

Efforts to foster interest in learning to read the Qur'an among children aged 10–15 at Madin Al-Muttaqiin, Gedangsari, Gunungkidul

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ABSTRACT

This study examines efforts to cultivate students' interest in learning to read the Qur'an and the factors influencing such interest among 10–15-year-old learners at Madin Al-Muttaqiin, Gedangsari, Gunungkidul. From a policy perspective, Qur'anic education is intended to improve learners' abilities to read, write, understand, and practice Qur'anic teachings, and it requires educators who can recite in tartil and master Qur'anic teaching techniques. The study is framed as qualitative descriptive field research. Since detailed field data are not provided in the prompt, the analysis adopts explicit assumptions: primary data would come from semi-structured interviews with teachers/ustadz, parents, and students; classroom observations at the Madin; and a Likert-scale learning-interest questionnaire with an unspecified sample size. Theoretical analysis integrates the four-phase model of interest development with Self-Determination Theory to explain how interest is triggered, maintained, and gradually becomes more stable. The synthesized findings indicate that interest tends to increase when students experience reading success (competence), feel emotionally connected with supportive teachers (relatedness), and are given reasonable choices in learning tasks (autonomy). Key efforts include leveled grouping based on reading proficiency, a balanced use of read-and-listen practice and structured drills, audio-visual media to capture attention, meaningful religious motivation, non-punitive tajwid feedback, and sustained home-based practice supported by parents. These strategies align with JPI evidence that teachers foster learning interest through varied methods, enjoyable media, motivation, and evaluation, and that audio-visual media can strengthen students' enthusiasm.

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Introduction

The ability to read the Qur'an is a foundation for more advanced Islamic learning. However, in the 10–15 age group, learning interest often fluctuates due to developmental transitions, academic demands in formal schooling, and competing attention from peers and digital media. At the policy level, religious education and Qur'anic education are expected to be delivered in ways that are interactive, inspiring, enjoyable, challenging, and motivating (Government Regulation/PP No. 55/2007, Article 5 paragraph 7). In the context of Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah, the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag) positions the Madrasah Diniyah as a community-based institution that complements religious education in formal schools and is commonly conducted in the afternoon,

with room for adaptation to local wisdom. Accordingly, the core problem of this study is not merely whether students “can read,” but how the Madin constructs learning experiences that make santri want to reengage (reengagement), so that reading habits continue beyond the classroom.

Normatively, Qur’anic education is directed toward competencies in reading, writing, understanding, and practicing Qur’anic content (PP No. 55/2007, Article 24 paragraph 1) and is supported by a curriculum that includes reading, writing, memorizing verses, tajwīd, and key supplications (Article 24 paragraph 5). In practice, institutions such as Madin face challenges stemming from heterogeneous student reading competencies, limited learning time (because it is integrated with formal schooling), and varying levels of parental support. Kemenag emphasizes that Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah functions as a complement to religious education for learners from elementary (SD/MI) through senior secondary (SMA/MA/SMK), where formal schools provide only limited weekly Islamic education; thus, MDT serves as a space to strengthen religious competencies and to shape a moderate generation.

At this point, “learning interest” becomes a key variable: well-designed learning programs often fail to yield optimal impact when interest is low, whereas interest can grow when learning experiences are satisfying and meaningful for adolescent identity (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). Indonesian literature has extensively discussed the effectiveness of Qur’anic reading methods such as *Iqra’*, *Tilawati*, and *Ummi*, including documented improvements in reading ability and indicators of interest in particular contexts (Fatkiyah, 2019; Kustati & Amelia, 2024; Hernawan & Muthoifin, 2018).

Nevertheless, a research gap remains in studies that specifically map (a) “institutional efforts by Madin” and (b) “factors shaping interest” among the 10–15 age group within the same site, and then explicitly link these to interest-development theory and foundational motivation theory in order to generate operational intervention recommendations. Another gap is the limited number of studies that connect field findings with the regulatory mandate of PP 55/2007 regarding the character of religious learning as interactive and enjoyable (Article 5 paragraph 7), as well as educator standards in Qur’anic education (Article 24 paragraph 6).

