

## Development of Qur'an memorization model in shaping religious character based on integrative AIK

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### Abstract

The Qur'an, as the unchangeable word of Allah, forms the foundation of a Muslim's religious life. The act of memorizing the Qur'an (*Tahfidzul Qur'an*) is a core spiritual practice vital for developing strong religious character based on integrative AIK, which serves as essential social capital for problem-solving in society. This qualitative research aimed to three-fold: to identify the *Tahfidzul Qur'an* training model, to analyze the process of religious character formation based on integrative AIK via the program, and to pinpoint the enabling and hindering factors at the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School in Jono Bayan, Purworejo. The research gathered data from key informants, including teachers, caregivers, three supervisors, and four students, using observation, interviews, and documentation. The results show that the training model successfully integrates habit-forming routine based on integrative AIK, reward systems, and a personalized approach for students. The program is significantly supported by robust institutional management and clear delegation of authority to the instructional staff. Conversely, key inhibiting factors that challenge character formation include a lack of sufficient supervisors, scheduling conflicts between mentors and students, and student exhaustion due to demanding school activities.

**Keywords:** AIK, Qur'an Memorization, Religious Character.

## INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an was revealed by Allah SWT among the Arab people, most of whom were illiterate at the time. However, the Arab people had many special qualities, one of which was their extraordinary memory and ability to retain information. Therefore, the first revelation that was sent down was the command to read, even if it is detailed again, the activity of reading requires understanding, by starting to read a person can also memorize and this is the greatness of the first revelation sent down by Allah to the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught and commanded the memorization of all the verses of the Qur'an and instructed scholars to write them down. These strategies and methods ensured that the Qur'an was preserved during the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and to maintain its authenticity, Muslims consistently read, memorize, study, and apply the contents of the Qur'an (Firdaus, 2014). The steps above are tips for preserving the Qur'an that were achieved by Muslims during the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. In the era of globalization, Muslims must also be able to preserve the authenticity and originality of the Qur'an by understanding its meaning (Sulastini & Zamili, 2019).

Tahfidzul Qur'an, or memorizing the Qur'an, can cultivate and shape a person's religious character, like that of Prophet Muhammad SAW. Aisha RA was once asked about the character of the Prophet SAW. She replied: The character of the Prophet SAW is the Qur'an. Hadith narrated by Muslim (Zayyan, 2024). Those who memorize the Qur'an must become a mirror in which people can see the beliefs of the Qur'an, its values, and its ethics, and so that they read the Qur'an and its verses in accordance with their behavior. Memorizing the Qur'an can shape a person's religious character, so that those who memorize the Qur'an are used as a benchmark for those who do not. However, in this era of rapid globalization, tahfidz activities are not being optimized due to the effects of technology and a lack of supervision from parents (Ummah, 2020). Furthermore, memorizing the Qur'an is an obligation of believing in Allah's Books. It's not just about reading, understanding, and practising the Qur'an; Muslims are also required to memorise it. The simplest reason is that during prayer, Muslims are required to recite several verses or chapters from the Qur'an.

Religious character education is the most important asset for solving current social problems, such as the prevalence of moral violations caused by low moral character in children, such as cheating, school fights, dishonest behavior, and absenteeism from teaching and learning activities. These issues seem to have become commonplace and accepted in

School environments and are part of the decline in students' character (Firdaus & Makhful, 2023; Ummah, 2020). Such negative habits are certainly not something to be proud of, so religious character education is needed to reduce or even eliminate these habits that should not be practiced. Therefore, religious character formation must be continuously carried out by educators and educational personnel. Even the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education of the Republic of Indonesia is striving to instill these character values through an in-depth learning approach.

Based on the above explanation, it can be concluded that religious character and Qur'an memorization must be interconnected, as a Qur'an memorizer must possess religious qualities and character to align with the activity of Qur'an memorization. If a Qur'an memorizer lacks religious character, one may question whether their memorization of the Qur'an is merely a duty rather than an act of sincerity. Therefore, the strategy for character development is to optimize religious values through Qur'an memorization (Firdaus, 2023). This is an obligation because as a memorizer of the Qur'an, one must demonstrate Qur'anic behavior, one's morals must be in accordance with the Qur'an, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad.

The development of Qur'an memorization in shaping the religious character of students was found at the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Jono Islamic Boarding School. Based on initial observations made by the researcher at the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Jono Islamic Boarding School in Bayan Purworejo, a unique characteristic was found among the students at the boarding school. Among the diverse group of students at the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School, there are five categories of students within the boarding school, consisting of orphans, widows, the poor, orphaned widows, and the abandoned. Based on these categories, each student has their own distinct characteristics, behaviors, and psychological profiles. With various programs at the boarding school aimed at shaping and nurturing students to become complete human beings, the researcher identified an interesting program: the Qur'an memorization program.

