

Cultural Integration and Collaborative Pedagogy in Qur'anic Literacy: The *Tahsin* Program's Innovative Model

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the transformative impact of the *Tahsin Program* on advancing Qur'anic literacy by integrating culturally responsive pedagogy with contextually grounded instructional design. Addressing the gap in inclusive, community-rooted religious education, the program aims to foster both linguistic proficiency and cultural identity. A qualitative case study approach was employed at a community-based learning center in Cimahi, Indonesia. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, direct classroom observations, and document analysis. This multi-method strategy ensured a comprehensive understanding of the program's design and outcomes. Findings revealed that over 80% of learners improved their Tajweed proficiency within three months. The program's unique integration of modular curriculum progression, localized content, intergenerational mentorship, and embedded formative feedback contributed significantly to learner success. Culturally embedded practices—particularly the inclusion of elders—enhanced communal learning and reinforced cultural identity. Peer mentoring and dialogic group discussions fostered interpretive depth and active engagement, while ongoing feedback supported differentiated instruction and learner autonomy. The *Tahsin Program* exemplifies how pedagogical models that blend tradition with innovation can enhance religious education. By grounding the curriculum in social constructivist theory, the program accommodates diverse learner profiles and promotes sustainable community involvement. This study highlights the effectiveness of context-sensitive, culturally grounded Qur'anic education. Future research should explore how digital tools can scale such models for broader urban and online application.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education constitutes the cornerstone of human development, cultural preservation, and societal advancement. As the global landscape becomes increasingly interconnected and shaped by rapid technological progress, the demand for educational paradigms that are inclusive, adaptive, and culturally nuanced has never been more critical (Nurhayati, Dina, et al. 2024; Shliakhovchuk 2021). Such frameworks must not only address the complexities inherent in diverse learner populations but also bridge systemic disparities in access to and outcomes of education. A promising approach involves integrating traditional knowledge systems with contemporary pedagogical strategies, creating holistic models that transcend conventional limitations. The Tahsin Program exemplifies this synthesis, offering an innovative model for Qur'anic literacy education that marries traditional religious instruction with cutting-edge pedagogical practices. This study responds to the urgent call for educational systems that preserve cultural heritage while meeting the exigencies of a rapidly globalizing and technologically dynamic world.

Qur'anic literacy holds a pivotal role in Muslim communities, serving as a foundation for spiritual understanding, moral cultivation, and social identity formation (Juhana and Nurhayati 2023; Tiarawati et al. 2023; Widyawati and Nurhayati 2023). Historically, Qur'anic education has emphasized rote memorization and the mechanical application of Tajweed rules (Ayyad 2022; Baharuddin et al. 2024)). While effective for ensuring technical proficiency, these methods often fall short of fostering critical engagement and a nuanced comprehension of the Qur'anic text. Furthermore, traditional approaches frequently fail to accommodate the diverse needs of learners, particularly in socio-economically disadvantaged settings where access to quality education is limited (Noh et al. 2020). To address these limitations, it is imperative to reimagine Qur'anic education in ways that align with contemporary pedagogical principles while retaining its spiritual and cultural essence (Bensaid and Machouche 2017).

Scholars and practitioners have proposed various strategies to address these gaps. Modularized curricula, for example, enable learners to progress through systematically structured phases, beginning with foundational Tajweed skills and advancing to interpretative exercises. Such approaches have demonstrated measurable improvements in learner engagement and comprehension (Tiarawati et al. 2023). Similarly, collaborative learning methodologies, including peer mentoring and community-driven activities, leverage social interactions to enrich intellectual engagement and cater to diverse learner needs (Ali et al. 2022; Cholifah, Nurhayati, and Fitriana 2023). These methodologies draw on Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory, which underscores the role of social interaction in facilitating knowledge acquisition (Khosravizadeh 2023).

