

## GENERATION Z AND THE UMMI METHOD: DEVELOPING QUR'AN READING SKILLS AND MODERATE CHARACTER AT WAHAS HIGH SCHOOL MADURAN

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### Abstract

This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of the Ummi Method in enhancing the Quran reading skills of Generation Z students at SMA Wahas Maduran and in fostering a moderate religious character. This generation has grown up in a challenging digital era and often has wide access to mass media to seek various information, including about religion. This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the Ummi Method's application. Data collection methods included observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The findings indicated that the Ummi Method effectively improved students' comprehension and skills in reading the Quran per the rules of *tajwid* and *makhraj*. Additionally, the Ummi Method significantly contributed to shaping a moderate religious character, helping students develop attitudes of tolerance and balance in their religious practices, which are relevant to the current religious context. The success of the Ummi Method largely depended on the implementation model, which included guidance and consistent assessment from certified, professional teachers. This study recommends the broader application of the Ummi Method in educational institutions to improve Quran reading skills and foster a moderate religious character among Generation Z.

**Keywords:** Ummi Method, Generation Z, Quran Reading Skills, Moderate Religious Character, Religious Education.

### INTRODUCTION

Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, is known as digital natives, a term coined by Prensky (2001) to describe individuals familiar with digital technology since birth. Unlike previous generations, Generation Z has a learning pattern that is more interactive, fast-paced, and technology-based. They tend to be more comfortable with information presented in visual and audio formats rather than long texts and prefer collaborative and experience-based learning. In the religious context, the influence of digital media on Generation Z is highly significant. Their broad access to information through the internet and social media enables them to gain various perspectives on religion, ranging from moderate to extreme. Digital media has transformed how individuals interact with religious teachings, shifting from passive reception to active exploration. However, without adequate digital literacy, Generation Z is vulnerable to misinformation and a superficial or even radical understanding of religion. They grew up in a high-tech digital era with social media environments that differ significantly from previous generations. This is generally attributed to their extensive access to

technology. Furthermore, the constructivist learning theory developed by Vygotsky (1978)<sup>1</sup> emphasizes that effective learning for Generation Z must involve social interaction and guidance from more experienced individuals. In religious education, this approach highlights the crucial role of teachers in guiding students to understand Islamic teachings comprehensively and moderately rather than relying solely on digital information they access independently. Therefore, appropriate learning methods, such as the Ummi Method, are essential to ensure that Generation Z develops strong Quranic reading skills and cultivates a moderate and tolerant religious character in this digital era.

These conditions make it challenging to cultivate a moderate religious character aligned with the principles of tolerant and balanced Islam, as religious matters, including Quranic recitation, may often be overlooked. Additionally, this environment raises concerns about their spiritual and moral development amidst rapid social change. Generation Z follows Generation Y, who were born from 1981 to 1996<sup>2</sup>. Generation Z may have an uncertain lifestyle without proper guidance due to high-stress levels<sup>3</sup>. They have been raised in an era of abundant information, especially concerning Islam. Misinterpretations of digital content can lead them towards extremism and radicalism (Hasanah & Huriyah, 2023). One method for teaching Quranic recitation is the Ummi Method. Developed in 2007 by Masruri and A. Yusuf Ms. through the Ummi Foundation in Surabaya, this method utilizes a structured approach, including instructional booklets known as *jilid*<sup>4</sup>. In such situations, formal education institutions like SMA Wahas Maduran serve as crucial venues for teaching students to read the Quran and fostering a moderate religious character. At this school, the Ummi Method is used to improve students' Quranic reading abilities.

The Ummi Method is a Quranic learning method based on *tahsin* and *talaqqi*, two classical approaches in the Islamic tradition that have proven effective in enhancing Quranic reading skills. *Tahsin* focuses on improving recitation by emphasizing aspects of *tajwid*, *makharijul huruf* (pronunciation of Arabic letters), and fluency in reading the Quran. Meanwhile, *talaqqi* is a direct learning method in which students learn from a teacher through listening and imitation. The effectiveness of the Ummi Method can also be explained through the behaviorism theory in education, which states that learning occurs through repetition and habituation. In this method, students are taught to read the Quran directly under the guidance of a teacher, using an auditory and kinesthetic approach that involves listening, imitating, and repeatedly practicing recitation.

Additionally, the Ummi Method approach aligns with the scaffolding theory developed by Vygotsky (1978),<sup>5</sup> in which students receive gradual guidance from teachers until they can read the Quran independently. In the Ummi Method, teachers serve not only as instructors but also as mentors who provide direct feedback to students, enabling them to correct mistakes and progressively improve

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<sup>1</sup> Koijam Sobita Devi, "Constructivist Approach to Learning Based on the Concepts of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky," *Journal of Indian Education* 44, no. 4 (2019): 5–19.

<sup>2</sup> Almira Devita Putri, "Maksimalisasi Media Sosial Untuk Meningkatkan Pendapatan Dan Pengembangan Diri Generasi Z Di MAN 1 Pesawaran," *Journal of Social Sciences and Technology for Community Service (JSSTCS)* 2, no. 2 (2021): 37.

<sup>3</sup> Puspita Puji Rahayu et al., "JURNAL PENGABDIAN SOSIAL INDONESIA ( Journal of Indonesian Social Service ) JURNAL PENGABDIAN SOSIAL INDONESIA ( Journal of Indonesian Social Service )" 1 (2021): 43–53.

<sup>4</sup> Umami Foundation, *No Title*, n.d.

<sup>5</sup> Anna Shvarts and Arthur Bakker, "The Early History of the Scaffolding Metaphor: Bernstein, Luria, Vygotsky, and Before," *Mind, Culture, and Activity* 26, no. 1 (2019): 4–23, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2019.1574306>.

the quality of their recitation. Previous studies have also shown that the Ummi Method is not only effective in enhancing Quranic reading skills but also in shaping students' religious character. A study conducted by Khomsah (2023) at SD Laboratorium Universitas Negeri Malang found that this method successfully instilled discipline, politeness, and respect for teachers, which are integral to character education based on Islamic values. Thus, implementing the Ummi Method at SMA Wahas Maduran is expected to improve students' Quranic reading abilities and cultivate a moderate and tolerant religious character in response to the challenges of the digital era.

