Tentri, an Islamic Education teacher at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh, explained, "Reading the Qur'an can be a starting point for getting students into the habit of reading. In addition to reading, students also need to be guided to understand the meaning and content of the verses so that they not only read fluently but also comprehend the messages within them." (Tantri, interview, August 27, 2026)

This statement indicates that Qur'anic literacy should not be limited to the ability to read Arabic text. Qur'anic literacy can be developed into the ability to understand meaning, interpret messages in simple terms appropriate to students' educational levels, and connect the values of the Qur'an to daily life.

Issues in Student Literacy from the Perspective of Islamic Education

The research findings indicate that the literacy challenges faced by students at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh consist of three main issues: a lack of reading habits, weak reading comprehension skills, and suboptimal abilities to evaluate

and use information.

These findings indicate that literacy must be understood in a broader sense. Literacy is not merely the technical ability to read, but the ability to interact with information actively and critically. Within the framework of the National Assessment, reading literacy encompasses the ability to understand, use, evaluate, and reflect on various texts. (Center for Assessment and Learning, 2025)

The research findings are also relevant to the state of literacy in Indonesia. The 2022 PISA results show that Indonesia's average reading score was 359, compared to the OECD average of 476. In addition, about 25% of Indonesian students reached Level 2 or higher in reading, while the OECD average was 74%. (OECD, 2023) While this data cannot be used to draw conclusions about the specific circumstances of students at Pondok Suguh Public Junior High School No. 11, it does provide a national context showing that improving reading literacy remains a significant challenge in Indonesia's education system.

From the perspective of Islamic education, this issue takes on even greater importance because the act of reading has a strong foundation in the Qur'an. Surah Al-'Alaq, verses 1–5, begins with the command "iqra'," which conveys an important message about reading and acquiring knowledge. (Qur'an, Al-'Alaq 96:1–5). Thus, students' low reading culture can be viewed as an educational issue that needs to be addressed not only through pedagogical approaches but also through values-based approaches. Students need to be made aware that reading is not merely an obligation when they are given assignments, but rather part of the process of acquiring knowledge.

The Meaning of "Iqra'" as the Foundation of a Culture of Literacy

The concept of "iqra'" provides a philosophical foundation for the idea that Islamic education places a strong emphasis on reading and the acquisition of knowledge. "Iqra'" is not merely understood as the act of reciting written text, but can also refer to reading texts, understanding reality, seeking knowledge, and drawing lessons from various phenomena in life.

When considered in light of research findings, the issue of students who only read when instructed indicates that the value of "iqra'" has not yet fully become part of the learning culture. Therefore, teachers need to develop instructional approaches that make reading a meaningful activity.

In the context of SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh, the value of "iqra'" can be applied by establishing the habit of reading before class, reading Islamic texts, reading the Qur'an and understanding its translation, reading articles and non-fiction books, summarizing readings, discussing the content of readings, restating information in one's own words, and reflecting on the values gained from the readings. Thus, "iqra'" can be translated into a concrete learning culture.

Literacy and the Value of Seeking Knowledge

The issue of literacy is also related to students' motivation to seek knowledge. Islam places a high value on knowledge. Surah Al-Mujadilah, verse 11, explains that Allah elevates the status of those who believe and possess knowledge. (Qur'an, Al-Mujadilah 58:11)

In the context of research, this verse can be used to provide a motivational foundation for the idea that learning and reading are activities of great value. Students need to understand that knowledge is not only gained through the teacher's explanations but also through reading, observing, asking questions, discussing, and seeking out sources of knowledge. Thus, literacy development should be directed toward changing students' mindset, from "I read because I have an assignment" to "I read because I need knowledge". This shift in orientation is an important part of fostering a culture of learning.

Literacy as the Implementation of the Principle of Tabayyun

One of the study's key findings is the fairly dominant role of mobile devices in students' lives. This situation has two sides. On the one hand, mobile devices can serve as a source of information and a learning tool; on the other hand, they can lead students to consume more entertainment content and information that may not be accurate.

In this context, QS. Al-Hujurat verse 6 provides the principle of tabayyun, which is to verify the truth of information before accepting or sharing it. This principle is highly relevant to digital literacy. (Qur'an, Al-Hujurat 49:6)

Thus, efforts to strengthen the literacy skills of students at Pondok Suguh Public Junior High School No. 11 should include the ability to verify information sources, compare multiple sources, distinguish between facts and opinions, not automatically trust information on social media, verify religious information before sharing it, use credible sources, and utilize technology for learning purposes. Literacy grounded in tabayyun will shape students who are not only able to read but also capable of critical and responsible thinking..