The emergence of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) has further redefined the landscape of Qur'anic education, offering a framework that aligns instructional content with learners' cultural identities and lived experiences. This alignment fosters emotional resonance and enhances both engagement and retention (Zhou and Hassan 2024). In the specific context of Qur'anic literacy, embedding local narratives and idiomatic expressions into instructional materials has proven effective in connecting the sacred text with learners' everyday realities (Mardiana 2023; Nurdiana et al. 2023). This approach highlights the necessity for educational frameworks that are both culturally resonant and pedagogically rigorous. What makes the Tahsin Program distinct is this holistic integration. Unlike standard modular learning, its structure flexibly adapts to learners' evolving capacities, enriched by peer mentoring and continuous feedback (Dejene 2019; Tiarawati et al. 2023). Unlike generic CRP frameworks, it embeds culture not as content, but as method and medium—rooted in local heritage, elevated by community voices, and sustained through shared accountability (Gultekin et al. 2022; Widyawati and Nurhayati 2023). The model operates on the understanding that spiritual literacy cannot be divorced from cultural identity or social context. In today's Qur'anic education discourse, where debates often revolve around the tension between preserving religious authenticity and embracing pedagogical reform, the Tahsin Program offers a meaningful synthesis. It demonstrates that tradition and innovation need not be opposing forces, but can be harmonized to foster inclusive, impactful learning experiences. At a time when many Islamic education institutions grapple with declining engagement and uneven access, this

model provides practical insights into how holistic, community-centered approaches can revitalize Qur'anic literacy while honoring its sacred foundations. As such, the Tahsin Program represents a timely and contextually relevant contribution to the evolving landscape of Islamic education.

This study critically examines how the Tahsin Program enhances Qur'anic literacy among adult learners. Specifically, it investigates how the program's modular structure supports differentiated learning trajectories, how collaborative strategies deepen understanding and motivation, and how cultural elements embedded in the curriculum strengthen learner engagement and content retention. It also explores the impact of formative and peer-driven feedback mechanisms in supporting iterative learning and self-efficacy. By addressing these interwoven dynamics, the study fills a notable gap in current Islamic education research and offers a grounded framework for developing educational systems that are pedagogically innovative, culturally attuned, and socially empowering.

2. METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach to investigate the implementation and outcomes of the Tahsin Program at Majelis Ta'lim Cibeber, located in Cimahi, Indonesia. A case study methodology was selected because it allows a detailed exploration of the curriculum, pedagogical strategies, and learner outcomes within their authentic cultural and community context (Iswahyudi et al. 2023; Nurhayati, Kurnianta, and Anggraeni 2024). By closely examining a single, context-rich setting, this research captures the complexities and interactions inherent to the program, offering insights into its potential adaptability for broader educational contexts.

Majlis Ta'lim Cibeber was purposively selected for its established implementation of the Tahsin Program, diverse learner demographics, and reputation for community engagement. Participants included 40 learners, three instructors, and five community stakeholders. Learners, aged 12–50 years, came from diverse educational backgrounds and Qur'anic literacy levels, and were divided into two groups based on their skill level: 25 beginners focusing on foundational Tajweed and recitation techniques, and 15 advanced learners engaging in thematic memorization, interpretation, and critical analysis. The three instructors were selected based on their extensive experience (minimum three years) delivering the Tahsin curriculum, ensuring informed perspectives on instructional practices and learner progression. Five community stakeholders—comprising local leaders and respected elders closely affiliated with the majlis—provided insights into the cultural relevance and communal significance of the program. For deeper analysis, 20 learners (10 beginners and 10 advanced) were purposively sampled based on active participation (attendance rate above 80%) and representation across varying skill levels to ensure balanced insights into different learner experiences. Ethical approval for the research was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and informed consent was collected from all participants, clearly outlining their right to anonymity, confidentiality, and voluntary participation.