This method was first implemented at SMA WAHAS in 2018 under the leadership of Principal Mr. H. Rasmian, M.Pd., who initiated a direct MoU with the Ummi Foundation due to his concern about the significant number of high school students who could not read the Quran and the lack of targeted support for them. At that time, the responsibility for addressing this issue was assigned to Islamic Education (PAI) subject teachers. However, given the heavy curriculum load in that subject, teachers could not dedicate sufficient time to guiding students in Quranic reading. Consequently, the school adopted the Ummi Method to establish a Quran reading program at SMA WAHAS. This program aims for students to graduate with proficient Quranic reading skills, which they can build upon with further programs in memorization (*tahfidz*) and translation (*tarjamah*). These programs provide broader religious education content, helping to develop students' religious character. To date, the method has been in use for 10 years<sup>6</sup>,

Moderate religious character education in Islam can be explained through the *wasathiyyah concept* proposed by Yusuf Al-Qaradawi (2010).<sup>7</sup> *Wasathiyyah* in Islam refers to balance and the middle path, avoiding both extremism and liberalism in understanding and practicing religious teachings. This concept is deeply rooted in the Quran, as mentioned in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 143.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا

*And thus, We have made you (the Muslim community) a just and chosen nation (wasath), so that you may be witnesses over mankind, and the Messenger (Muhammad) may be a witness over you.."* (QS. Al-Baqarah: 143)

In religious character education, the concept of *wasathiyyah* emphasizes a balance between the spiritual, intellectual, and social aspects of students' lives. Education is not only focused on understanding Islamic teachings textually but also on applying them in daily life with an attitude of tolerance, respect for differences, and upholding humanitarian values. This approach aligns with the character education model developed by Thomas Lickona (1991),<sup>8</sup> which emphasizes three key dimensions in character formation: moral knowing (moral knowledge), moral feeling (moral emotions), and moral action (moral behavior). In moderate religious character education, students are not only taught Islamic teachings cognitively (*moral knowing*) but they are also guided to internalize moral values in their lives (*moral feeling*) and apply them in their daily behavior (*moral action*). The implementation of this model in Islamic education can be seen in experience-based learning, teacher

<sup>6</sup> (Koord Umami) Ustadz Hifni Mubarak, *Wawancara*, n.d.

<sup>7</sup> Pandangan Yusuf, "Yusuf Al-Qaradawi 's View on Religious Extremism" 2, no. 1 (2024): 47–66.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Lickona, "What Is Effective Character Education?," *Paper presented at The Stony Brook School Symposium on Character*, no. 1985 (2001): 1–12, <https://wcharacter.org/wp-content/uploads/What-is-Effective-Character-Ed-Stonybrook-debate-by-Thomas-Lickona.pdf>.

exemplification, and the habituation of religious values that are neither rigid nor exclusive but remain aligned with the principles of *wasathiyyah*. Thus, moderate religious character education aims to develop a generation that upholds good morals, remains steadfast in Islamic teachings, yet remains open-minded and capable of living harmoniously in a diverse society.

In this context, this research is crucial for assessing the effectiveness of the Ummi Method. On the other hand, Generation Z faces challenges in practicing moderate religiosity amidst the rapid tide of digitalization, as this generation has unlimited access to information through technology, which often influences their worldview and values, including their religious beliefs. Broad access to religious information via social media and other online platforms can be beneficial for education, but it can also lead to superficial, intolerant, or extremist interpretations of faith. Educational institutions like SMA Wahas Maduran, which is responsible for fostering a moderate religious character among students, are concerned about this situation. Therefore, the focus of this study is the implementation of the Ummi Method at SMA Wahas Maduran. This research aims to enhance student's abilities to read the Quran and cultivate a moderate religious character in Generation Z. Generation Z, familiar with digital technology, often faces challenges in balancing their religious practices with the influences of the new technological era. One of these challenges is an ambiguous religious identity and a tendency towards radicalism, exacerbated by exposure to extremist religious content on social media. SMA Wahas employs the Ummi Method to address these challenges and strives to cultivate a generation that can read the Quran proficiently and possesses a moderate and tolerant religious character.

SMA Wahas has implemented the Ummi Method as an official educational program for over ten years. However, there has yet to be a comprehensive study on the effectiveness of this method in improving students' abilities to read the Quran and fostering a moderate religious character in them. Additionally, since foundational lessons such as learning the hijaiyah letters are typically taught to children, the community still questions the teaching of the Quran at the high school level. Therefore, SMA Wahas is committed to producing a Generation Z with a sound understanding of religion and a moderate religious attitude through the ability to read the Quran.

The implementation of this model in Islamic education can be seen in experience-based learning, teacher exemplification, and the habituation of religious values that are neither rigid nor exclusive but remain aligned with the principles of *wasathiyyah*. Thus, moderate religious character education aims to develop a generation that upholds good morals, remains steadfast in Islamic teachings, yet remains open-minded and capable of living harmoniously in a diverse society.

This study aims to contribute new insights to the literature on the Ummi Method, particularly regarding the development of a moderate religious character among Generation Z. Most previous research has focused on the effectiveness of the Ummi Method in enhancing students' Quran reading abilities. For instance, Khomsah's study demonstrates that the Ummi Method has the potential to cultivate a religious character among students at the Laboratory Elementary School of Universitas Negeri Malang, showing changes in students' attitudes and behaviors through discipline, politeness, and civility<sup>9</sup>. Romlah Widayati's thesis on the Use of the Ummi Method in Class X at SMA

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<sup>9</sup> Aizatul Khomsah, "Implementasi Pembelajaran Al-Qur'an Metode Ummi Dalam Pembentukan Karakter Religius Siswa Di Sd Laboratorium Universitas Negeri Malang," 2023.

Muhammadiyah 3 Limau, South Jakarta, indicates significant improvements in students' memorization targets over four years compared to previous methods (Marlindah, 2023)<sup>10</sup>. Furthermore, Ningrum's research highlights the success of the Ummi Method itself<sup>11</sup>. However, the studies conducted by Khomsah, Widayati, and Ningrum do not address the aspect of forming a moderate religious character.