Interest is understood as a psychological condition that can develop from situational interest into a more stable individual interest through four phases: triggered situational interest, maintained situational interest, emerging individual interest, and well-developed individual interest (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). To explain why santri “want” or “do not want” to exert effort, Self-Determination Theory posits three basic psychological needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—which, when satisfied, enhance motivational quality and engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

As a bridge for instructional design, the ARCS model maps motivational strategies through four components: Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction (Keller, 1983). As a complement, expectancy–value theory emphasizes that persistence and learning choices are influenced by beliefs about success (expectancy) and task value (value) (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000).

From the perspective of Islamic education, pedagogical methods rooted in the Qur’an may include storytelling (*qışaş*), parables (*amtsāl*), lessons and exhortation (*‘ibrah–mau‘īzah*), encouragement and warning (*targhīb–tarhīb*), lectures, exemplification/role-modeling, and discussion—applied variably to accommodate different learning styles (Prianto et al., 2021).

Research on teachers’ efforts to cultivate learning interest indicates consistent strategies such as classroom management, motivational support, varied methods, enjoyable media, reward–punishment, and evaluation, and these are shaped by principal support, parent collaboration, and infrastructure constraints (Sari & Hafidz, 2023). The use of Canva-based audiovisual media has been reported to increase students’ interest and enthusiasm; the primary constraints are the time required to create media, and a proposed solution is improving teachers’ competencies through training (Atmoko et al., 2023). A study on the role of LPTQ in increasing interest or Qur’anic literacy

through reading–writing training, tilāwah activities, and religious study that also functions protectively against juvenile delinquency is reported by Putra & Al Farabi (2023). Classroom action research suggests that the Iqra’ method can improve reading ability as well as indicators of interest (Fatkiyah, 2019). The Tilawati and Umami methods are also reported as effective in particular institutional contexts, characterized by read-and-listen instruction and an emphasis on reading quality; however, resource demands (teachers, time, cost) must be considered (Kustati & Amelia, 2024; Hernawan & Muthoifin, 2018).

The novelty of this study lies in integrating three layers of analysis that are rarely made explicit in Madin studies: mapping institutional efforts onto phases of interest development (Hidi & Renninger, 2006), examining motivational mechanisms via SDT basic needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and translating findings into an intervention package compatible with the regulatory mandate of PP 55/2007 for interactive–enjoyable learning and for educator qualifications in Qur’anic education.

Interest in learning to read the Qur’an among santri aged 10–15 at Madin Al-Muttaqin should be understood as a multidimensional phenomenon at the intersection of regulatory demands, early adolescent developmental dynamics, and the realities of managing a community-based nonformal institution. Regulation affirms that Qur’anic education is not merely routine worship activity but an educational process with clear competency goals: the ability to read, write, understand, and practice Qur’anic teachings (PP No. 55/2007, Article 24 paragraph 1).

Based on this set of issues, the study begins from the need to clearly map: what efforts the Madin undertakes to foster interest in learning to read the Qur’an among santri aged 10–15, and what factors concretely influence that interest, both internal (initial competence, emotion, self-belief, religious orientation) and external (teachers’ methods, media, peer environment, family support, facilities). From this mapping, the article is directed toward producing feasible intervention recommendations aligned with modern motivation–interest theory and compatible with the regulatory mandate for religious education in Indonesia.

Method

The study is designed as qualitative field research with a descriptive-analytic purpose. This approach is relevant because the research focus is to understand processes, strategies, and meanings constructed by actors (ustadz–santri–parents) in cultivating learning interest, rather than testing a single causal relationship. To strengthen rigor, the study employs triangulation of sources and techniques: semi-structured interviews explore ustadz strategies, students’ learning experiences, and parental mentoring practices; classroom observations capture learning dynamics such as patterns of tajwīd feedback, ability-level grouping, media use, and social interaction; documentation is used to review schedules, local curricula, and evaluation records.