Data collection involved multiple qualitative methods. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected learners, all three instructors, and five community stakeholders to gather diverse perspectives on curriculum effectiveness and pedagogical practices. Direct observations of eight Tahsin sessions provided real-time data on instructional dynamics, learner interactions, and collaborative processes. Additionally, program documents—including lesson plans, assessment records, and feedback forms—were analyzed to assess curricular coherence and alignment with pedagogical objectives. Focus group discussions were also held, with six learner groups (three beginner and three advanced groups, each with five participants) and separately with the instructors, facilitating reflective dialogue on the collaborative and community dimensions of the program.

The data was analyzed using thematic analysis due to its suitability for systematically identifying and interpreting patterns within rich qualitative datasets (Creswell 2017). Unlike other qualitative methods such as grounded theory or narrative analysis, thematic analysis provided greater flexibility in exploring interrelated themes such as cultural integration, collaborative learning, and iterative feedback mechanisms. To ensure trustworthiness and credibility, triangulation was employed by cross-validating

insights across interviews, observations, document analyses, and focus groups, thereby addressing potential biases and enhancing the validity of findings.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study underscore the transformative impact of the Tahsin Program on Qur'anic literacy, cultural integration, collaborative learning, and feedback mechanisms. These results provide a comprehensive understanding of how innovative educational approaches can enhance learning outcomes, foster cultural relevance, and promote community engagement.

3.1 Tahsin Program's Curriculum Design and Learner Outcomes

The curriculum of the Tahsin Program is strategically structured using a phased, differentiated instructional approach designed to systematically enhance participants' Qur'anic literacy. Learners progressed sequentially from foundational aspects of Tajweed, including basic phonetics and recitation techniques, toward more sophisticated thematic memorization and interpretative analysis modules. Instructor-based assessments conducted over a three-month period indicated that more than 80% of participants demonstrated substantial improvement in recitation accuracy and fluency. Qualitative data from instructor interviews highlighted the curriculum's flexibility as a significant strength, allowing individualized progression and tailored support. For example, one instructor noted, "The curriculum's flexibility allows learners to progress meaningfully, meeting them where they are." Similarly, participant feedback from focus group discussions underscored the systematic nature of the program, with one learner remarking, "The curriculum's step-by-step process made even the most challenging aspects of Tajweed approachable."

Modules within the program, clearly delineated as "Basic Phonetics," "Intermediate Recitation Techniques," and "Advanced Tafsir and Critical Analysis," provided structured yet adaptable pathways tailored to diverse learning abilities. Critical analysis of this modular approach confirms its efficacy in aligning pedagogical strategies with the incremental mastery central to Tajweed (Bayron 2023; Ocampo 2023). Nonetheless, despite the overall success, the structured format occasionally introduced rigidity, particularly impacting beginner learners who reported difficulty adjusting to transitions between modules, a challenge stemming from disparate skill levels and varying progression speeds. This finding resonates with Bayron's (2023) observation regarding the potential rigidity inherent in modular curriculum designs, which can inadvertently disadvantage learners requiring additional pedagogical support.

Furthermore, continuous formative assessments implemented by instructors effectively allowed for dynamic curricular adjustments responsive to evolving learner needs (Dejene 2019). However, practical limitations emerged related to instructor workload, expertise, and the consistent delivery of personalized feedback. Ocampo (2023) similarly cautions that while modular educational frameworks have proven beneficial, notably during disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, their efficacy is significantly contingent upon robust instructor competencies and the availability of supportive resources. Therefore, enhancing the program's effectiveness necessitates targeted professional development for instructors and the allocation of adequate resources to sustain personalized learning and flexible curricular adjustments (Akhwanudin et al. 2024; Musa et al. 2024). The Tahsin Program's modular curricular approach evidences considerable potential for systematically advancing Qur'anic literacy, particularly through its differentiated instructional methodologies. Nonetheless, critical enhancements in module flexibility, transitional pacing, and resource distribution are essential to fully realize its effectiveness across diverse learner populations.

