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## ANALYSIS OF PEDAGOGICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES FACED BY TEACHERS IN TEACHING THE QURAN USING THE WAFI METHOD AT MUHAMMADIYAH PRIMARY SCHOOL 01 TANGGUL JEMBER

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### Abstract

*Quran teaching in primary schools requires the integration of teachers' pedagogical and methodological competencies to ensure that the learning process is effective, adaptive and meaningful. However, the implementation of innovative methods such as the Wafa method in teaching practice still faces various challenges. This study aims to analyse in depth the pedagogical and methodological constraints faced by teachers in teaching the Qur'an using the Wafa method, as well as to examine the efforts made by teachers to overcome these constraints. This study employs a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design to explore teachers' experiences and reflections within the context of real-world teaching at SD Muhammadiyah 01 Tanggul Jember. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, and subsequently analysed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model with triangulation techniques to ensure data validity. The results indicate that the pedagogical challenges faced by teachers include the heterogeneity of pupils' Qur'an reading abilities, difficulties in maintaining motivation and concentration during learning, and limitations in effective classroom management. These challenges suggest that the application of a differentiated approach and learning management tailored to pupils' developmental characteristics has not yet been optimised. Meanwhile, methodological challenges include limited allocation of learning time, inconsistency in the application of the stages of the Wafa method (talaqqi, tasmi', and murojaah), minimal use of multisensory learning media, and teachers' limited technical mastery of the rhythmic and phonetic aspects of the method. These conditions indicate a gap between the ideal design of the Wafa method and the reality of its implementation in the classroom. In addressing these challenges, teachers undertook various adaptive and reflective efforts, including grouping pupils according to ability, increasing the intensity of murojaah as a strategy to reinforce reading, and adjusting the pace and learning strategies to suit classroom conditions. These efforts demonstrate the teachers' methodological flexibility and professional awareness in ensuring the continuity of effective learning. Thus, this study affirms that the success of Qur'anic learning using the Wafa method is not solely determined by the method's strengths, but is highly dependent on the strengthening of teachers' pedagogical and methodological competencies, support for learning resources, and contextualised continuous training.*

**Keywords:** Wafa method; Qur'anic learning; pedagogical constraints; methodological constraints; teacher strategies

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Qur'anic education is a cornerstone of Islamic education, particularly at primary school level, as it serves to develop both religious literacy and the spiritual character of pupils. Qur'anic education is not merely focused on technical reading skills, but also on the internalisation of Qur'anic moral values and ethics in daily life (Al-Ghazali, 2010; Zuhairini, 2019). Consequently, the effectiveness of Qur'anic education serves as a crucial indicator of the success of Islamic religious education in primary schools.

However, in practice, Qur'anic education in primary schools still faces various challenges. A number of studies indicate that monotonous and unvaried teaching methods lead to low student motivation (S. Rahmawati, 2022). Teachers often still rely on traditional approaches that pay insufficient attention to the developmental characteristics of primary school-aged learners, meaning the learning process has not yet been optimised.

To address these challenges, various innovative methods for teaching the Qur'an have been developed, one of which is the Wafa method. The Wafa method is a multisensory approach to Qur'anic education that integrates visual, auditory, and kinesthetic aspects through the activities of talaqī, tasmi', and murojaah (Foundation, 2020). This method is designed to make Qur'anic learning more enjoyable, systematic, and suited to the world of children.

Theoretically, the Wafa method aligns with Piaget's theory of cognitive development, which states that primary school-aged children are in the concrete operational stage, thus requiring learning that involves direct experience and concrete media (Santrock, 2018). Furthermore, the multisensory approach in the Wafa method is also relevant to Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences, which emphasises that every child possesses diverse intellectual potentials (Gardner, 1983).

Nevertheless, the implementation of the Wafa method in practice does not always proceed in accordance with its ideal concept. Several studies indicate that the success of this method is highly dependent on teachers' pedagogical and methodological competence (Aminah, 2023; Suryana, 2022). Teachers are required not only to master the material and techniques of reading the Qur'an but also to be able to manage the classroom, motivate students, and consistently apply the stages of the method.

Teachers' pedagogical challenges in Qur'anic education include difficulties in managing differences in students' abilities, maintaining focus and motivation, and creating a conducive learning environment. From an Islamic educational perspective, teachers act as *murabbi* who not only teach but also guide and instil spiritual values in learners (Al-Attas, 1993; Al-Ghazali, 2010). When this role is not fulfilled optimally, the objectives of Qur'anic education are difficult to achieve.

In addition to pedagogical challenges, teachers also face methodological challenges in applying the Wafa method, such as difficulty following the learning steps systematically, limited use of supporting media, and a lack of mastery of songs and pronunciation in accordance with the rules of tajwid. Research by (Khalifah, 2020) and (Fitria & Lestari, 2022) indicates that limited resources and a lack of ongoing support also affect the quality of the Wafa method's implementation in primary schools.