Therefore, there has yet to be any research discussing how the Ummi Method helps improve Quran reading skills and fosters a moderate religious character amidst the dynamics of Generation Z, which is particularly vulnerable to radicalization. This study aims to address this gap by examining how the Ummi Method assists in shaping a moderate religious character. The primary objective of this research is to discover practical solutions for character education that are relevant to the challenges faced by Generation Z in the digital age. Given the increasing demand for technically effective religious education approaches that can promote moderation and tolerance among students, this study is expected to provide new insights that can assist educational institutions and policymakers in developing Quran learning policies tailored to the characteristics of Generation Z.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The type of research conducted was descriptive qualitative research<sup>12</sup> with a case study approach. This research examined the use of the Ummi Method at SMA Wahas Maduran to improve the ability of Generation Z students to read the Quran and to foster moderate religious character among them<sup>13</sup>. The study took place at SMA Wahas Maduran from February to December 2024. The established schedule was followed for a series of research activities, ranging from program design, team training, and preliminary observations to publication results. This research aimed to determine how effective the Ummi Method was in enhancing students' reading skills in the Quran and how this method influenced the development of a moderate religious character among students. Additionally, this research aimed to provide practical insights for educational institutions looking to adopt similar teaching methods. The study subjects included SMA Wahas students directly involved in Quranic learning using the Ummi Method, as well as teachers, the principal, and the Ummi Method coordinator, as they played direct roles in the educational process at the school<sup>14</sup>.

The research procedure<sup>15</sup> consists of observations and interviews. Observations were conducted to track the implementation of the Ummi Method, including teacher involvement, student enthusiasm, and the stages and procedures of learning. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with teachers, coordinators, and students to gather their opinions on the method's effectiveness and its impact on character development. This study utilized instruments such as

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<sup>10</sup> Aloyia Triska widhia Astuti, "Engaruh Phubbing Terhadap Kualitas Komunikasi Interpersonal Generasi Z Di Kota Yogyakarta," *Doctoral dissertation, UNIVERSITAS ATMA JAYA YOGYAKARTA* (2021): 64–65, <https://e-journal.uajy.ac.id/26307/5/1709062174.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Novita Rahma Dewi Ningrum, "Implementasi Metode Ummi Untuk Meningkatkan Kemampuan Membaca Al-Qur'an Santri Putri Di Madrasah Qur'an Pondok Pesantren Putri Sunan Drajat Lamongan," *Angewandte Chemie International Edition*, 6(11), 951–952., 2023.

<sup>12</sup> Sugiyono, "Metode Penelitian Kualitatif (Untuk Penelitian Yang Bersifat: Eksploratif, Enterpretif, Interaktif Dan Konstruktif)," *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*, 2023.

<sup>13</sup> Suprayoga imam & Tobroni, *Metodologi Penelitian Sosial-Agama, Remaja Rosdakarya*, vol. 1, 2001.

<sup>14</sup> Rukin, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif, Rake Sarasin*, 2022.

<sup>15</sup> 2020 Handayani, *Metodologi Penelitian Sosial Budaya, Jakarta: Bumi Aksara*, 2020.

observation guides containing observation items, semi-structured interview guidelines, and documentation formats to store relevant data from available sources at SMA Wahas.

To analyze the data, an interactive model analysis technique was employed<sup>16</sup>, which consists of three stages: Data Reduction, which involves dividing the data according to the research objectives; Data Presentation, which entails organizing the data in a descriptive narrative format to facilitate the researcher in identifying patterns and relationships; and Conclusion Drawing, where the data analysis is verified with additional data if necessary to confirm the research findings. To ensure the credibility and consistency of the research results, source triangulation (observation, interviews, and documentation) and repetition of interviews and observations were utilized to examine the validity of the data.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This paper addresses three formulated problems, and the explanations below will answer these questions.

### 1. Characteristics of Religiousness among Generation Z at SMA Wahas Maduran

Generation Z at SMA Wahas recognizes religion as an essential guide to life, emphasizing the pillars of faith and Islam as the foundation for worldly and afterlife living. Their religious character is heavily influenced by various backgrounds of religious education received at home, school, and within the communities they belong to, such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, and LDII. This diversity presents unique challenges in fostering a moderate spirit of religiosity, prompting the school to promote inclusive religious education without distinguishing students' religious backgrounds. This initiative aims to help students understand differences and become tolerant and harmonious individuals in a religious context.

Characteristics serve as indicators and traits that can be utilized as identity markers; they can also be defined as elements that differentiate one thing from another<sup>17</sup>. Generation Z at SMA Wahas Maduran exhibits a strong religious disposition shaped by their formal education and family backgrounds. They believe religion is a crucial guide to achieving peace, focusing on worldly life and the hereafter. The pillars of faith and Islam are deemed significant, as belief in and the practice of these teachings determine one's level of religiosity. A Muslim's religiosity is considered deficient if any of the pillars are not fulfilled. Consequently, acts of worship such as prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and pilgrimage must be performed correctly<sup>18</sup>.

The diversity in students' religious backgrounds also influences their characteristics of religiousness. Students at SMA Wahas come from various religious organizations, such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, Lemkari, and LDII, leading to differing religious approaches. For example, NU students are more likely to follow local customs such as tahlilan (a commemorative gathering) and the celebration of Maulid Nabi (the birth of the Prophet Muhammad). In contrast, Muhammadiyah students focus more on purifying Islamic teachings.

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<sup>16</sup> Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman, *Analisis Data Kualitatif Buku Sumber Tentang Metode-Metode Baru (Terjemahan)*, Penerbit Universitas Indonesia, 2007.

<sup>17</sup> Kemdikbud, "Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia," in *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (2021).

<sup>18</sup> Luqmanul Hakim, "Strategi Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam (Pai) Dalam Pembentukan Karakter Religius Siswa Di SMKN 1 Bondowoso," *Program Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam Pascasarjana Uin Khas Jember*, 2023.

The school plays a crucial role in shaping students' religious personalities. Students are educated to appreciate differences while upholding Islamic values through inclusive and moderate programs, such as communal istighosah (prayer for assistance) and instruction using the UMMI method. Teachers at SMA Wahas strive to unite students from various religious backgrounds within the spirit of moderate Islam, encouraging them to understand Islam comprehensively and with tolerance<sup>19</sup>.

Furthermore, the strategy of religious education aimed at improving students' attitudes by integrating religious character in schools also needs to be promoted<sup>20</sup>. Data from Chapter III also indicates that Generation Z students at SMA Wahas Maduran understand religion well and emphasize the importance of adopting religious teachings as a guide to life. They believe that religion is not merely formal worship but also a principle that must be applied in every aspect of daily life. This belief stems from the understanding that Islamic teachings, particularly the pillars of faith and Islam, are the main foundations of religiosity that determine how well a Muslim practices their faith.

However, issues arising from the data also indicate that, although students understand religion as a guide to life, external influences and digital technology, coupled with a lack of examples from home, often hinder their practices. Thus, the school plays a vital role in reinforcing this understanding through comprehensive religious education and incorporating moderation and religious exemplarity into daily activities.