The Role of Islamic Religious Education in Strengthening Literacy

Islamic Religious Education plays a strategic role in strengthening a culture of literacy because its curriculum is directly linked to texts and sources of knowledge, particularly the Qur'an and the hadith. (Muslim, Hadith 2699a) Islamic Education teachers can use the learning material as a means of developing literacy by providing activities such as:

- 1 .Reading verses from the Qur'an;
- 2 .Reading translations of the verses;
- 3 .Identifying the main message of the verses;
- 4 .Exploring how the verses relate to real life;
- 5 .Reading relevant hadiths;
- 6 .Comparing Islamic information from various sources;
- 7 .Writing summaries;
- 8 .Presenting the results of their reading; and
- 9 .Reflecting on the values they have learned.

With this approach, Islamic Education instruction aims not only to improve students' understanding of religious material but also to enhance their ability to

read, comprehend, analyze, and communicate information.

Strategies for Strengthening Student Literacy Based on Islamic Education

Based on the research findings and discussion, a strategy for strengthening students' literacy can be formulated in five stages: First, habituation. Schools foster consistent reading habits through pre-class reading activities, reading the Qur'an, and utilizing the library. Second, comprehension. After reading, students do not immediately move on to the next activity but are asked to identify the main ideas, answer questions, summarize, and paraphrase the content of the text. Third, analysis. Students are guided to compare information, identify relationships between ideas, and provide reasons for their opinions. Fourth, tabayyun or evaluation of information: Students are trained to verify the accuracy of information, particularly information obtained through the internet and social media. Fifth, implementation: Information gained from reading is connected to behavior and daily life. At this stage, literacy does not stop at knowledge but leads to changes in attitude and behavior. This model aligns with the character of Islamic education, which connects knowledge with action. Thus, the culture of literacy that is developed produces not only students who read extensively, but students who are able to understand, evaluate, use, and apply knowledge responsibly.

Synthesis of Research Findings and Islamic Education Perspective

Based on the overall research findings, the following synthesis can be presented: Empirical Findings Literacy Issue Islamic Education Perspective Implication Students mainly read when instructed or given assignments. Reading habit is not yet established. Surah Al-'Alaq 96:1-5 (iqra') Consistent reading habituation Some students have difficulty identifying main ideas, explaining texts, and summarizing. Reading comprehension is still limited Seeking knowledge and learning (Surah Al-Mujadilah 58:11) Reading, summarizing, discussing, and reflecting Students' reading motivation is often driven by assignments

Intrinsic motivation to seek knowledge needs strengthening. Surah Al-Mujadilah 58:11 Strengthening motivation to learn Some students use mobile devices mainly for social media and entertainment. Use of digital information is not yet optimal. Tabayyun (Surah Al-Hujurat 49:6) Verifying and evaluating digital information Students read the Qur'an but do not always understand its meaning. Qur'anic literacy needs strengthening. Iqra' and the pursuit of knowledge Reading, understanding, and connecting Qur'anic values to daily life Literacy development requires school, teacher, student, and family involvement.

Literacy is a multidimensional and shared responsibility. Islamic education integrates knowledge with responsible action. Building a supportive literacy ecosystem Based on this synthesis, it is clear that the literacy challenges faced by students at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh encompass the dimensions of habits, skills, motivation, environment, technology, and religious values. Therefore, solving this problem requires more than simply increasing the number of books or assigning reading tasks. The school needs to build a literacy ecosystem that involves teachers, students, families, the library, the school environment,

technology, and the values of Islamic education.

Key Findings of the Study

Based on the research findings and discussion, there are four main findings. First, students' literacy challenges are not limited to a lack of interest in reading but also include their ability to understand, interpret, draw conclusions, and evaluate information. Second, the use of digital devices is a factor that influences students' literacy patterns. However, technology need not be viewed as an obstacle. With proper guidance, digital devices can be transformed into tools for digital literacy. Third, Islamic education has a strong normative foundation for developing a culture of literacy through the concepts of *iqra'*, seeking knowledge, and *tabayyun*. Fourth, effective literacy development must be achieved through habit formation, comprehension, analysis, evaluation of information, and the application of values derived from reading. Thus, this study indicates that efforts to strengthen literacy among students at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh should be directed toward fostering a literacy culture grounded in the values of Islamic education specifically, a reading culture that cultivates knowledge, critical thinking skills, religious character, and responsible behavior.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the student literacy issues at SMP Negeri 11 Pondok Suguh, Mukomuko Regency, are reflected in weak reading habits, difficulties in understanding and retelling text content, and limited ability to evaluate and use information. The findings also show that these conditions are related to student motivation and reading habits, the learning and family environments, the availability and use of literacy resources, and the tendency to use mobile devices mainly for entertainment.

From the perspective of Islamic education, these findings can be understood through the values of *iqra'* (Surah Al-'Alaq 96:1–5), the pursuit of knowledge (Surah Al-Mujadilah 58:11), and *tabayyun* (Surah Al-Hujurat 49:6). Therefore, strengthening literacy in this context should integrate reading habituation, comprehension and reflection, Qur'anic literacy, critical evaluation of information, and the constructive use of technology. The study emphasizes that literacy in Islamic education involves not only reading ability but also understanding, evaluating, and applying knowledge responsibly.

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