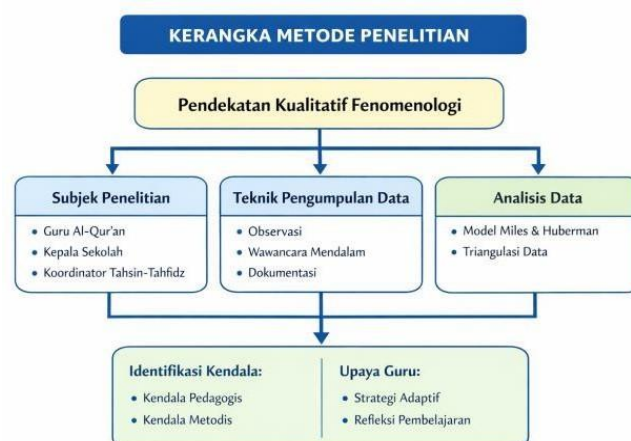
These conditions were also found at SD Muhammadiyah 01

Tanggul, where the Wafa method has been applied in Qur'anic education. Based on initial observations, some teachers still face difficulties in pedagogical and methodological aspects, despite having undergone training in the Wafa method. This indicates a gap between the ideal concept of the method and the reality of classroom teaching practice.

Previous studies have generally focused more on the effectiveness of the Wafa method in improving student learning outcomes, such as reading fluency and learning motivation (L. Rahmawati, 2021; Sutrisno, 2022). However, research specifically examining the pedagogical and methodological challenges faced by teachers—as the primary implementers of the Wafa method—remains relatively limited. In fact, teachers are a key factor in determining the success of the implementation of the Qur'an teaching method.

Based on the above, this research is important to conduct an in-depth examination of the pedagogical and methodological challenges faced by teachers in teaching the Qur'an by applying the Wafa method at SD Muhammadiyah 01 Tanggul. The results of this study are expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of Qur'anic learning studies, as well as a practical contribution for teachers and Islamic educational institutions in improving the quality of Qur'anic learning in primary schools.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



This study employs a qualitative approach with a phenomenological descriptive design to gain an in-depth understanding of the pedagogical and methodological challenges faced by teachers in teaching the Qur'an using the Wafa method. A qualitative approach was chosen because this study focuses on exploring teachers' experiences, perceptions, and practices within a real-world learning context, thereby enabling the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). A phenomenological design was used to explore the meaning of teachers' subjective experiences in the process of applying the Wafa method in primary schools.

The research was conducted at SD Muhammadiyah 01 Tanggul, Jember Regency, East Java, which was selected purposively as the school had already implemented the Wafa method in Qur'anic education. The research subjects included Qur'anic teachers as primary informants, as well as the headteacher and the tahsin-tahfidz programme coordinator as supporting informants. The informant selection technique used purposive sampling, namely the selection of informants based on considerations of the relevance of their experience and direct involvement in the implementation of

the Wafa method (Moleong, 2021; Sugiyono, 2019). This approach enabled the researcher to obtain rich and in-depth data.

Data collection was carried out through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and

documentation. Observation was used to directly observe the process of learning the Qur'an using the Wafa method, the interaction between teachers and students, and the learning strategies employed. In-depth interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to explore teachers' views on the pedagogical and methodological challenges faced, as well as the strategies employed to overcome them. Documentation was used to supplement the data through the analysis of learning documents, the Wafa method guide, and archives of learning activities.

This combination of techniques allows for data triangulation to enhance the validity of the research findings (Creswell, 2018; Spradley, 1980).

Data analysis was carried out interactively using the Miles and Huberman model, which encompasses data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction was performed by categorising findings based on main themes, namely pedagogical challenges, methodological challenges, and teachers' strategies. Data presentation was carried out in the form of descriptive narratives to illustrate patterns and relationships between findings, whilst conclusions were drawn gradually with verification through source and method triangulation. This analytical model was selected as it provides a systematic and in-depth understanding of qualitative data (Miles et al., 2019; Moleong, 2019).

To ensure the validity of the data, this study applied source, technique, and temporal triangulation, as well as member checking with informants. Furthermore, the researcher upheld research ethics by obtaining official permission from the school, maintaining the confidentiality of informants' identities, and ensuring the accuracy of data interpretation. The application of these validation procedures and research ethics is crucial for enhancing the credibility, reliability, and confirmability of the research findings, thereby ensuring that the findings can be scientifically justified (Creswell, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. Teachers' Pedagogical Challenges in Teaching the Qur'an Using the Wafa Method

Pedagogical competence is the cornerstone of successful learning processes, including in the teaching of the Qur'an in primary schools. Conceptually, pedagogical competence encompasses a teacher's ability to understand the characteristics of learners, design and implement educational teaching, manage the classroom, and conduct continuous learning evaluation (Creswell, 2018; Sugiyono, 2020). In the context of Islamic education, pedagogical competence is not merely understood as technical instructional ability, but also reflects the teacher's role as a *murabbi* responsible for guiding the integrated intellectual, spiritual, and moral development of learners (Al-Attas, 1993; Al-Ghazali, 2010).

