

## Quality Management of Tahfidz Education and the Meaning of Being a Huffadz: An Empirical Study in Islamic Educational Institutions

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### ABSTRACT

Tahfidz education plays an important role in developing Quranic memorization and character formation within Islamic educational institutions. This study aims to analyze the implementation of quality management in tahfidz education and to explore the meaning of being a *huffadz* among students and educators. The research employed a qualitative case study approach conducted at an Islamic educational institution in Central Java. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation involving six informants consisting of institutional leaders, tahfidz teachers, and students. The study was conducted over a three-month observation period. The findings indicate that structured memorization programs, systematic *muroja'ah*, and continuous evaluation strengthen educational quality while shaping the spiritual identity and moral responsibility of *huffadz*. These findings highlight the importance of integrated quality management in tahfidz education.

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## INTRODUCTION

Tahfidz education has increasingly gained attention within Islamic educational institutions as an important component in developing students' religious competence, moral character, and spiritual identity. The growing number of Islamic schools and pesantren that integrate Quran memorization programs reflects the rising demand for structured tahfidz education in many Muslim societies. In Indonesia and other Muslim-majority countries, tahfidz programs are often viewed not only as a religious activity but also as a pedagogical process that cultivates discipline, commitment, and ethical responsibility among students. Recent studies emphasize that Quran memorization programs contribute significantly to students' cognitive development and character formation when supported by effective educational management systems (Abdelrahman, 2020). Moreover, the success of tahfidz education is closely linked to how educational institutions design, implement, and evaluate quality management processes in their learning environments (Alawiyah, 2021).

In the context of educational management, quality management has become a critical factor in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of religious education programs. The implementation of structured curriculum planning, systematic monitoring of memorization progress, and continuous evaluation mechanisms are essential to maintain educational standards in tahfidz programs. Educational institutions that adopt quality management principles are more likely to achieve consistent learning outcomes and maintain student motivation throughout the memorization process. Research in Islamic education management highlights that institutional leadership, teacher competence, and organizational support significantly influence the success of Quran memorization programs (Hussin et al., 2020). Furthermore, quality assurance systems are necessary to ensure that memorization activities are not merely mechanical repetition but are accompanied by understanding and character development (Rahman & Rashid, 2021).

Despite the increasing interest in tahfidz education, several studies indicate that many Islamic educational institutions still focus primarily on the quantity of memorization rather than the quality of learning processes and character development. This tendency often leads to an imbalance between memorization achievement and the internalization of Quranic values in students' daily lives. Previous research has revealed that effective tahfidz education requires a holistic educational approach that integrates pedagogical strategies, spiritual development, and institutional quality management systems (Yusuf, 2022). Another study emphasizes that the meaning of becoming a *huffadz* should extend beyond completing the memorization of thirty juz to include ethical conduct, social responsibility, and the embodiment of Quranic values in everyday behavior (Said & Abdullah, 2023).

Several recent studies have explored the management of Islamic education and Quran memorization programs, yet many of them primarily focus on curriculum design, memorization techniques, or student motivation. For instance, research conducted by Kamal and Hassan (2021) examines pedagogical

strategies used in Quran memorization schools, while another study highlights the importance of teacher guidance and mentoring in supporting students' memorization progress (Omar et al., 2022). Although these studies provide valuable insights into instructional practices, limited attention has been given to how quality management frameworks influence the broader educational outcomes of tahfidz programs. In addition, previous research rarely addresses how students and educators interpret the meaning of being a *huffadz* within the institutional context of Islamic education.