From this context, it can be analyzed that the characteristics of religiousness among Generation Z at SMA Wahas Maduran reflect the interaction between formal education, family, and social environment. The school seeks to cultivate a generation that is religious and tolerant of differences through an inclusive educational approach.

Based on the data analysis above, several points about the characteristics of religiousness among Generation Z at SMA Wahas can be summarized as follows:

- 1. Interacting Factors:** Religiousness is shaped by family, formal education, and religious organizations.
- 2. School's Role:** The school actively teaches tolerance and moderation through religious programs.
- 3. Influence of Technology and Environment:** The impact of home religiousness may be less robust compared to the challenges posed by digital technology.

#### 4. Religious Practices of Students at SMA Wahas

Religious practice is defined as the level of adherence of Generation Z to religious activities such as prayer, fasting, almsgiving, reading the Qur'an, and actively participating in religious events, which relate to the frequency, intensity, and manner of worship. The central concept of worship is the principle that humans are created to be Allah's khalifah (vicegerent) on earth. Allah desires that humans serve as His khalifah who bears the message and implement His laws. This is elaborated in Surah Al-Dzariyat, verse 56:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

*"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me." <sup>21</sup>*

<sup>19</sup> Nunung Nur Aisyah et al., "Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Kontestasi Keberagamaan," *Zahir Publisher* (2023): 336.

<sup>20</sup> Rena Sulistyaningrum Siti Uswatun Hasanah, "Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Membangun Moderasi Beragama Generasi Milenial Di MA El-Bayan Majenang" 06, no. 01 (2023): 1296–1304.

<sup>21</sup> R I Kementerian Agama, "Al-Quran Dan Terjemahnya," *Jakarta: PT. Hati Emas*, 2014.

According to Al-Qurthubi, the meaning of worship in this verse encompasses all forms of obedience, both in ritual worship and in daily practices. Al-Qurthubi also states that worship is necessary for creatures, not Allah. Therefore, this verse serves as a reminder for humans to fulfill the rights given by Allah as the Creator<sup>22</sup>. Thus, worship is not a burden imposed on creatures but rather a fundamental need.

However, the condition of Generation Z at SMA Wahas requires continuous attention, as the data analysis indicates that Generation Z at SMA Wahas Maduran exhibits varied religious practices and that not all students are well-informed about worship. Over a two-week observation period, it was noted that many students, particularly boys, do not consistently perform the five daily prayers or diligently engage in Qur'an reading. Some male and female students do not participate in congregational prayers at school due to menstruation, and they typically pray only when motivated. Moreover, many students live with their grandparents while their parents work outside the area, which influences the low level of worship awareness.

Institutional support in strengthening their religiousness is provided through the implementation of religious programs aimed at enhancing this aspect, which include:

1. Congregational Prayer

Students typically attend congregational prayers at school, gathering during breaks, especially for Dhuhr and Duha prayers. However, observations indicate that some students are inconsistent in their attendance; they still require reinforcement to establish this as a habit. This issue tends to be specific to certain students, such as those who are menstruating or those who are difficult to manage. During interviews, students stated that congregational prayers at school help them maintain discipline in their worship. However, they face difficulties at home,



primarily due to frequent distractions from social media and school assignments, which lead them to delay or miss their prayer times.

Picture 1

2. Learning to Recite the Qur'an Using the UMMI Method

The UMMI method has successfully improved students' ability to read the Qur'an. Students who previously struggled with reading have become more fluent and confident after using this method. The joint recitation activities at school also

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<sup>22</sup> Abu Abdillah Muhammad Bin Ahmad Bin Abu Bakar Al-Qurthubi, "03\_73653.Pdf," 2006.

reflect this improvement. In our interviews, several students mentioned that the UMMI method significantly helps them understand the Qur'an with proper tajwid. They also acknowledged that academic commitments and the allure of various



digital platforms, such as games and social media, often disrupt their consistency in reading the Qur'an at home.

Picture 2

### 3. Study of the Yellow Book

Many students attend studies of the Yellow Book at school, which focuses on enhancing their understanding of Islam. Observations indicate that students actively participating in this study demonstrate a more critical understanding of religious teachings and can relate them to modern issues, such as technological challenges. Interviews revealed that students believe studying the Yellow Book



gives them a comprehensive understanding of Islam. However, the most significant challenge they face is applying those values in the digital world, where they are frequently exposed to information that contradicts religious principles.

Picture 3

Observations and interviews indicate that students' religious practices at SMA Wahas demonstrate a commitment that requires reinforcement, mainly through congregational prayers, the use of the UMMI method, and the study of the yellow book.

This effort is part of SMA WAHAS's intention to play a significant role in nurturing the students' religious commitment, as steps must be taken before performing acts of worship. The first step is coercion. People must sometimes force themselves to engage in necessary activities, as the benefits of these activities ultimately accrue to themselves. Second, once individuals have successfully passed through the first stage, they may feel lost when they

abandon their habits. Finally, the third stage involves love, need, and desire. Individuals may feel guilty and regretful when they reach this point, especially if they neglect their prayers, and this feeling is often present<sup>23</sup>.

Observations reveal significant variability among students regarding their recitation skills. While some students have become proficient in reading the Qur'an due to early exposure from their parents, others have not yet achieved this. Often, students cannot recite the Qur'an due to a lack of encouragement from their families or because their environment does not support religious practices at home<sup>24</sup>.

Survey results and interviews show that only 35% of students consistently perform the five daily prayers and are skilled in reading the Qur'an; others require additional guidance. Furthermore, social media and digital technology distract students from their worship practices; many prefer to use their phones instead of praying or reading the Qur'an. However, the school has improved this situation by organizing religious activities such as daily Qur'an recitation sessions, congregational dhuha prayers, and istighosah twice a week. These programs are included in the school's formal activities and aim to encourage students to develop more disciplined religious habits. This aligns with a survey investigating how social media use affects students' attention to worship and religious behavior. The study discusses the school's efforts through religious programs to enhance students' attention to worship. It finds that students' engagement with social media can decrease the frequency of their worship practices<sup>25</sup>.

The UMMI method for teaching the Qur'an has proven effective in enhancing students' reading skills. However, there are still challenges in consistently applying this method at home. Studying the Yellow Book also helps students gain a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings. Nevertheless, they face difficulties applying these values in modern life influenced by digital technology. Overall, students' religious practices at SMA WAHAS require reinforcement, particularly in recitation skills and consistency in congregational prayers, to foster greater engagement in religious activities and discipline. Although these methods assist students in improving their reading abilities in a formal school environment, they need support at home to achieve the best outcomes<sup>26</sup>.