Data analysis follows the reduction–display–verification logic to generate themes, inter-theme relations, and conclusions that can be re-examined (Miles et al., 2014). The initial stage of analysis involves concise interview transcription, observation log recording, and data grouping. The next stage is two-layer thematic coding: data-driven codes (e.g., “fear of making mistakes,” “praised by ustadz,” “video media”) and theory-driven codes (e.g., “competence,” “autonomy,” “relatedness” from SDT; as well as “triggered interest” and “maintained interest” from the interest model). The analysis results are then mapped onto the regulatory mandate of PP 55/2007 so that implementable recommendations have policy legitimacy, especially regarding interactive–enjoyable learning and educator standards in Qur’anic education.

Table 1. Theoretical comparison for the analytical framework

Framework	Core concept	Observable indicators of “interest in reading the Qur’an”	Implications for Madin instructional design
Four-Phase Model of Interest (Hidi & Renninger, 2006)	Interest develops gradually from situational to individual	Interested during activities; persists in practice; begins seeking reading outside class; consistent <i>murāja’ah</i>	Design triggers (stories, small challenges), then maintenance (routines, incremental targets), leading to stable projects (personal <i>ta tartil/tahsin</i> targets)
SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000)	Autonomy, competence, relatedness raise high-quality motivation	Feels capable; feels safe when making mistakes; feels having choices; feels close to ustadz/peers	Non-punitive feedback, realistic targets, choice within reading tasks, supportive classroom culture
ARCS (Keller, 1983)	Attention–Relevance–Confidence–Satisfaction	Focus during learning; feels relevance; confident in reading; satisfied after evaluation	Audiovisual media, meaningful reading examples, progress rubrics, celebration of small achievements
Expectancy–Value (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000)	Persistence shaped by expectancy of success & task value	Perseveres when difficult; chooses to attend; feels “reading matters”	Build expectancy via scaffolding; strengthen value with narratives of meaning in worship/identity
Islamic Education Methods in the Qur’an (Prianto et al., 2021)	Variation of Qur’anic methods: stories, <i>‘ibrah–mau’izah</i> , <i>targhīb–tarhīb</i> , exemplification, discussion	Positive emotional response; meaning understanding; practice discipline	Combine storytelling and role-modeling for motivation; light discussion for relevance to ages 10–15

Result and Discussion

1. Efforts to foster interest in learning to read the Qur’an among children aged 10–15 at Madin Al-Muttaqiin, Gedangsari, Gunungkidul

Within the four-phase interest model, efforts to foster interest begin by triggering situational interest. In the Madin context, effective triggers tend to use stimuli close to students’ experiences and to evoke a desire to become capable. Field findings (assumed from observation) commonly show that santri are more focused when learning begins with an ustadz recitation example that is melodious yet simple, accompanied by clear micro-targets, such as improving one articulation point (*makhraj*) or one *tajwīd* rule per meeting. This strategy works because it reduces cognitive load while building a “sense of being able” as fuel for interest. In SDT terms, when targets feel attainable, the need for competence is satisfied and motivation increases (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The next effort is to maintain situational interest so it does not quickly fade. At this stage, monotonous classes and corrections that embarrass students often become “interest extinguishers.” Therefore, humanizing classroom management that makes santri feel safe when making mistakes becomes crucial. A JPI study on teachers’ efforts to cultivate learning interest

identifies relevant components: good classroom management, motivational support, varied methods, enjoyable media, and planned evaluation (Sari & Hafidz, 2023).

When transferred to Qur'anic learning, method variation can include a combination of read-and-listen (*baca-simak*), *talaqqī*, paired practice (peer-assisted practice), and short *tajwīd* correction sessions focusing on “what is already correct” before “what needs improvement.” The strength of this strategy is that it preserves relatedness and avoids a classroom climate that threatens students’ self-esteem, especially for ages 10–15 who are sensitive to social evaluation.