Qur'an instruction at primary school level has specific characteristics because pupils are in the concrete operational stage of development. According to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, primary school-aged children tend to understand concepts through direct experience, repetition, and concrete and

varied learning stimuli (Santrock, 2018). Therefore, Qur'an instruction requires teachers to be able to adapt pedagogical strategies appropriate to the students' developmental level, needs, and learning abilities. A mismatch between pedagogical approaches and these developmental characteristics has the potential to create barriers in the learning process, even if the methods used have been well-designed in theory.

The research findings indicate that teachers face pedagogical challenges in the form of differences in Qur'anic reading ability among pupils within a single class. This heterogeneity makes it difficult for teachers to determine the ideal pace of learning and teaching strategies capable of accommodating all learners. This finding aligns with (L. Rahmawati, 2021), who emphasises that differences in initial Qur'an reading ability are a major challenge in Qur'anic education in primary schools, particularly when teachers have not optimally implemented a differentiated learning approach. Without adequate pedagogical skills, innovative teaching methods such as the Wafa method tend not to be applied to their full potential.

In addition to differences in pupils' abilities, pedagogical constraints are also evident in teachers' difficulties in maintaining pupils' motivation and concentration during the learning process. Although the Wafa method is designed with an enjoyable multisensory approach, the research results indicate that not all pupils are able to maintain their focus for the duration of the lesson. This indicates that the effectiveness of a learning method is highly dependent on the teacher's pedagogical skills in managing the classroom and creating a conducive learning environment. This finding supports Arends' view that effective learning methods must be complemented by the teacher's classroom management skills to ensure learning objectives are achieved optimally (Arends, 2015).

From an Islamic educational perspective, weak pedagogical management by teachers has direct implications for the process of internalising Qur'anic values. Qur'anic education aims not only to produce technical proficiency in fluent reading but also to cultivate etiquette, love, and a sense of closeness between learners and the Qur'an (Al-Ghazali, 2010; Langgung, 1991). When teachers face difficulties in establishing positive educational relationships and motivating pupils, the learning process risks losing its spiritual and affective dimensions. Thus, the pedagogical challenges identified in this study underscore that strengthening teachers' pedagogical competencies is a key prerequisite for the successful implementation of the Wafa method in Qur'anic education at primary schools.

#### 3.2. Teachers' Methodological Challenges in Applying the Wafa Method

A learning method is a systematic procedure used by teachers to implement learning strategies so that predetermined objectives can be achieved effectively (Arsyad, 2014). In Qur'anic education, a method functions not only as a means of conveying content but also as a pedagogical instrument for developing students' reading skills, accuracy in tajwid, and spiritual attitudes. The Wafa Method is designed as a multisensory-based Qur'an teaching method that integrates visual, auditory, and kinesthetic aspects through the stages of *talaqqi*, *tasmi'*, and *murojaah* (Foundation, 2020).

Theoretically, the multisensory approach in the Wafa method aligns with Gardner's theory of *Multiple Intelligences*, which asserts that learners possess diverse learning styles (Gardner, 1983). However, the success of this approach is largely determined

by the teacher's methodological ability to apply each stage of the method consistently and systematically. The research findings indicate that teachers still face methodological challenges, particularly in maintaining consistency in the application of the Wafa method stages in accordance with the established guidelines.

The most dominant methodological challenge is the limited time available for learning. Teachers reported that the allocated time is often insufficient to implement all stages of the Wafa method optimally, particularly the murojaah stage, which requires intensive repetition. This finding aligns with research (Khalifa h, 2020) which states that time constraints are the primary factor leading to the simplification of the Wafa method's stages in teaching practice. Consequently, the process of reinforcing students' reading skills and the accuracy of their tajwid has not yet been maximised.

In addition to time constraints, methodological challenges are also linked to the limited use of supporting learning media. Although the Wafa method emphasises the use of visual and audio media to reinforce learning stimuli, the research findings indicate that teachers still tend to rely on textbooks and blackboards. According to Arsyad, the limited use of learning media can reduce the effectiveness of the learning process, particularly for primary school-aged pupils who require concrete and varied stimuli. This situation means that the potential of the Wafa method as a multisensory approach has not been utilised to its fullest extent (Arsyad, 2014).