## 5. Challenges in Building Religious Character in the Digital Era

Challenges are elements or objects that encourage individuals to improve their problem-solving abilities and strive harder<sup>27</sup>. According to the book on Emotional Resilience, challenges hinder a person from performing the tasks and functions necessary to achieve predetermined goals<sup>28</sup>. Therefore, it can be concluded that the challenges of religiosity push

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<sup>23</sup> Zakiah Daradjat, *Ilmu Jiwa Agama (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 2005), Cet Ke*, vol. 15, 2005.

<sup>24</sup> Maulidiyah Khasanah, "Strategi Pembentukan Karakter Religius Siswa Di Sma A Wahid Hasyim Tebuireng Jombang," *Program Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam Jurusan Pendidikan Agama Islam Fakultas Ilmu Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang (Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, 2023)*.

<sup>25</sup> Dewi Immaniar Desrianti et al., "Pengaruh Media Sosial Terhadap Perilaku Keagamaan Siswa Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Alphabet Jurnal Wawasan Agama Risalah Islamiah, Teknologi dan Sosial (Al-Waarits 1*, no. 1 (2021).

<sup>26</sup> mujahidin, "Efektivitas Metode Ummi Dalam Meningkatkan Kemampuan Membaca Al-Qur'An Peserta Didik Di Sekolah Menengah Pertama Islam Terpadu Ar Rahman Petungkang Utara, Pesanggrahan, Jakarta Selatan" (Institut Ptiq Jakarta, 2022).

<sup>27</sup> W. J. S. Poerwadarminta, "Kamus Umum Bahasa Indonesia Edisi Ketiga," *Kamus Umum Bahasa Indonesia I* (2005).

<sup>28</sup> B R Siregar, E S H Hutahaean, and ..., "Ketahanan Emosional Pada Siswa Smp Korban Cyberbullying," *Jurnal Ilmu Psikologi ... 04*, no. 2 (2023).

Generation Z to face all the circumstances surrounding their religious practices, especially those that obstruct their ability to practice their faith effectively.

Data analysis has revealed that Generation Z encounters difficulties in selecting content that aligns with Islamic principles due to the increasing accessibility and breadth of religious information in the computer and internet age. This is evident from students' tendency to seek religious information from online sources, which are often unverified and unchecked. Consequently, they possess superficial religious knowledge and are less spiritually engaged compared to previous generations. Statements from religious teachers at SMA WAHAS indicate that educators recognize this issue and need to find better ways to engage with students in the digital realm. As noted in an article by Wiramaya, the role of religious teachers is crucial in helping students identify credible sources of religious information, even as access to such information becomes easier <sup>29</sup>.

Schools, communities, and families play vital roles in shaping students' religious character; however, differences in values and examples among these three pillars can disrupt strong character development. As Jamilah explained, the lack of alignment between the role models in families, schools, and communities poses a barrier to the character education of Generation Z. At SMA Wahas, efforts to cultivate a religious environment through various programs demonstrate the importance of schools in providing religious examples, but they also require support from families and communities. Research by Lita indicates that the interactions among schools, families, and communities influence the formation of students' religious character. This article also emphasizes that value discrepancies among these three pillars can hinder the development of a strong character grounded in religious values <sup>30</sup>.

Furthermore, there are issues of Pragmatism and Hedonism in Education. The pragmatic phenomenon observed in Generation Z, particularly in education, illustrates how hedonism and a lack of religious values can lead to negative behaviors, such as corruption. Therefore, SMA Wahas strives to balance religious education with general education to ensure students develop a robust understanding of their faith. Adapting the curriculum with project-based methods and practical skills is crucial to mitigate the impact of pragmatism and facilitate education that meets students' needs. The effects of hedonism also extend to general learning outcomes, as the hedonistic lifestyle of students can diminish their commitment to academic and moral principles. This study indicates that a hedonistic lifestyle can undermine students' discipline and responsibility in school <sup>31</sup>.

Additionally, Generation Z faces the challenge of being less interested in traditional religious practices due to their inclination towards viral content on social media. Students report that participating in online lectures is more engaging and flexible, highlighting this phenomenon. They express the need for innovations in delivering religious education to make it more relevant and appealing to students. To ensure that religious practices are not adversely affected by technological advancements, bridging religious activities with the digital world that students inhabit is essential.

Table 1

| Aspect | Key Points | Description |
|--------|------------|-------------|
|--------|------------|-------------|

<sup>29</sup> Devi Sastika Wiramaya, "Pengaruh Media Sosial Terhadap Akidah Generasi Z Muslim Di Perkotaan" 4 (2024): 130–142.

<sup>30</sup> Dinata Lumban Gaol, "Peran Keluarga, Sekolah, Dan Masyarakat Dalam Pembentukan Karakter Berkualitas," *Edukasia : Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* VOL.2. NO., no. 2 (2023): 41–49.

<sup>31</sup> Lukman Ratuloli, "Pengaruh Gaya Hidup Hedonisme Di Kalangan Pelajar Terhadap Prestasi Belajar Siswa Di Madrasah Aliyah Negeri Kota Kupang," *Prosiding ilmu pendidikan dan keguruan* 1, no. November (2023): 206–222, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/288186156.pdf>.

|                 |   |  |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Characteristics | Religiosity as a Guideline for Life                     | Focusing on the pillars of faith and Islam as the foundation of religiosity, Generation Z at SMA WAHAS sees religion as an essential guide for life in this world and the hereafter.   |
|                 | Diversity of Religious Backgrounds                      | Students come from various religious groups (NU, Muhammadiyah, LDII), and the school plays a crucial role in uniting this diversity through effective approaches.  |
|                 | Influence of Formal Education and Family                | Formal education at school and family values significantly influence students' religious character.  |
| Practices       | Level of Compliance with Worship                        | Activities such as congregational prayers and Quran recitation are held at school to enhance students' religious discipline, and worship practices like prayer and reading the Quran are continually encouraged.   |
|                 | Influence of Social Media and Digital Technology        | The school seeks to address religious issues by conducting daily religious activities because many students are more interested in social media than religious activities.   |
|                 | Role of the UMMI Method in Quran Learning               | The UMMI method improves students' Quran reading skills, but there are still challenges in applying it consistently at home.   |
| Challenges      | Open Access to Religious Information through Technology | Students possess shallow religious understanding and are vulnerable to unverified information due to easy access to religious content online.  |
|                 | Value Gaps between School, Family, and Society          | The lack of alignment between the principles taught at school, family, and social environments hinders the development of students' religious character.   |
|                 | Pragmatism and Hedonism in Education                    | Their pragmatic and hedonistic lifestyles influence students' responsibilities and discipline in religious practices and academic behavior. To ensure students understand their faith, the school strives to balance religious education with general education. |
|                 | Low Interest in Traditional Religious Practices         | Schools need to adapt their methods of religious education to be relevant and engaging for students, as they are more interested in digital content and online lectures than traditional religious practices.  |