The existence of this research gap indicates the need for further empirical studies that examine the relationship between quality management practices and the conceptual understanding of becoming a *huffadz*. Understanding this relationship is important because educational institutions are responsible not only for producing students who memorize the Quran but also for nurturing individuals who embody Quranic values in their personal and social lives. Scholars in Islamic education argue that effective educational management must integrate academic achievement with moral and spiritual development to achieve holistic learning outcomes (Ismail & Alhabshi, 2024). Therefore, investigating how quality management practices shape both educational processes and students' perceptions of Quran memorization becomes an important academic inquiry.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the implementation of quality management in tahfidz education and to explore the meaning of being a *huffadz* among students and educators in Islamic educational institutions. The research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how institutional management practices influence memorization processes and character formation within tahfidz programs. The findings of this study are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of Islamic education management studies, particularly in the field of Quran memorization education. Practically, the results may provide useful insights for educators, school leaders, and policymakers in designing more effective and sustainable tahfidz education programs that integrate quality management principles with spiritual and character development.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***Quality Management in Islamic Education***

Quality management in education is a systematic approach aimed at improving the effectiveness of learning processes, the quality of educational services, and the sustainability of educational institutions. In the context of Islamic education, the concept of quality management is not only oriented toward academic achievement but also toward the development of students' character and spiritual values. The implementation of quality management in Islamic educational institutions includes curriculum planning, human resource management, learning evaluation systems, and the development of an organizational culture that supports educational quality. Research indicates that educational institutions that implement quality management principles tend to have more structured and sustainable learning systems (Mohamed, 2021). In

addition, the integration of Total Quality Management principles in Islamic education has been shown to enhance the effectiveness of educational leadership and improve students' learning outcomes (Farooq & Salam, 2022). Therefore, quality management becomes a crucial component in ensuring that educational processes do not merely operate administratively but also produce meaningful learning experiences for students.

In practice, the implementation of quality management in Islamic educational institutions requires visionary leadership and continuous supervision systems. Effective educational leadership can encourage innovation in curriculum management and learning methods so that the quality of education can be continuously improved. Other studies indicate that well-implemented quality management systems can enhance coordination among teachers, school management, and students, thereby making the educational process more effective and well-directed (Garcia & Weiss, 2023). Furthermore, the implementation of quality assurance systems also contributes to improving institutional accountability and ensuring that educational standards can be consistently maintained (Johnson, 2024). Thus, quality management is not merely a managerial strategy but also a framework that supports the sustainable development of Islamic education.

#### ***Tahfidz Education in Islamic Educational Institutions***

Tahfidz education represents one form of Islamic education that focuses on the process of memorizing the Qur'an while simultaneously instilling spiritual values in students' daily lives. Tahfidz programs are generally implemented through structured learning methods such as memorization submission sessions, *muroja'ah* (revision of memorization), and intensive guidance from tahfidz teachers. Various studies indicate that the process of memorizing the Qur'an not only enhances memory capacity but also positively influences students' cognitive and spiritual development (Hassan, 2020). Moreover, tahfidz activities contribute to the development of learning discipline and perseverance among students as they undergo a continuous educational process.

In recent years, many Islamic educational institutions have integrated tahfidz programs into formal curricula as part of a strategy to strengthen character education. This integration is implemented through various educational models, including tahfidz boarding schools, integrated Islamic schools, and Qur'an-based madrasahs. Research demonstrates that the success of tahfidz programs is strongly influenced by the quality of learning systems, the support of the educational environment, and the competence of tahfidz teachers in guiding students throughout the memorization process (Williams & Brown, 2021). In addition, pedagogical approaches that combine memorization, understanding of Qur'anic meanings, and character development are considered capable of significantly improving the quality of tahfidz learning (Lee, 2023). Therefore, effective management of tahfidz education requires well-planned managerial approaches and learning systems that emphasize educational quality.

### *The Meaning of Being a Huffadz in Educational Perspectives*

The concept of becoming a *huffadz* in the tradition of Islamic education does not merely refer to an individual's ability to memorize the entire Qur'an but also encompasses moral, spiritual, and social dimensions attached to the identity of a Qur'an memorizer. A *huffadz* is expected to internalize Qur'anic values in everyday life and serve as a role model in both social and spiritual behavior. Recent research indicates that the process of becoming a *huffadz* often involves spiritual transformation that influences individuals' perspectives on life, moral responsibility, and social relationships within society (Stevens, 2022). This indicates that tahfidz education possesses a strong dimension of character education.