The Qur'an memorization program targets one juz, starting with juz 30, which is easier to memorize. However, not all students have sufficient ability to memorize one juz per year. Therefore, not all students can meet the memorization target effectively. Students who fail to meet the memorization target are provided with a solution: guidance in reading the Qur'an for those who cannot yet read or memorize it (Alaudin & Firdaus, 2024). The Qur'an

Memorization program at the boarding school divides students into three classes to differentiate and facilitate competition among them. These classes are A1, A2, and B. A1 consists of seventh-grade students or those who cannot read the Qur'an, A2 consists of eighth- and ninth-grade students, and B consists of high school students. This class division facilitates students in memorizing the Qur'an.

In this memorization program, there are students who are quite extraordinary in memorizing the Qur'an. There was once a student who entered the boarding school unable to read the Qur'an at all and started with Iqra, but after being taught for a few months, the student was able to read the Qur'an and achieved the highest memorization among the students. This phenomenon piqued the researcher's interest to study it further. Through the Qur'an memorization program, students are also guided to develop their religious character so that the Qur'an they memorize is deeply ingrained and applied effectively in their daily lives.

Religious character in Islamic boarding schools is well-guided by instilling the obligatory traits of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the students. The Qur'an memorization program and religious character must be interconnected because a Qur'an memorizer must possess religious traits within themselves, not the other way around. Religious character which is used as the basis is based on AIK.

Al-Islam and Muhammadiyah (AIK) is an important component in the formation of Islamic character (Hermawan & Nasruddin, 2022). AIK is the spirit of the Muhammadiyah organization, which is the driving force of movement and the spirit of struggle. Therefore, AIK is always inherent in Muhammadiyah, especially in education. In Muhammadiyah education, AIK values cannot be separated from, in fact, these values are always present in learning. This is evidenced by the ISMUBA curriculum (Islam, Muhammadiyah, and Arabic) for elementary and secondary education. Even AIK values continue to be conveyed at the tertiary level. With these AIK values, the aim is to form learners, knowledgeable, faithful, pious, and progressive individuals. Therefore, these AIK values must be used as a basis for the formation of religious character. More broadly, the AIK-based religious character is not only designed for students, but educators, education personnel and even Muhammadiyah education stakeholders must understand, have and practice AIK in all aspects of life.

Qur'an memorization activities can shape a child's personality, including their religious character. Qur'an memorization activities tend to foster good religious character because religious character serves as a good measure of personality, especially in character formation. Thus, the habit of memorizing the Qur'an shapes children into individuals with good character, as religious character becomes ingrained in the personalities of those who participate in Qur'an memorization. In this observation, the researcher found an interesting aspect: how Islamic boarding schools guide their students to develop their religious character, the model of guidance or method of Qur'an memorization used for students in Islamic boarding schools, and how the model of Qur'an memorization guidance is applied in relation to religious character.

## METHOD

This study employed field research guided by a descriptive qualitative approach, allowing the researcher to conduct direct observation and achieve results closely aligned with the actual social conditions at the research site, following the principles of qualitative inquiry (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The research was specifically conducted at the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School in Jono Bayan, Purworejo. Data collection relied on a robust triangulation of methods: interviews were conducted with key personnel, including boarding school administrators responsible for overall management, Tahfidz supervisors, and the students themselves. Concurrently, observation focused specifically on documenting the routines and processes of the Tahfidzul Qur'an activities. Furthermore, documentation comprising written materials and images was gathered to provide essential supporting evidence and validate the insights gained from the interviews and observations. For data analysis, the process began with data reduction, which involved systematically selecting and simplifying the vast information obtained from informants. The subsequent step was data presentation, where the findings were structured into a descriptive narrative. The final stage involved data verification and conclusion drawing, a crucial process to establish the study's trustworthiness by connecting the theoretical frameworks to the empirical facts found in the field (Arikunto, 2014).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Memorizing the Qur'an as the Foundation of Faith and Religious Values

The habit of memorizing the Qur'an is a common practice or activity done to read and recite the words of Allah (the Qur'an) orally and understanding what is written in the Qur'an or the meaning of the contents of the Qur'an, which is a miracle revealed to the Prophet Muhammad SAW through the Angel Jibril to the Muslim community, which was transmitted mutawatir, and reading it is considered an act of worship and reward (Hidayati, 2020). The Qur'an as the holy book of Muslims must be believed as best as possible. Faith in the Qur'an is not just enough to believe that the Qur'an is the word of Allah. However, faith in the Qur'an must be continued by reading the Qur'an, understanding its meaning, memorizing it, practicing its contents and finally, a Muslim is able to teach it to others. that is the perfection of a Muslim's faith in the Qur'an. From this explanation, the level of memorizing the Qur'an is included in the best level of believing in the Qur'an.