## 6. The Effectiveness of the UMMI Method in Building Moderate Religious Character

The application of the UMMI method has several effective elements in enhancing Quran reading skills among Generation Z at SMA WAHAS:

### 4.1. The UMMI Method: Gradual, Direct, and Varied

One aspect of the UMMI method is the implementation of Allah's command in Surah Al-Muzzammil, verse 4:

أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا

"Or more than (half of it). Read the Quran with measured recitation." <sup>32</sup>

Al-Qurthubi defines *Tartil* as reading while paying attention to *tajwid*, which means pronouncing letters correctly according to their points of articulation (*makhraj*) and observing the length of the vowels. Additionally, he states that reading with *tartil* is a way to honor the words of Allah and make them more meaningful and resonate within the hearts of the readers and listeners <sup>33</sup>.

Ibn Kathir emphasizes the importance of reading with *tajwid* and *tartil*, noting that honoring the words of Allah and preserving their authenticity requires correct pronunciation. Furthermore, Imam Nawawi explains in his book the etiquette of reading, teaching, and maintaining the authenticity of the Quran. An-Nawawi states that those who teach the Quran are responsible for ensuring others read it correctly, as any mistakes in reading can diminish the value of the recitation and affect the meaning of Allah's verses <sup>34</sup>.

In a hadith narrated by Bukhari:

خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ

"The best among you are those who learn the Quran and teach it." (HR. Bukhari)<sup>35</sup>

Scholars interpret that teaching the Quran involves conveying its meanings and preserving its pronunciation and recitation to prevent errors from being passed on. This hadith emphasizes the significance of learning and teaching the Quran accurately.

From these primary sources, the UMMI method emerges as a way to teach the Quran properly and appropriately.

Based on observations, interviews, and documentation, the UMMI method is implemented in seven stages to enhance students' Quran reading abilities: Opening, Apersepsi (review), Concept Introduction, Concept Understanding, Tadarrus (recitation), Evaluation, and Closing. Changes in how individuals read the Quran indicate that the UMMI method can enhance the Quran reading skills of the students.

From the analysis of the learning stages employed in the UMMI method, it is evident that a gradual, direct, and varied approach to teaching the Quran at SMA WAHAS significantly improves students' reading abilities. Data obtained through documentation, observation, and interviews show that this method yields positive results in helping students read the Quran with *tartil* and in accordance with *tajwid*.

<sup>32</sup> Kementerian Agama, "Al-Quran Dan Terjemahnya."

<sup>33</sup> Al-Qurthubi, "03\_73653.Pdf."

<sup>34</sup> Imam Nawawi, "Keutamaan Membaca Dan Menghafal , At-Tibyaan Fii Aadaabi Hamalatil Quran," *Islamhouse.Com* (2010): 1–9.

<sup>35</sup> Muhammad Fu'ad Abdul Baqi, *Lu'lu' Wal Marjan Shahih Bukhori* (Jakarta: PT Elex Media Komputindo Komputindo, 2017).

Furthermore, using various teaching approaches, such as reading together, classical methods, and individual instruction, at each learning stage allows students to enhance their skills according to their individual needs. This varied approach supports flexible learning and fosters students' confidence in Quran reading.

The theory of applying the seven stages of the UMMI method synergizes with the findings above, as it aligns with the objectives and needs for learning the Quran. Students must begin practicing reading the Quran directly, as the UMMI method emphasizes the students' ability to fluently and skillfully recite the text without prolonged thought.

The stages are:

1. Opening
2. Apersepsi/Review
3. Concept Naming
4. Concept Understanding
5. Reading/Tadarrus
6. Evaluation
7. Closing

This theory is also supported by the work of Edward Lee Thorndike (The Law of Exercise), which states that the relationship between stimulus and response will strengthen with frequent use<sup>36</sup>. The process of tadarrus will develop students' mental abilities to utilize and apply reading rules while reciting the Quran. This process will also build a connection between the students and the act of reading the Quran.

The UMMI method, consisting of seven stages, can assist SMA WAHAS students in improving their Quran reading abilities. Properly enhancing their reading skills has positive effects on students, including:

1. Fluency in reading the Quran.
2. Ability to read according to the rules of tartil.
3. Improved memorization of the Quran.

Thus, the UMMI method, employed through a gradual, direct, and varied approach, successfully enhances the Quran reading abilities of SMA WAHAS students. Observations indicate that students improve their pronunciation of letters (makhraj), understanding of tajwid, and fluency in recitation.

According to tajwid, the success of the UMMI method in enhancing reading abilities aligns with the concept of behaviorist learning theory, which emphasizes that observable behaviors result from the learning process<sup>37</sup>. In behaviorist theory, the main idea is that behavior before learning changes due to a learning process that includes experience, practice, and exercises.

#### 4.2. The Role of Certified Teachers

Certified teachers are professionals trained to be competent in their teaching. Bandura's book explains that self-efficacy plays a crucial role in determining a person's success in various situations, influencing their choices, perseverance, and reactions to problems or failures<sup>38</sup>. All these efforts aim to achieve positive outcomes for students.

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<sup>36</sup> Rahmadi et al., *Psikologi Pendidikan, Psikologi Pendidikan*, 2023.

<sup>37</sup> Rahmadi et al., *Psikol. Pendidik*.

<sup>38</sup> Albert Bandura, W. H. Freeman, and Richard Lightsey, "Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control," *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy* 13, no. 2 (1999).

Data analysis indicates that certified teachers are essential in successfully implementing the Ummi method at SMA Wahas. By utilizing a structured learning approach, adapting to students' needs, conducting regular evaluations, and fostering a positive learning environment, certified teachers create effective, enjoyable, and encouraging learning experiences for students. This significantly enhances their ability to read the Quran.

Among their capabilities recognized through certification, teachers manage learning systematically, with each session starting with a prayer to help students focus and providing a brief overview of the material to be studied. This structured learning assists students in practicing Quranic reading directly and accelerates their comprehension without spelling out each letter.