3.2 Collaborative Learning Strategies and Social Engagement

The Tahsin Program's integration of collaborative learning mechanisms functioned as a critical pedagogical strategy in cultivating a dynamic and dialogic educational environment. Structured

modalities—including group Tajweed recitation sessions, peer-assisted mentoring, and cooperative interpretive exercises—were intentionally designed to stimulate mutual accountability, facilitate distributed cognition, and reinforce co-constructed learning processes. Grounded in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of learning, these activities leveraged interpersonal interaction as a core medium for the internalization of complex Qur'anic concepts (Achmad and Fitria 2024; Alkhudiry 2022; Khosravizadeh 2023). Qualitative data drawn from participant interviews substantiated the cognitive and affective benefits of these methods. One advanced learner articulated, "Working with peers allowed me to see new perspectives, making the learning process more enriching," reflecting a broader pattern of enhanced interpretative capacity emerging from dialogical engagement. Similarly, Tajweed proficiency was reportedly deepened through recursive peer feedback and collaborative problem-solving, further confirming the pedagogical value of structured interaction.

Beyond formal instruction, community-oriented initiatives such as Qur'anic recitation competitions and family-based workshops operated as affective learning extensions. These events fostered a collective ethos of accomplishment and mutual validation, with instructors attesting to increased learner motivation and programmatic commitment. The inclusion of intergenerational mentorship further enriched these processes. Elders, drawing from lived cultural memory, contributed historical and contextual narratives that grounded Qur'anic instruction within localized epistemological frameworks. As one educator noted, "Elders' involvement brought authenticity to lessons, connecting learners to their heritage." Nevertheless, the implementation of collaborative models was not without its limitations. Ethnographic observations revealed stratified participation dynamics, wherein novice or younger learners expressed apprehension when engaging in multi-level group discussions. This hesitation was often attributed to internalized social hierarchies or perceived disparities in Qur'anic proficiency. Such findings corroborate literature suggesting that without intentional facilitation, collaborative structures may inadvertently replicate societal power asymmetries, thus undermining equity in participation (Warsah et al. 2021). Furthermore, inconsistencies in the mentoring capacity of peer facilitators introduced uneven instructional quality, thereby limiting the pedagogical coherence of the collaborative framework.

These findings underscore the necessity for deliberate instructor mediation and formalized mentor development protocols. Effective collaborative learning in religious education contexts must be undergirded by structured equity safeguards, including transparent role distribution, skill-based grouping, and socio-emotional scaffolding. When well-regulated, collaborative learning remains a highly generative mechanism—enhancing empathy, critical inquiry, metacognitive reflection, and communal solidarity (Nurhayati and Handayani 2025; Rahmawan and Nurhayati 2025; Ratnawulan et al. 2025). However, its success is contingent upon the program's capacity to adaptively respond to the nuanced socio-cultural dynamics of learner groups. This analytical lens affirms the value of collaborative pedagogy while cautioning against its uncritical or unstructured application.

3.3 Cultural Relevance and Community Integration

The Tahsin Program's integration of culturally relevant pedagogy emerged as a distinctive and transformative feature, aligning strongly with Banks' (2009) framework that emphasizes cultural alignment as a means to enhance learner engagement and retention (Sleeter 2018). By embedding local idioms, analogies, and narratives, the program cultivated a learning environment that resonated with participants' lived experiences. This cultural embeddedness was consistently affirmed in participant interviews. One learner explained, "The examples used in lessons reflected our daily lives, making the teachings more meaningful and relatable." While this approach strengthened engagement, it also presented instructional challenges. Focus group discussions revealed that some instructors lacked sufficient familiarity with local cultural expressions, resulting in variations in delivery quality. This inconsistency suggests a need for targeted professional development focused on culturally responsive instructional strategies (Anyichie and Butler 2023; Syafrudin and Nurhayati 2020).

A demographic analysis of responses highlighted differentiated engagement across age and gender. Younger learners gravitated toward content that incorporated contemporary references, whereas older participants responded more positively to traditional narratives and intergenerational storytelling. Female learners were especially responsive to themes involving family and community, indicating a gendered preference in content resonance. These findings underscore the necessity for differentiated cultural framing within curriculum design (Rosita et al. 2020; Tini, Nuraeni, and Nurhayati 2025; Wongso, Lucky, and Suhartono 2022).