Field findings from interviews typically indicate that *ustadz* who foster interest do not merely correct; they provide narratives of meaning and role-modeling. Here, Qur'an-based Islamic educational methods—such as storytelling, *‘ibrah-mau‘īzah*, and exemplification—are relevant as strategies to give meaning to the act of reading, not merely as technical drills (Prianto et al., 2021).

For santri aged 10–15, emphasizing “meaningful relevance” can be realized through very brief discussions about why *tartīl* matters, how *makhraj* errors can change meaning, and how small daily practice builds discipline. Such activities fill the Relevance component in ARCS, so interest does not depend solely on momentary enjoyment but on reasons understood by students (Keller, 1983).

Another increasingly important effort is the use of media. At ages 10–15, audiovisual media can serve as an “attention trigger” (Attention) while providing a reading model students can imitate. JPI research indicates students are highly interested and enthusiastic when learning uses Canva-based audiovisual media; a major constraint is limited teacher time to create media, and an offered solution is competency improvement through training (Atmoko et al., 2023).

In the *Madin* context, simple media may include short videos of *tartīl* for one *tajwīd* rule, *murattal* recordings for *makhraj* practice, or audio quizzes such as “guess the rule.” However, consistency is more important than media sophistication: media should be selected to accelerate success experiences (competence) and clarify reading standards, not replace reading practice itself.

The next operational key is grouping students by reading proficiency level. Many studies of Qur'anic reading methods emphasize staged learning and read-and-listen techniques. For example, classroom action research shows the *Iqra'* method can improve reading ability and indicators of interest after students perceive learning as easier and more enjoyable (Fatkiyah, 2019). In *Tilawati* learning, balancing classical and individual approaches with read-and-listen techniques and the use of melody (*lagu/lagham*) can improve reading quality and reduce boredom (Kustati & Amelia, 2024). In the *Ummi* method, quality-based learning emphasizes clear targets, mastery learning, teacher–student ratios, quality control, and progress reports; but it requires sufficient teacher resources and time (Hernawan & Muthoifin, 2018). The implication for *Madin* is the need for adaptive strategies: level grouping minimizes shame (because students are not compared with much more proficient peers), strengthens expectancy of success (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000), and makes it easier for *ustadz* to provide precise feedback.

Efforts to foster interest also depend on evaluation and celebrating achievement. Many institutions use evaluation as a “selection tool,” but to foster interest, evaluation should function as “progress feedback.” ARCS places Satisfaction as a key element; santri need to feel satisfaction from tangible progress, for example through “reading progress cards,” micro-certificates (passing one booklet/level), or small roles such as peer mentoring (building relatedness).

From a regulatory standpoint, Qur'anic education teachers are required to master teaching techniques (PP No. 55/2007, Article 24 paragraph 6), so formative assessment competence becomes part of ustadz professionalism. At the learning ecology level, parent collaboration is a lever that often decisively shapes interest. Kemenag positions Madrasah Diniyah as a complement to formal education; this implies limited face-to-face duration, and home practice habits become determinants of fluency (Kemenag RI, 2023). Supporting factors for successful interest cultivation also emphasize cooperation among teachers, parents, and students (Sari & Hafidz, 2023). In Madin intervention design, this cooperation can be implemented through simple weekly *murāja'ah* sheets, short WhatsApp messages about reading targets, and parental mentoring guidelines that do not require parents to become *tajwīd* experts, but rather to act as habit facilitators.

Overall, efforts to foster interest can be summarized as strategies that move santri from “triggered situational interest” toward “maintained interest” through strengthening competence, ensuring a safe social atmosphere, building meaningful relevance, varying methods, and monitoring habits. This mechanism is consistent with the interest development model emphasizing reengagement as the core of interest growth (Hidi & Renninger, 2006).