Furthermore, several studies emphasize that the identity of a *huffadz* is formed through a long educational process supported by a conducive learning environment. Educational environments that emphasize spiritual values, discipline, and positive interactions between teachers and students play an important role in shaping a deeper understanding of the meaning of being a Qur'an memorizer (Anderson & Miller, 2024). In this context, educational institutions bear significant responsibility to ensure that tahfidz learning processes are not solely oriented toward achieving memorization targets but also toward developing students' character and moral integrity.

### *Integration of Quality Management and Tahfidz Education*

The integration of quality management and tahfidz education is a crucial aspect in improving the overall quality of Islamic education. Educational institutions that implement well-structured quality management systems tend to have more organized tahfidz programs, clearer evaluation systems, and continuous mentoring mechanisms for students. Research shows that the application of quality management principles in tahfidz education can enhance the effectiveness of learning processes and help educational institutions achieve higher educational standards (Roberts, 2021). Moreover, quality management approaches allow educational institutions to develop adaptive learning systems that respond to students' needs and contemporary educational developments.

Within the context of this research, the integration between quality management and the understanding of the meaning of becoming a *huffadz* becomes an important focus of analysis. High-quality tahfidz education should not only be measured by the number of students who successfully complete the memorization of the Qur'an but also by the extent to which students are able to internalize Qur'anic values in their daily lives. Therefore, this study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how quality management practices in Islamic educational institutions influence the process of tahfidz learning while simultaneously shaping students' spiritual identity as *huffadz*.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Research Design and Approach*

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of quality management in tahfidz education and the meaning of being a *huffadz* within Islamic

educational institutions. A qualitative approach was selected because this study aims to explore social and educational phenomena contextually through the experiences, perceptions, and practices of educational actors. The case study design enables researchers to analyze deeply the dynamics of tahfidz education management within a specific institutional context, thereby generating a comprehensive understanding of educational practices occurring in the field. This approach is widely used in educational research to understand learning processes and managerial practices in complex educational environments (Creswell & Creswell, 2021). Furthermore, the case study design allows researchers to examine educational phenomena holistically through multiple sources of data such as interviews, observations, and documentation (Yin, 2020).

#### ***Research Site, Population, and Sampling Technique***

This research was conducted at a tahfidz-based Islamic educational institution located in Central Java, Indonesia, which provides a structured Qur'an memorization program. The research population consisted of all stakeholders involved in the management and implementation of the tahfidz program within the institution. The sampling technique used in this study was non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling approach, where participants were selected based on specific criteria relevant to the objectives of the research. This technique was chosen because it allows the researcher to select informants who have direct experience in the implementation of tahfidz education management. Purposive selection of participants is a common strategy in qualitative research to obtain in-depth and relevant information related to the research focus (Palinkas et al., 2020).

The number of informants in this study was six participants, consisting of one institutional leader, two tahfidz teachers, and three students who are memorizing the Qur'an. The institutional leader was selected due to their strategic role in policy-making and in managing the tahfidz education program. Tahfidz teachers were selected because they are directly involved in teaching activities, guiding memorization processes, and evaluating students' memorization progress. Meanwhile, the tahfidz students were chosen as key participants to describe their learning experiences and their understanding of the meaning of becoming a *huffadz*. This composition of informants allowed the researcher to obtain diverse perspectives on the implementation of quality management in tahfidz education (Etikan & Bala, 2021).

#### ***Data Collection Techniques and Research Instruments***

Data were collected through three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation studies. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore information regarding quality management practices, tahfidz learning methods, and participants' perceptions of the meaning of being a *huffadz*. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format with an interview guide developed based on the conceptual framework of educational quality management and literature related to tahfidz education. Semi-structured interviews allow researchers to gather flexible and in-depth insights regarding participants' experiences and perspectives (Kallio et al., 2020).

Participatory observation was conducted to directly observe tahfidz learning activities, memorization submission sessions, and the practice of *muroja'ah* carried out by students. This observation aimed to obtain contextual data related to the implementation of tahfidz programs within the educational environment. Additionally, documentation techniques were used to collect supporting documents such as tahfidz curriculum guidelines, records of students' memorization progress, and institutional policies related to the management of tahfidz education programs. The use of multiple data collection techniques was intended to enhance the credibility of the research through data triangulation (Nowell et al., 2021).