Community-driven events such as Qur'anic fairs and family workshops further supported cultural integration by transforming learning into a socially embedded experience. According to focus group data, over 90% of participants cited these events as motivational and helpful in maintaining engagement. These findings validate previous assertions that contextualized, communal education enhances both academic and emotional investment (Gultekin et al. 2022; Pandey 2024). Nonetheless, the success of cultural integration should not obscure its limitations. The reliance on localized content risks marginalizing learners from different backgrounds or newer members of the community unfamiliar with traditional idioms. Furthermore, while intergenerational mentorship was credited by 87% of participants as crucial for comprehension, its implementation varied based on the availability and willingness of elder mentors. As Wenger's Communities of Practice model suggests, sustained collective learning requires consistent facilitation and equitable participation (Huijser et al. 2016). Thus, while the Tahsin Program's culturally grounded approach demonstrated clear pedagogical strengths, its long-term scalability depends on instructor training, demographic sensitivity, and inclusive design strategies that anticipate the evolving cultural fabric of learning communities.

3.4 Feedback Mechanisms and Iterative Learning

The feedback architecture within the Tahsin Program constitutes a central pillar of its iterative pedagogical model. Weekly evaluative sessions, as substantiated by both instructor narratives and learner testimonials, offered targeted and timely insights into individual progress trajectories. One participant aptly reflected, "The feedback sessions were not just corrections but stepping stones toward mastery." Approximately 88% of learners emphasized the role of these sessions in bolstering their academic confidence and intrinsic motivation. Distinct from conventional, top-down assessment paradigms, the program employed a multidirectional feedback system encompassing instructor-led evaluations, peer exchanges, and public performance reviews. Among these modalities, peer feedback emerged as a particularly innovative and pedagogically rich component. Advanced learners assumed mentoring roles, facilitating discussions around Tajweed mastery. An advanced participant articulated, "Giving feedback made me more reflective about my own recitation," illustrating how reciprocal critique advanced metacognitive engagement. These peer-led interactions echo Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice framework, fostering a shared learning culture grounded in mutual accountability (Huijser et al. 2016). Similarly, Chakarvarti (2023) underscores the capacity of peer assessment to cultivate both critical reasoning and communal responsibility. Authentic performance contexts—such as Qur'anic recitation competitions—provided an additional evaluative layer that reinforced learner agency through real-world application (Al-Samarrai 2024).

Nonetheless, the operationalization of these feedback mechanisms was not without challenges. Data from interviews revealed disparities in instructor training, which resulted in inconsistencies in the clarity, depth, and actionability of feedback across cohorts. Some learners recounted receiving contradictory input, suggesting a need for more standardized evaluative rubrics and targeted capacity-building for educators. These findings align with broader concerns in non-formal Islamic education, as noted by Musa et al. (2022) and Susanti and Nurhayati (2024), who documented similar discrepancies in instructional delivery across geographically and resource-diverse contexts. Bergantz (2021) further argues that professional development focused on culturally responsive and differentiated pedagogy is critical to ensure coherence and instructional equity. To address scalability constraints, digital technologies present viable supplementary tools. AI-enabled feedback systems and gamified

assessment platforms may enhance personalization without compromising the reflective and dialogical ethos of the Tahsin framework (Adiyono et al. 2025; Milyane et al. 2023; Nurhayati et al. 2025; Sulkipani et al. 2024). However, the integration of such innovations must be carefully managed to avoid displacing the human-centered and community-rooted values that define the program's pedagogical identity.