The varied approaches used by certified teachers also greatly assist in tailoring learning to the individual needs of each student. By grouping students according to their abilities, teachers can give special attention to those needing additional guidance through read-aloud and individual approaches. This method allows students to learn more effectively and at their own pace.

Certified teachers conduct routine evaluations daily to ensure students understand tajwid and makhraj correctly. Every mistake is corrected, and this assessment serves as a basis to determine if students are ready to learn the following material. This continuous evaluation ensures that student's abilities to read the Quran develop optimally according to the learning standards of the Ummi method.

Additionally, certified teachers help create a positive and motivating learning environment. By providing rewards and praise for every student's achievement, they foster an environment that makes students feel valued and more confident, encouraging them to continue improving their abilities. Interviewed students reported that learning with licensed teachers feels more enjoyable and successful due to their friendly approach.

### 4.3. Continuous Evaluation

Evaluation is an essential aspect of learning as it serves as a benchmark for the success of the material covered. One theory proposed by Rochy states that a competency-based evaluation model emphasizes continuous assessment to evaluate the expected competencies of learners and provide useful feedback<sup>39</sup>. Based on the data presented, the Ummi method also includes evaluation to measure students' achievements in Quranic recitation.

Data collected from the continuous evaluation used to implement the Ummi method at SMA Wahas shows that this phased evaluation method significantly enhances students' skills in reading the Quran. Daily evaluations, developmental stage assessments, and formal evaluations through tashih, accompanied by supervision and discussions from the Ummi Foundation, are conducted. Each type of evaluation has different focal points and benefits for the learning process.

The goal of daily evaluations conducted by certified teachers is to improve students' tajwid, makhraj, and fluency in reading. Quick corrections reduce the likelihood of students making similar mistakes in the future. This aligns with the statements from Ms. Poni and students like Dini, who feel the benefits of this immediate feedback. As a

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<sup>39</sup> Zainun Misbah et al., "Evaluating Competence-Based Vocational Education in Indonesia," *Journal of Vocational Education and Training* 72, no. 4 (2020): 488–515, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2019.1635634>.

result, this daily evaluation is highly effective, with findings showing that 75% of students improved their fluency and 80% corrected their tajwid.

Whenever students complete one volume or stage in the Ummi method, they receive a more in-depth developmental stage evaluation that includes assessments of their tartil, tajwid, and fluency in reading the Quran. Using a performance book as a tool to record student progress, teachers can systematically and objectively assess their students' advancements. According to the data, 85% of students successfully completed this stage without serious errors, while 15% required more time to learn tajwid.

In addition to the evaluations conducted by teachers, the Ummi Foundation also performs supervision and discussions to ensure that the Ummi method is implemented correctly. This external competency exam assesses students' technical abilities and learning effectiveness at SMA Wahas. Mr. Ridwan from the Ummi Foundation stated that this oversight is crucial for maintaining program quality.

Overall, this continuous evaluation contributes significantly to enhancing students' skills in reading the Quran. Research results indicate that students who actively participate in evaluations tend to take more responsibility for their progress and demonstrate significant improvement in their skills.

Table 2

| Aspek                      | Main Points of Analysis                          | Description   |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Ummi Method                | Systematic Learning Stages                       | The Ummi method consists of seven stages: opening, apperception, concept planting, understanding, recitation (tadarus), evaluation, and closing. These stages help students learn to read the Quran with proper tartil and tajwid according to the Ummi stages. |
|                            | Step-by-Step, Direct, and Varied Approach        | This method enhances students' confidence in reading the Quran and allows them to learn according to their needs.   |
|                            | Principle of Tartil and Tajwid in Learning       | This method is based on Quranic verses and hadiths, emphasizing the importance of reading with tartil and tajwid as a sign of respect for the words of Allah.   |
| Role of Certified Teachers | Trained Teachers' Competence and Professionalism | Certified teachers organize learning in a systematic way that focuses on students' needs, resulting in a more positive and varied learning experience.  |
|                            | Varied Approach Based on Student Ability         | Teachers divide students based on their reading skills and provide special attention through individual and listening-reading techniques.   |
|                            | Routine Evaluation and Appreciation              | Students are more motivated by daily evaluations and appreciation, which increase   |

|                       |   |   |
|-----------------------|---|---|
|                       |   | their focus on tajwid and makhraj when reading the Quran.   |
| Continuous Evaluation | Daily Evaluation and Tashih as a Benchmark for Reading Progress | Formal evaluations are conducted through tashih to assess accuracy and fluency, while daily evaluations ensure immediate improvement in tajwid and makhraj. |
|                       | Supervision and Discussion (Munāqashah) from Ummi Foundation    | The quality of Quranic learning at SMA Wahas is maintained through the consistent application of the method under the supervision of the Ummi Foundation.   |
|                       | Gradual Improvement in Quranic Reading Skills                   | Students show significant improvement in their reading skills, especially in fluency and accuracy of tajwid.  |

### 5. Implementation of the Ummi Method in Forming Moderate Religious Personalities Among Students at SMA Wahas

A study conducted in Islamic schools in Indonesia found that character-based religious education approaches, like the Ummi method, help students face the influence of digital media and strengthen their religious independence<sup>40</sup>. This approach is also applied at SMA Wahas.

The findings show that using the Ummi method in Quranic learning contributes to shaping students' religious character at SMA Wahas. This program began in 2018 and continues to the present. Previously, Quran lessons were held every Monday and Tuesday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:40 a.m. However, in the 2024/2025 academic year, they are now held once a week on Tuesdays for two class hours, from 12:10 p.m. to 1:40 p.m.

In each session, Quran learning with the Ummi method at SMA Wahas involves nine learning groups. Using the Ummi method, students begin with a prayer, then proceed to review (muroja'ah) short surahs and add memorization of Juz Amma (30th chapter). They then read from the Ummi book according to each student's level.

The results indicate that the Quranic learning with the Ummi method at SMA Wahas meets the standards of the Ummi Foundation. Ummi teachers carry out seven stages: opening greeting, apperception, concept planting, concept understanding, skill practice, evaluation, and closing greeting. Students can properly understand the material after going through these stages.

The Ummi Foundation breaks down these seven stages into a sequence of twenty teaching steps:

**Opening (5 minutes):**

1. The teacher begins the lesson by greeting.
2. The teacher asks the students questions.
3. The teacher asks a student to lead the opening prayer.

**Memorization (10 minutes):**

1. The teacher leads students in reviewing previous memorization (muroja'ah Qorib and Baid).

<sup>40</sup> Muh Jabir, Nabilah Safitri, and Nursyam Nursyam, "Character Building Through Tahfizul Qur'an: Assessing the Impact on Students at an Islamic High School Palu," *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan* 16, no. 2 (2024): 2803–2812.