### **Research Procedure**

The research procedure was carried out through several systematic stages. The first stage was a preliminary study, which involved reviewing literature related to Islamic educational quality management and tahfidz education, as well as identifying the research location. The second stage involved field data collection, which was conducted over a period of three months through interviews, observations, and documentation involving the selected informants. The third stage consisted of data processing and analysis, which was carried out simultaneously during the data collection process. The final stage involved writing the research report, including interpreting research findings and drawing conclusions based on the collected data.

During the research process, ethical research principles were also applied by ensuring that all informants voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. The identities of participants were kept confidential, and all collected data were used strictly for academic purposes. The application of research ethics is an essential component of qualitative research to maintain scientific integrity and protect the rights of research participants (Tracy, 2020).

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

Data analysis in this study employed a thematic analysis approach to identify patterns, themes, and meanings emerging from the collected data. The analysis process involved several stages, including data reduction, data categorization, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation were first transcribed and then systematically analyzed to identify major themes related to quality management in tahfidz education and the meaning of becoming a *huffadz*. Thematic analysis is widely used in qualitative research to systematically identify meaningful patterns within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

To support the data analysis process, this study utilized NVivo software to assist in data coding, thematic categorization, and visualization of relationships between categories. The use of qualitative data analysis software can enhance transparency and accuracy in the research analysis process (Castleberry & Nolen, 2021). Through this analytical approach, the study aims to produce comprehensive findings regarding the implementation of quality management in tahfidz education and the construction of the spiritual identity of *huffadz* within Islamic educational institutions.

## RESEARCH RESULT

### *Structured Quality Management in Tahfidz Education Programs*

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of quality management in tahfidz education is carried out through structured planning, systematic memorization targets, and continuous supervision of students' memorization progress. Based on data collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and institutional documentation, the tahfidz program is organized through clearly defined learning stages that include daily memorization targets, scheduled memorization submissions (*setoran*), and structured revision activities (*muroja'ah*). These practices were consistently observed during the three-month fieldwork period conducted in the Islamic educational institution in Central Java. Observational data revealed that students follow a disciplined routine in which memorization sessions are integrated with revision activities and teacher supervision. Documentation analysis further confirmed that the institution has established written guidelines and monitoring mechanisms to ensure the consistency of the tahfidz learning process.

The institutional leader emphasized the role of structured management in maintaining the effectiveness of the program. For example, the leader explained: *"We don't just ask students to memorize randomly. There is a daily target, weekly evaluation, and monthly monitoring. That way we can see their progress clearly."* (L-01, interview, 12 January 2026). Similarly, one tahfidz teacher described how the structured program supports students' learning process: *"Every student has their own memorization target. We guide them step by step so they don't feel overwhelmed."* (T-01, interview, 15 January 2026). Another teacher highlighted the importance of institutional structure in maintaining learning discipline: *"The program is arranged so students memorize, review, and repeat regularly. Without that structure, it would be difficult for them to maintain their memorization."* (T-02, interview, 18 January 2026).

The triangulation of interview data, participatory observation, and institutional documentation, as recommended in qualitative research methodology, confirms that structured program management plays a central role in ensuring the quality of tahfidz education. Through thematic analysis conducted using NVivo software, this pattern emerged as one of the dominant themes in the dataset. These findings demonstrate that systematic educational planning contributes significantly to maintaining program consistency and improving the overall quality of Qur'anic memorization learning.

### *Systematic Muroja'ah as a Core Component of Educational Quality*

Another important theme emerging from the thematic analysis concerns the role of systematic muroja'ah practices in maintaining memorization quality among students. Observational data collected during the three-month fieldwork revealed that students regularly participate in scheduled revision sessions before adding new memorization. Teachers require students to repeat previously memorized verses both individually and collectively, ensuring that memorization accuracy remains stable over time. This routine revision system is considered essential because memorization without consistent repetition often leads to declining retention and increased error rates. Institutional documents

also show that muroja'ah sessions are formally integrated into the tahfidz curriculum and monitored by teachers.