Cumulatively, the findings related to feedback—alongside those from preceding themes—underscore the dual realities of potential and complexity inherent in implementing integrative religious pedagogies. The Tahsin Program exemplifies a nuanced convergence of curriculum innovation, collaborative practice, and cultural contextualization. Yet, it also exposes underlying tensions between standardization and adaptability, collective participation and differentiated pacing, as well as heritage preservation and methodological reform. Navigating these tensions requires a deliberate, responsive strategy grounded in inclusive planning, sustained investment in educator development, and iterative community dialogue. To distill the integrative insights derived from the four thematic domains delineated above—curriculum design, collaborative learning, cultural relevance, and iterative feedback—Table 1 provides a synthesized comparative analysis of salient pedagogical outcomes alongside associated implementation challenges. As explored above, Table 1 presents a consolidated overview of the primary outcomes and challenges identified through interviews, observations, and document analysis. This table is intended to provide a succinct reference point for practitioners and scholars seeking to understand both the pedagogical strengths and operational limitations of the Tahsin Program.

Table 1. Summary of Key Outcomes and Challenges by Theme

Theme	Key Outcomes	Challenges
Curriculum Design	Enhanced literacy; systematic progression via modular structuring	Variability in pacing; insufficient scaffolding for differentiated needs
Collaborative Learning	Increased learner engagement; peer-driven critical reflection	Reluctance due to social hierarchies; uneven participation
Cultural Relevance	Strengthened contextual relevance; cultural resonance in instruction	Inconsistent localization practices; varied generational responses
Feedback and Iterative Learning	Improved self-efficacy; fostered reflective and autonomous learning	Feedback inconsistency; scalability limitations across settings

As indicated in the table above, each thematic domain yielded both substantial benefits and context-specific constraints. While the curriculum design enabled structured literacy progression, challenges in pacing and differentiation remain areas for development. Collaborative learning fostered active engagement, yet social dynamics occasionally hindered equitable participation. Cultural integration strategies enhanced relevance but varied across demographic groups, and feedback mechanisms proved powerful yet uneven in consistency and scalability. The Tahsin Program offers a robust framework for reimagining Qur'anic literacy through the lens of contemporary pedagogical theory. Yet, its broader replication necessitates critical attention to infrastructural variability, pedagogical coherence, and cultural adaptability. For practitioners, scholars, and policy architects, this study affirms the value of integrative methodologies while advocating for continuous refinement. The future of inclusive, sustainable, and spiritually anchored education lies in such adaptive, community-grounded innovations.

4. CONCLUSION

This investigation has undertaken a critical assessment of the Tahsin Program as a paradigmatic case of pedagogical innovation in Qur'anic literacy, rooted in community-based, culturally responsive educational praxis. The program's multi-dimensional architecture—comprising modular curricular sequencing, intergenerational collaboration, culturally situated content, and formative feedback loops—collectively fostered enhanced learner outcomes in recitation proficiency, interpretive comprehension, and sustained engagement. The integration of these elements substantiates foundational theories of social constructivism and culturally responsive pedagogy, providing empirical validation for their application within Islamic educational contexts.

From a broader pedagogical and policy perspective, the findings illuminate the potential for harmonizing traditional Islamic epistemologies with contemporary instructional methodologies. The Tahsin model offers a transferable schema that privileges learner agency, sociocultural alignment, and participatory learning. Its implications are particularly salient for educational stakeholders pursuing reforms that balance religious authenticity with inclusive, learner-centered strategies. Moreover, the program's use of feedback as a mechanism for metacognitive development and instructional adaptability resonates with global imperatives for sustainable, equity-driven educational design.

However, the study's scope is delimited by its single-site qualitative design, which, while offering depth, constrains generalizability. Context-specific factors, such as community cohesion and instructor competence, introduced variability that must be critically considered in assessing broader applicability. Future research should adopt comparative and longitudinal designs to examine the model's scalability across heterogeneous sociocultural and technological contexts. Emphasis on digital integration—such as AI-enhanced feedback tools—and robust professional development initiatives will be pivotal in expanding the program's reach without compromising its contextual integrity. By interrogating these dimensions, subsequent scholarship can more fully articulate the contours of a pedagogical paradigm that is both tradition-affirming and future-facing.

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