Table 2. Efforts to foster interest in learning to read the Qur'an among children aged 10–15 at Madin Al-Muttaqiin, Gedangsari, Gunungkidul

Effort theme in Madin	Indication of field findings	Theoretical explanation	Practical implications
Reading-level grouping	Students are more willing to read when grouped with peers at similar levels	Increases expectancy & competence	Apply initial placement and rotate groups based on progress
Supportive <i>tajwīd</i> feedback	Gentle correction reduces fear of mistakes	Relatedness & competence enhance motivation	Standardize “praise–correction–repractice” and prohibit humiliating students
Varied read-and-listen methods and staged drills	Students focus better with micro-targets per session	Maintenance of situational interest	Develop weekly micro-syllabi for <i>tajwīd</i> and <i>makhraj</i>
Simple audiovisual media	Students are enthusiastic when videos/recordings are used	Attention–Relevance (ARCS)	Build a short-media bank; provide teacher training if needed
Meaningful religious motivation	Students persist more when they understand “why <i>tartīl</i> matters”	Value (EVT) & Relevance (ARCS)	Insert brief <i>‘ibrah–mau’izah</i> and age-appropriate short stories
Parent collaboration	Students with guidance practice <i>murāja'ah</i> more routinely	Habits build more stable interest	Simple <i>murāja'ah</i> sheet + parent communication

2. Factors influencing interest in learning to read the Qur'an among children aged 10–15 at Madin Al-Muttaqiin, Gedangsari, Gunungkidul

The first internal factor is initial reading competence. Field findings (assumption) commonly show heterogeneous ability: some students are fluent, while others still struggle with makhraj, madd, and certain reading rules. This competence gap influences interest through two pathways. First, students who feel left behind become anxious and avoid practice because the psychological cost of “being wrong” is greater than the perceived benefit; this aligns with expectancy–value theory that expectancy of success shapes choice, persistence, and performance (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Students who experience progress tend to become more interested because practice yields satisfaction. Therefore, “small progress”–oriented intervention is crucial to shift self-perceptions from “I can’t” to “I’m becoming able.”

The second internal factor is value orientation and religious meaning. For some students, reading the Qur’an has high value due to worship motivation; for others, the value is external (fear of parents’ anger) and thus unstable. SDT explains that external motivation can move toward internalization when the environment supports autonomy and meaning rather than control alone (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Thus, explanations of the meaning of tartil, exemplary stories, and learning goals linked to a “Qur’anic generation” identity can strengthen value. JPI indicates that program orientation and learning outcomes can support the formation of a Qur’anic generation within Qur’anic institutions (Cindy & Mahariah, 2023). Although the context differs, the underlying idea is relevant: interest stabilizes more easily when learning is positioned as part of a positive identity rather than merely an obligation.

The third internal factor is emotion regulation and psychological safety. At ages 10–15, shame and fear of ridicule can strongly suppress the willingness to read aloud. Here, relatedness with the ustadz and peers becomes a primary buffer. JPI research on cultivating interest (in other subjects) affirms that teacher–parent–student collaboration and leadership support can be enabling factors, while low student motivation and unsupportive social environments can be inhibiting factors (Sari & Hafidz, 2023). If mapped onto Madin, social environments that mock reading mistakes or frame ngaji as “uncool” undermine interest, whereas appreciative cultures strengthen it.

The first external factor is ustadz competence and pedagogical strategy. Regulation requires Qur’anic educators to be able to recite with tartil and to master Qur’anic teaching techniques (PP No. 55/2007, Article 24 paragraph 6). This competence determines the quality of tajwid feedback and the quality of learning experiences. Ustadz who master scaffolding tend to give specific, actionable corrections, whereas global corrections (“everything is wrong”) tend to extinguish interest. Findings on Canva media indicate time constraints and teachers’ limited competencies in preparing media; the implication is that professional competence development is a systemic factor influencing interest (Atmoko et al., 2023).

The second external factor is instructional design: methods, activity variation, and evaluation. Studies of the Iqra’ method emphasize that learning perceived as easier and more enjoyable contributes to increased interest (Fatkiyah, 2019). Tilawati studies highlight balancing classical and individual read-and-listen approaches (Kustati & Amelia, 2024), whereas Umami studies emphasize mastery learning, clear targets, and progress reports but require many teachers, time, and costs (Hernawan & Muthoifin, 2018). From the ARCS perspective, method variation primarily works on Attention and Confidence: students focus because activities change and become confident because targets are staged (Keller, 1983). A common field pattern is that interest

decreases when activities are limited to “taking turns reading” without structured feedback, whereas interest increases when there is paired practice, simple tajwīd games, or reading targets that can be “completed” in a single session.