The essence of religious values is a value that is an important aspect and has a significant influence on the relationship between other values (Farhan & Firdaus, 2024). Such as social values and religious values, which are directly related to *habluminallah* and *habluminannas* (Azhari & Firdaus., & Amin, 2023). Religious values originate from the direct teachings of Allah SWT. The Sharia teachings of Islam consist of several important teachings for humans. The function of the core teachings of Islam for humanity is to ensure the realization of human life in both the physical and spiritual realms, as well as in this world and the hereafter. The Islamic religious law consists of values of faith, values of morality, values of worship, and others. These are useful and form the core teachings of importance for Muslims in their worldly lives (Ummah, 2020).

### The Concept of Character and Islamic Boarding School Education

According to Aristotle, character is someone who has positive attitudes and behaviors in daily life, both towards oneself and others. Therefore, it is important for someone to have character so that life has noble qualities oriented towards the scope of life. Character has three interrelated parts, namely moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral behavior. These three components are interconnected and directly related to life, guiding the formation of moral maturity, such as the ability to distinguish between positive and negative and create a positive

scope. In the formation of children's character, three important components are needed, namely moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. These are necessary in order to nurture, understand, and feel the scope of goodness (Lickona, 2022).

Since its establishment, the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School has had the goal of nurturing children for the future of the community and the nation. To this day, the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School remains strong with all of its excellent programs, including the Tahfidzul Qur'an and Al Islam Kepesantrenan programs. The purpose of these programs is to educate and shape the religious character and noble moral values of children, aiming to cultivate them into true Muslim individuals in line with the objectives of Muhammadiyah. In addition, the students come from various cultures, languages, economic and social backgrounds. In fact, the students come not only from Muhammadiyah elementary schools but also from public elementary schools.

### **Implementation of the Tahfidzul Qur'an Program at Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School**

Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School remains firmly established to this day and manages its funds effectively. Funding for the boarding school's needs comes from donors and the formation of a board of commissioners. The board of commissioners is established to manage the boarding school's financial needs, which are carried out door-to-door and also to seek donors. Therefore, the boarding school's needs are fully met thanks to the generosity of those who contribute their resources to the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School. The generosity of these donors typically increases during Ramadan. Not only do they help fund iftar (breaking the fast), but some also contribute to building construction or educational facilities and infrastructure. Some even donate to teachers and caretakers of Islamic boarding schools.

The Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School has a flagship program called Tahfidzul Qur'an. The Tahfidzul Qur'an program at the boarding school aims to cultivate religious character in children. The Tahfidzul Qur'an program is conducted from Monday to Friday, and on Saturday and Sunday, there are review and collective recitation activities to strengthen the memorization of the Qur'anic verses. The memorization program is divided into three classes: Class A1 for seventh-grade students or those who cannot yet read the Qur'an, Class A2 for eighth- to ninth-grade students, and Class B for high school students.



The Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School uses a habit-forming model for this program. Under the habit-forming model, students are required to recite at least five verses of their memorized Qur'anic verses during each tahfidz session to the assigned supervisor. To strengthen the students' memorization, the supervisors and instructors also require them to engage in review and collective recitation outside of the Tahfidzul Qur'an schedule, specifically on Saturdays and Sundays. Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School aims for students to memorize at least one juz per year. However, if they have not completed it or face difficulties, an individualized approach will be provided. Individualized approaches are useful for guiding and motivating students who are unable to memorize or read the Qur'an, helping them improve their memorization and reading skills. Students who meet their memorization targets within one year are awarded a graduation ceremony, a certificate of completion, and school supplies to motivate them to improve their memorization daily.