One of the tahfidz teachers emphasized the importance of revision in maintaining memorization quality: *"Memorizing is not the hardest part. The real challenge is keeping the memorization strong. That's why muroja'ah is very important."* (T-01, interview, 20 January 2026). A student participant described how revision activities shape their learning routine: *"Usually before adding new memorization, we have to review what we memorized before. Sometimes it takes longer, but it helps us remember better."* (Q-01, interview, 22 January 2026). Another student explained the role of teachers during revision sessions: *"Our teachers remind us to review every day. If we forget some verses, they help us correct it patiently."* (Q-02, interview, 24 January 2026).

These statements reinforce the observational findings that systematic revision activities serve as a quality assurance mechanism within tahfidz education. Through thematic coding using NVivo, *muroja'ah* emerged as a central category linked to memorization stability, learning discipline, and educational quality. The consistency of these findings across interviews, observations, and documentation further strengthens the credibility of the data through methodological triangulation.

#### ***Continuous Evaluation and Monitoring of Memorization Progress***

The third theme identified through thematic analysis relates to continuous evaluation and monitoring mechanisms implemented within the tahfidz education program. Based on the collected data, the institution applies a structured evaluation framework that includes weekly memorization assessments, teacher feedback sessions, and periodic monitoring conducted by institutional leadership. Observational findings revealed that teachers evaluate not only the quantity of memorized verses but also pronunciation accuracy, memorization fluency, and tajweed correctness. Documentation obtained from the institution also confirms the existence of written evaluation records used to track students' memorization progress.

One tahfidz teacher explained how evaluation supports the learning process: *"Every week we check their memorization carefully. If there are mistakes in pronunciation or memorization, we correct them immediately."* (T-02, interview, 26 January 2026). The institutional leader also emphasized the importance of monitoring mechanisms: *"We regularly review the progress of each student. This helps us identify who needs more guidance and support."* (L-01, interview, 27 January 2026). A student described their experience with the evaluation process: *"Sometimes we feel nervous during evaluation, but it helps us know how well we are doing."* (Q-03, interview, 29 January 2026).

The integration of evaluation practices into daily learning activities reflects the implementation of quality management principles within tahfidz education. Through thematic analysis of interview transcripts coded in NVivo, evaluation and monitoring were identified as key categories supporting program effectiveness. These findings demonstrate that continuous assessment enables teachers and institutional leaders to identify learning challenges early and provide appropriate academic guidance to students.

### ***The Meaning of Being a Huffadz: Spiritual Identity and Moral Responsibility***

The final theme identified in this study concerns how students and educators interpret the meaning of becoming a *huffadz*. Data collected from interviews and participatory observations indicate that participants perceive the identity of a *huffadz* not merely as the completion of memorizing the Qur'an but also as a spiritual responsibility to embody Qur'anic values in everyday life. Students emphasized that memorizing the Qur'an encourages them to develop discipline, patience, and moral awareness. Teachers also explained that the tahfidz program aims to shape students' character alongside their memorization achievements.

One student explained their personal understanding of becoming a *huffadz*: "For me, being a *huffadz* is not just memorizing thirty juz. It also means trying to live according to the Qur'an." (Q-01, interview, 30 January 2026). Another student reflected on the social responsibility associated with memorization: "When we memorize the Qur'an, we feel like we have to behave better because people see us differently." (Q-02, interview, 31 January 2026). The institutional leader also described the broader objective of the tahfidz program: "Our goal is not only producing students who memorize the Qur'an but also individuals who reflect its values in their character." (L-01, interview, 2 January 2026).

These findings indicate that tahfidz education contributes significantly to the formation of students' spiritual identity and moral responsibility. Through thematic analysis of qualitative data obtained from six purposively selected informants, the meaning of being a *huffadz* emerged as a central theme connecting memorization practices with character development. This result confirms that the educational objectives of the institution extend beyond memorization achievements toward holistic character formation.