2. The teacher recites the new verse 5–10 times.
3. Students recite the new verse in groups.
4. The teacher evaluates students' memorization of the new verse and records it in the memorization assessment.
5. The teacher also asks for the surah name, meaning, number of verses, and verse type.

**Classic Presentation (10 minutes):**

1. The teacher leads students in reading the material from the first page.
2. The teacher introduces new material.
3. The teacher shows students how to find similar readings in the new material.
4. Students read the new material together to develop proficiency.
5. The teacher teaches page 20 in a classic, step-by-step manner, following the main topic

**Evaluation (30 minutes):**

1. Students read the Ummi book together first, then each reads individually. The teacher records grades in the student achievement book.

**Closing (4 minutes):**

1. The teacher reviews the new material with the students.
2. The teacher reviews the new memorization with the students.
3. The teacher offers advice and motivation to students.
4. The teacher asks a student to lead the closing prayer.
5. The teacher ends with a greeting.

As a Quran teacher, Ummi's role is to teach students not only how to read the Quran but also how their attitudes and behavior reflect the values within it. Instilling character in students is not only about teaching them what is right and wrong; it involves setting a good example, creating an environment they enjoy, practicing good morals, and reminding them to avoid negative actions.

The Ummi Method at SMA Wahas also aims to improve technical Quran reading skills and cultivate a moderate religious character. This compassionate educational approach incorporates moral values and prioritizes moderation, emphasizing a tolerant, just, and balanced attitude. As a result, students become proficient in Quranic reading and develop a personality that respects diversity and applies tolerant Islamic values in daily life.

Moreover, this method encourages students to apply Quranic values outside the classroom, which is reflected in their increasingly religious and tolerant behavior. The heart-touching and moral-focused Quranic learning enables students to become more humble and respectful, helping them grow into moderate Muslims. This aligns with SMA Wahas' goals of producing religious, intelligent, and patriotic students.

At SMA Wahas, the Ummi program is supported by several factors, including the enthusiasm of certified teachers, adequate facilities, and students' eagerness to learn Quran reading. For instance, students show readiness and enthusiasm by forming study circles in the classroom or mosque before the program begins, which motivates teachers to continue providing quality learning.

However, challenges for the program include diverse student backgrounds, different levels of religious awareness, and unsupportive family conditions for religious education. Many students come from families where parents work out of town, meaning there is no parental supervision of religious education at home. Additionally, a diverse peer environment influences students' attitudes toward religious activities at school. Conversely, the limited number of certified Ummi teachers due to transfers to other schools also hampers the program.

Table 3

| Aspect                              | Main Points  | Description   |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| Effectiveness of Ummi Learning      | Systematic and Structured Method                     | Quranic learning with the Ummi method at SMA Wahas consists of seven stages: opening, memorization, classic presentation, and evaluation. These stages help students effectively and systematically understand tajweed and tartil, with a total of ten steps overall. |
|                                     | Time and Frequency of Learning                       | At Wahas, Quranic learning is held once a week for two class periods, with nine study groups. Each session begins with a prayer, followed by a review (muroja'ah) and memorization of Juz Amma (30th chapter), tailored to each student's level.                      |
| Moderate Religious Character        | Moral Values and Attitude of Tolerance               | The Ummi method focuses on reading skills and fostering a moderate religious character by instilling tolerance, justice, and balance. This approach encourages students to respect diversity and apply tolerant Islamic values daily.                                 |
|                                     | Heartfelt Learning and Morality-Focused Approach     | In line with SMA Wahas' goal to produce religious, tolerant, and broad-minded students, Quranic learning with a heartfelt, morality-focused approach helps students become more humble and respectful of others.  |
| Role of Teachers and School Support | Certified Teachers and Positive Learning Environment | Certified Ummi teachers play a vital role in implementing this method. They provide structured guidance daily evaluations, create a positive learning environment, and give students praise and rewards for their progress  |
|                                     | Availability of Facilities and Student Enthusiasm    | By providing adequate facilities and fostering students' enthusiasm for learning the Quran, SMA Wahas supports the learning process. This is reflected in students' readiness as they gather in circles in the classroom or prayer hall before the session begins.    |

|                              |  |   |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| Challenges in Implementation | Diverse Backgrounds and Family Support | Various religious backgrounds and lack of family support for religious education are significant challenges, especially for students whose parents work out of town. Students' attitudes toward religious activities at school are also influenced by their social environment. |
|                              | Limited Number of Certified Teachers   | The limited number of certified Ummi teachers, due to transfers or relocations, hinders the program.  |

## CONCLUSION

Based on the data presentation and analysis, this study yields the following conclusions: First, Religious Characteristics of Generation Z at SMA Wahas Amid the Challenges of the Digital Era. Students at SMA Wahas exhibit religious characteristics influenced by formal education, family environment, and exposure to digital media. Although they understand the importance of Islamic teachings, some students have yet to develop full awareness and discipline in practicing religious observances, particularly the five daily prayers. Technology and social media play a role in shaping their perceptions and practices of religion. Some students struggle to balance their religious habits with their enjoyment of using gadgets.

Second, Effectiveness of the Ummi Method in Enhancing Quranic Reading Skills: The Ummi Method has proven effective in improving students' Quranic reading skills at SMA Wahas. This method implements a gradual and structured learning system, where students are grouped based on their reading proficiency. The learning process follows a strict standard through stages of *tahsin*, *tashih* (verification), and level progression tests to ensure that students' recitation quality improves according to the rules of *tajwid* and *makhraj*. Additionally, certified teachers play a crucial role in the method's success. Regular evaluation systems also help monitor students' progress periodically.

Third, Contribution of the Ummi Method to the Formation of Moderate Religious Character Beyond improving Quranic reading skills, the Ummi Method also contributes to shaping a moderate religious character. Through an approach based on tolerance, compassion, and balance, students are taught to appreciate diversity and practice religious moderation (*wasathiyah*). Teachers in the Ummi Method serve not only as instructors but also as mentors who instill religious values gently and attentively. This approach is particularly relevant in addressing the challenges of the digital era, where students need to be guided in understanding religion from an inclusive and contextual perspective.

Overall, this study demonstrates that the Ummi Method is effective in enhancing technical Quranic reading skills and plays a significant role in fostering students' religious character to be balanced and tolerant, in line with the challenges of religious life in the digital era.

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