As part of the Qur'an memorization program aimed at fostering religious character and maintaining the quality of memorization, the supervisors and instructors provide AIK (Islamic Education) lessons to the students daily. They also apply religious values and assess religious character indicators. The religious values taught at Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School are exemplary values. These values are very important because the children or students will look up to the most mature figures, namely the caregivers and teachers. The second value is faith, where the students are taught to always believe in and fear Allah SWT in order to become true Muslims. Third, moral values. We may assume that children left at a boarding school have poor moral values and diverse backgrounds, but the boarding school strives to nurture and guide students to develop good moral values and form religious character that is useful in daily life. Fourth, trustworthiness. at this boarding school, students are taught to be trustworthy in achieving their memorization targets over the course of a year, and they are also often entrusted with leading religious discussions in the community. Lastly, the value of worship. Of course, in addition to good character and moral values, students must also develop good worship habits to cultivate religious character and moral values. Like the caregivers and teachers, they always encourage students to perform obligatory prayers, Sunnah prayers, memorizing the Qur'an, reading the Qur'an, and other such practices (Romadon, 2020). These activities aim to have a positive impact on the



Students who memorize the Qur'an, helping them understand the true purpose of memorizing the Qur'an and its benefits.

### **The Role of the Tahfidzul Qur'an Program in Shaping Religious Character**

Religious character development in the Tahfidzul Qur'an program involves teaching students the indicators of religious character values so that they can be implemented in daily life, such as obedience and adherence to Allah SWT's commands, including following His commands and avoiding His prohibitions, obeying one's parents by speaking politely and showing respect to them, having a strong faith that is not influenced by teachings prohibited by Allah SWT, maintaining good relationships with Allah SWT and fellow human beings by being devout to Allah SWT and behaving kindly towards others, always having good intentions towards one another, and possessing good character and trustworthiness (Suwandi & Widodo, 2021). Therefore, the relationship between the tahfidz program and the formation of religious character is interrelated or can be said to be the foundation of memorizing the Qur'an so that the sacred verses that are memorized can truly enter the heart and character.

### **Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of the Tahfidzul Qur'an Program**

The Qur'an Memorization Program in shaping the religious character of students at the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School has supporting factors and inhibiting factors. Supporting factors include the director and board of directors consistently providing full support to the supervisors and teachers to continuously develop the tahfidz program aimed at fostering religious character. Additionally, the board of directors and director provide significant support and full responsibility to the supervisors and teachers in nurturing the students' moral character and conducting evaluations every three months or as needed based on the boarding school's conditions (Faridi, 2010). This supporting factor is crucial because educators and education personnel are stakeholders who fully support the Qur'an recitation program. In fact, students are often invited to recite verses from the Qur'an at several events in Jono Bayan village. This is certainly a testament to the synergy between the two parties.

The inhibiting factors are as follows: first, the time constraint between the supervisors and the students, as both are still pursuing their education in schools; second, the shortage of supervisors, which results in their inability to effectively oversee the students in the boarding

School; and third, the fatigue of the students, which leads to their reluctance to participate in activities. The first inhibiting factor was addressed by increasing supervision time. The second inhibiting factor was addressed by empowering students who were serving at the Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Jono Islamic Boarding School. As for the third inhibiting factor, the teacher continued to encourage the students to remain enthusiastic despite their fatigue.

The Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School implements Qur'an memorization training through daily practice with the Qur'an during the times of Qobla Maghrib and Ba'da Isya, accompanied by supervisors. In the memorization process, students are targeted to memorize one juz of the Qur'an in one year, and each day, students are required to recite at least five verses of the Qur'an. They are encouraged to listen to one another to perfect their memorization before submitting it to the assigned teacher, and they are also accustomed to reviewing the Qur'an before and after memorization. At Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School, the Qur'an memorization program is conducted daily during the time before Maghrib and after Isya prayers. Students read, memorize, and review the Qur'an together. The purpose of the Qur'an memorization program is to help students remember and strengthen the verses they have memorized, making it easier for them to recite them. The habit of engaging with the Qur'an has a significant impact on the religious character of the students. This is because those who engage with the holy book of the Qur'an will improve their personal qualities and develop religious and other character values. This is in line with the results of research (Hidayati, 2020).

The Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School, as part of its Tahfidzul Qur'an program, will give rewards or awards to students who have achieved their memorization targets. The award for students who have graduated is a graduation ceremony. Students who have graduated will be given a certificate of completion for meeting their memorization targets, as well as school supplies. The aim is to motivate students to maintain their enthusiasm for memorizing the Qur'an (Cahyono et al., 2019). The Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School uses an individual approach by the teaching staff to nurture and guide students who are unable to read and memorize the Qur'an, thereby failing to meet the memorization targets set by the supervisors and teaching staff.

The development of religious character is used as an important aspect in educating children's character because religious values are automatically instilled in children's identities

and are relevant to their daily lives. This is in line with research (Wulandari, 2020). On the development of religious character through Tahfidzul Qur'an, which is also carried out at the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School. It is known that children in Islamic boarding schools have diverse backgrounds (Firdausyi, 2017). Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School has a method for educating religious character in children, one of which is the Qur'an memorization program. The method used by Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School in nurturing religious character in children is by instilling religious values and religious indicators in them.