Another methodological constraint relates to teachers' technical mastery of the variations in song, rhythm, and pronunciation within the Wafa method. Some teachers are not yet fully confident in applying the musical and rhythmic aspects of the learning process, resulting in lessons that tend to monotonous. This finding supports the results of Fitria and Lestari's research, which states that limitations in teachers' technical mastery of the method impact the quality of Qur'anic education implementation in Islamic primary schools. Without adequate methodological mastery, even an innovatively designed method risks a decline in quality in practice (Fitria & Lestari, 2022).

Overall, the methodological constraints identified in this study indicate a gap between the ideal concept of the Wafa method and the reality of its implementation in the classroom. This underscores that innovative teaching methods require support in the form of teachers' methodological competence, continuous mentoring, and the provision of adequate learning resources to ensure they can be applied effectively (Suryana, 2022). Consequently, strengthening teachers' methodological competence is a crucial aspect in optimising Qur'anic education using the Wafa method in primary schools.

### **3.3. Teachers' Efforts to Overcome Pedagogical and Methodological Challenges**

Teachers' efforts to overcome pedagogical and methodological challenges are key indicators of professionalism and reflective capacity in teaching practice. Theoretically, professional teachers are expected to possess the ability to reflect on the learning processes they implement and to adapt teaching strategies to the actual conditions of the pupils and the learning environment (Creswell, 2018; Rogers, 1969). In the context of Qur'anic learning, this reflective ability is particularly crucial because the learning process is not solely focused on cognitive outcomes but also on the development of students' spiritual attitudes and manners.

Research findings indicate that one of the primary approaches adopted by teachers is grouping students based on their ability to read the Qur'an. This strategy aligns with the principle of differentiated learning, which emphasises the importance of adapting instruction to students' readiness and ability levels (Santrock, 2018). Through such grouping, teachers can provide more proportionate learning support, ensuring that students still at the early stages of reading are not left behind, whilst those who are already proficient continue to receive appropriate learning challenges.

Another measure is increasing the frequency of murojaah sessions in response to time constraints and differences in students' abilities. From an Islamic educational perspective, repetition (*tikrar*) is a fundamental principle in Qur'anic learning as it serves to strengthen reading fluency, the accuracy of letter articulation, and students' memory (Al-Ghazali, 2010; An-Nahlawi, 2008). Research findings indicate that teachers utilised this principle as an adaptive strategy to maintain the quality of learning despite facing time and resource constraints.

Furthermore, teachers also adjust the pace of learning to suit the students' circumstances and characteristics. This adjustment reflects the teachers' methodological flexibility in applying the Wafa method without compromising the essence of the learning stages. This approach aligns with humanistic learning theory, which views the teacher as a facilitator whose role is to create meaningful learning experiences and to value the individual needs of learners (Rogers, 1969). Thus, Qur'anic learning is not only oriented towards achieving curriculum targets but also towards the comfort and readiness of students to learn.

Teachers' efforts to overcome pedagogical and methodological challenges also demonstrate an awareness of the importance of continuous and contextual learning. According to Suryana, the success of implementing the Wafa method is greatly influenced by teachers' readiness to adapt the method to the realities of classroom learning (Suryana, 2022). The findings of this study confirm that although teachers face various challenges, their adaptive and reflective abilities enable the Wafa method to continue to be implemented effectively. With the support of continuous training, teacher mentoring, and the provision of adequate learning resources, these efforts have the potential to strengthen the quality of Qur'anic learning in Islamic primary schools on a sustainable basis.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that the application of the Wafa method in Qur'anic education in primary schools holds great potential for supporting systematic learning that aligns with the characteristics of the learners. However, the effectiveness of its implementation still faces pedagogical challenges related to differences in students' ability to read the Qur'an, teachers' difficulties in maintaining motivation and concentration during learning, and suboptimal classroom management. These findings indicate that innovations in teaching methods need to be supported by the strengthening of teachers' pedagogical competencies so that Qur'anic education can proceed effectively and meaningfully.

In addition to pedagogical challenges, this study also identified methodological challenges in the implementation of the Wafa method, particularly regarding the consistency of the learning stages, time constraints, and the limited use of supporting learning

materials. These challenges highlight a gap between the ideal concept of the Wafa method and the reality of classroom practice. Consequently, the success of the Wafa method is not solely determined by its methodological design, but is highly dependent on the teacher's methodological competence and adequate support from learning resources and systems.

Despite facing various challenges, teachers have made adaptive efforts to overcome them, such as grouping pupils according to reading ability, increasing the intensity of review sessions, and adjusting the pace of learning. These efforts reflect the teachers' reflective ability and flexibility in applying the Wafa method in accordance with the actual conditions in the classroom. Therefore, strengthening teachers' pedagogical and methodological competencies through continuous training, professional mentoring, and the provision of adequate learning resources is a strategic step towards optimising Qur'an learning using the Wafa method in Islamic primary schools.

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