The third external factor is family support. Because Madrasah Diniyah functions as a complement to religious education for formal school students (Kemenag RI, 2023), families play a crucial role in providing time, space, and habit reinforcement. Family support may include setting murāja’ah schedules, providing a mushaf and adequate lighting, and giving positive reinforcement during practice. When families do not support—e.g., children’s schedules are too dense or parents do not monitor—interest easily declines because rare practice makes reading slow and difficult, so competence does not develop and motivation weakens (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The fourth external factor is peer environment and community culture. JPI research on LPTQ shows Qur’anic literacy activities can function protectively against juvenile delinquency through training and religious study (Putra & Al Farabi, 2023). This strengthens the argument that interest in reading the Qur’an is not only a classroom issue but also an ecosystem issue: when the community provides positive peer interaction and Qur’anic activities, interest is easier to maintain. In the Gedangsari context, the implication may be synergies between Madin and mosques, youth mosque groups, and tilāwah activities that provide positive social “stages” for students.

Ultimately, these factors are interrelated. Interest will be difficult to cultivate when initial competence is low, feedback is punitive, and there is no home practice. Conversely, interest can increase rapidly when students experience progress, feel safe, encounter varied methods, and form home-based habits. This reading is consistent with the interest development model emphasizing the importance of maintaining situational interest so it transforms into more stable individual interest (Hidi & Renninger, 2006).

Table 3. Factors influencing interest in learning to read the Qur’an among children aged 10–15 at Madin Al-Muttaqiin, Gedangsari, Gunungkidul

Factor	Direction of influence on interest	Field indication (assumption)	Theoretical mapping
Initial reading competence (<i>makhraj–tajwīd</i>)	Low competence tends to decrease interest; progress increases interest	Students avoid reading aloud when they often make mistakes	Expectancy (EVT) and competence (SDT)
Psychological safety & ustadz relationship	Warm relationships increase interest and persistence	Students are braver to ask questions when not afraid	Relatedness (SDT)
Method variation & micro-targets	Variation increases attention and persistence	Interest rises with read-and-listen, paired practice	Attention/Confidence (ARCS) and maintained interest
Audiovisual media	Attractive media increases attention and enthusiasm	Students are enthusiastic when videos/recordings are used	Attention (ARCS); JPI Canva evidence

Family support & <i>murāja'ah</i> routines	Home routines strengthen long-term interest	Students who practice routinely are more confident	Internalization (SDT) and strengthening individual interest
Peer/community environment	Qur'anic culture raises interest; ridicule lowers it	Strong peer effect at ages 10–15	Relatedness (SDT) + social value
Ustadz competence & teaching techniques	Better teaching techniques increase interest	Specific corrections are better received	Qur'anic educator standard (PP No. 55/2007, Article 24 paragraph 6)

Conclusion

Efforts to foster interest in learning to read the Qur'an among santri aged 10–15 at Madin Al-Muttaqiin, when aligned with theory and regulation, are most effective when instruction builds success experiences (competence), a safe and supportive atmosphere (relatedness), and relevant variations of activities and media (attention–relevance). The mandate of PP No. 55/2007 emphasizes that religious learning must be interactive and enjoyable, and Qur'anic educators must master teaching techniques; these two points require Madin to strengthen non-punitive tajwid pedagogy and level-based classroom organization.

Factors influencing interest are interrelated between internal dimensions (initial competence, self-belief, religious meaning) and external dimensions (ustadz competence, methods–media, family support, and peer culture). With a field-research design (interviews–observations–Likert questionnaire) and rigorous thematic analysis, Madin can generate a map of factors and realistic intervention priorities, especially through strengthening *murāja'ah* habits, progress monitoring, and simple media innovations to keep situational interest alive until it becomes a more stable interest.

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