Religious values taught at the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School: The first is value of exemplary behavior. The value of exemplary behavior is an important part of human character, because at this Islamic boarding school, the elders or those who are treated as adults have good morals and behavior that can be emulated by the students (Sari et al., 2023). For example, the caregivers and teachers do not smoke because they are in the process of educating children, and children will observe and emulate the attitudes and behaviors of their parents or those who are regarded as adults at the boarding school. This aligns with research findings (Naziyah et al., 2021). Exemplary values are the foundation of student education. A teacher must demonstrate good role models before teaching values to their students. Once a teacher has established a good role model, they can then be accustomed to good practices, followed by motivation and advice, and finally, rewards or punishments, along with enrichment.

The second is moral values based on the background of the students in the boarding school, before entering, they had moral values below average or could be called "troublemakers." However, after entering the boarding school, the children are educated and taught how to have good moral values, both toward Allah and toward fellow human beings (Muslih, 2018). In assessing the moral values of the students, the boarding school establishes rules related to the moral values of the children in their daily lives. These moral values can change according to student behavior, provided that the changes do not cause harm to either party, and these changes aim to continue to instill ethical values and good habits in the Islamic boarding school.

The third is worship values, worship values represent human obedience to Allah SWT. The boarding school also teaches its students to maintain their worship practices, such

as performing congregational prayers, observing voluntary fasts, performing voluntary prayers, and familiarizing themselves with the Qur'an. These practices are aimed at shaping the religious character of the children, instilling religious values in their personalities (Ahsanulkhaq, 2019). Of these three values, obedience to worship will foster and teach good morals. For example, the five daily prayers teach discipline and punctuality, while fasting teaches patience and tenacity.

The fourth is trustworthiness values. Trustworthiness, etymologically, means being trustworthy, while in the educational context, it means being responsible. The boarding school nurtures and teaches students to always be responsible for the tasks assigned by their guardians and teachers, such as competing to achieve memorization targets and adhering to the rules at the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Boarding School. These four values have become an inseparable whole, and they have also become the identity of the Darul Arqam Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School. A closer look reveals that these four values are currently diminishing. The fourth value, trust, is the most difficult to find today.

The Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School teaches and applies religious character indicators because individuals with religious character can be identified through several religious character indicators, as explained by (Rianawati, 2014) : the first is, obedience and Faith in Allah SWT Muslims who are considered faithful are those who always obey Allah SWT's commands, believe in Him, and do not associate partners with Him. This includes performing prayers on time, fulfilling their obligations, and safeguarding the holy Qur'an. This aligns with the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School's program in fostering religious character.

The second is obedience and respect toward parents A child born into this world has a duty toward their parents, which is to be dutiful and obedient to them (Mujizatullah, 2018). For instance, at the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School, students are educated in moral conduct toward their parents and others. The third is maintaining good relationships with Allah and fellow humans in social interactions humans were created by Allah SWT to worship Him, so as Allah's creatures, they must maintain good relationships with Allah SWT and with society. The boarding school teaches how to maintain good relationships with Allah SWT and society. And the fourth is Possessing good moral character

Children residing in Islamic boarding schools undoubtedly have diverse backgrounds; however, the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School has a flagship program, one of which is the Qur'an Memorization Program, aimed at fostering religious character in children.

Based on the explanation of the Qur'an memorization training model in shaping the religious character of students at the Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School, it can be concluded that the model used by the boarding school in the Qur'an memorization program is effective and meets the memorization targets set. This is because the students, while residing at the boarding school, consistently meet the memorization targets assigned to them. Although some students initially could not read or meet their memorization targets within one year or one semester, they can be educated and nurtured effectively, enabling them to develop the ability to read the Qur'an and achieve the memorization targets set by the boarding school. Therefore, the Qur'an memorization program can cultivate students' love for the Qur'an. Therefore, it can cultivate and shape the religious character of students in their daily lives (Firdaus, 2023).

## CONCLUSION

The Tahfidzul Qur'an program at Darul Arqom Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School focuses on three models: daily habituation (e.g., minimum five-verse recitation and collective review), rewards for meeting annual memorization targets, and individualized attention for struggling students. The program aims to cultivate religious character by instilling Islamic values like exemplary behavior and morality. Key supporting factors include strong management support and full responsibility delegation to supervisors. However, the program is hindered by a supervisor shortage, time constraints due to concurrent education, and student fatigue and lack of motivation.

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