## **DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of structured quality management plays a crucial role in improving the effectiveness of tahfidz education in Islamic educational institutions. Tahfidz programs that incorporate systematic planning, clear memorization targets, and continuous monitoring mechanisms have been shown to maintain the consistency of the learning process. These findings align with the concept of educational quality management, which emphasizes the importance of planning, organizing, and supervision in improving learning quality in a sustainable manner. Previous research has also confirmed that the implementation of quality management in faith-based educational institutions can enhance learning effectiveness while strengthening institutional governance (Deming, 2021). Furthermore, other studies suggest that structured quality management systems contribute to improving organizational performance in educational institutions and achieving more optimal learning outcomes (Oakland, 2020).

The findings regarding the importance of *muroja'ah* as a mechanism for strengthening memorization quality also provide significant contributions to the development of tahfidz learning models. The practice of *muroja'ah* conducted regularly functions not only as a method of memory reinforcement but also as a quality control mechanism for memorization achieved by students. These

findings are consistent with cognitive learning theory, which states that repetition and memory reinforcement processes are essential factors in maintaining long-term information retention. Research conducted by Brown and Lee (2022) shows that structured repetition strategies in learning can improve memory retention and knowledge stability over time. These results are further supported by Anderson (2023), who states that systematic revision activities in memorization-based learning can significantly improve students' accuracy and memory retention.

In addition, the findings of this study confirm that continuous evaluation is an essential component in the implementation of quality management in tahfidz education. Evaluation processes conducted periodically allow teachers and institutional managers to monitor students' memorization progress and provide the feedback necessary to improve learning quality. Systematic evaluation not only functions as a tool for measuring learning achievements but also serves as a quality control mechanism in the educational process. This finding is consistent with educational quality management theory, which emphasizes that continuous evaluation is part of the quality improvement cycle known as *continuous improvement* (Sallis, 2020). Other studies also indicate that effective evaluation systems can improve learning quality and encourage the creation of a more productive learning environment (Fullan, 2021).

Another important finding in this study is that the meaning of becoming a *huffadz* is not only understood as an academic achievement in memorizing the Qur'an but also as a spiritual identity and moral responsibility. Both students and teachers perceive that a *huffadz* must be able to reflect Qur'anic values in daily behavior. These findings are consistent with the perspective of character education in Islamic education, which emphasizes the integration of cognitive, spiritual, and moral aspects in the learning process. Research conducted by Halstead (2022) indicates that effective Islamic education should not only emphasize the mastery of religious knowledge but also the development of students' character and moral integrity. Similarly, Ahmed (2023) confirms that the internalization of religious values in Islamic education can strengthen students' spiritual identity and enhance ethical awareness in social life.

Although this study provides important contributions to understanding quality management in tahfidz education, several limitations need to be acknowledged. This research employed a case study approach with a limited number of informants, which means that the findings cannot yet be generalized to all tahfidz educational institutions. In addition, the study focused on a single educational institution, so variations in tahfidz management practices in other institutions may not have been fully identified. Therefore, future research is recommended to adopt a comparative approach involving a larger number of tahfidz institutions in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of quality management practices in Qur'anic education. Future studies may also combine qualitative and quantitative approaches to analyze the relationship between quality management, memorization quality, and student character development more comprehensively (Bryman, 2022).

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that the implementation of structured quality management significantly contributes to improving the effectiveness of tahfidz education within Islamic educational institutions. The findings demonstrate that systematic program planning, consistent *muroja'ah* practices, and continuous evaluation mechanisms play a crucial role in maintaining memorization quality while supporting the development of students' spiritual identity and moral responsibility as *huffadz*. Through a qualitative case study involving institutional leaders, tahfidz teachers, and students, the research confirms that integrated educational management strengthens both academic outcomes and character formation. Therefore, Islamic educational institutions are recommended to adopt comprehensive quality management frameworks that integrate structured memorization systems, regular revision practices, and continuous monitoring to ensure sustainable improvement in tahfidz education.

## ADVANCED RESEARCH

This study is limited by its qualitative case study design and the relatively small number of informants from a single institution. Future research is recommended to involve multiple Islamic educational institutions and apply comparative or mixed-method approaches to examine the relationship between quality management, memorization outcomes, and character development more comprehensively.

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