

Innovation in Islamic Education Management Through the Tahfidz Program at SMPN 3 Karangmoncol, Purbalingga

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Abstract: *This study aims to describe how the Tahfidz Class Program is implemented at SMPN 3 Karangmoncol. The background of this program lies in the negative perception among some community members who consider public schools to lack quality in religious education, despite the surrounding community being highly religious. The implementation of this program is both a response to community needs and an effort to improve the quality of education in a school located far from the city center. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. The research subjects include the school principal, program mentors, students, and parents involved in the program. Based on data analysis, the program is carried out in four phases: Tasmi' (listening to memorization), Tahsin (improving recitation), Tahfidz (memorization), and Muraja'ah (revision of memorization). The program takes place three times a week in the morning before regular classes begin. Reporting is conducted digitally through the Google Form platform. Supporting factors of the program include effective management practices across planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. The support of the principal and parents, teacher competence, and the use of appropriate technology have all motivated students to participate actively in the program. However, challenges still exist, such as the limited number of Tahfidz teachers, the lack of specific training for them, and weak internet access. The program has shown positive impacts, including the development of students' religious character and the improved public image of the school as one with quality religious education. One of the indicators of success is the increasing number of new student enrollments in the current academic year. This program is considered successful in enhancing educational quality based on Islamic values in a remote school setting.*

Keywords: *Quality Management, Remote School, Tahfidz Class*

Introduction

SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol, a school located in a remote area of Purbalingga Regency, faces various challenges typical of education in rural areas. Based on initial observations and interviews with the principal, it was found that there was concern among the community about the lack of

religious guidance in public schools. In fact, the surrounding community is known to be very religious, with the majority being members of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). The stigma that public schools do not provide sufficient religious education has become an issue that affects the community's trust in schools.

Furthermore, social phenomena among teenagers in this village show an increase in the negative influence of promiscuity and excessive cell phone use. The lack of organized religious activities makes students more vulnerable to behavioral deviations. In this context, the principal and teachers conducted institutional reflection and formulated quality improvement strategies with a religious values-based approach. One of the innovative efforts launched was the *Tahfidz* Class Program as a form of strengthening religious character education and responding to the needs and expectations of the community.

This effort is based on a SWOT analysis which shows that although the school has weaknesses in the allocation of time for religious education, it has strengths in the form of the commitment of the leadership and teachers to innovate. External threats come from an unhealthy social environment for teenagers, but there are opportunities in the form of strong parental support and a religious culture within the community. Therefore, the *Tahfidz* Class Program is not only an alternative solution, but also a managerial strategy to address the quality crisis and build a positive image of the school in the community. In addition to the *Tahfidz* Class Program, SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol has also developed other religious innovations that support the improvement of education quality, namely the *Amaliyah Tahlil* Program.¹ This program is a new breakthrough that began in the current semester as a response to the view of some people who believe that junior high school students are not yet capable of leading *tahlil*. To address this challenge, the school initiated the *Amaliyah Tahlil* activity as part of strengthening religious values and shaping students' social and religious character.

This activity is attended by male students and is held once a month every Friday as part of the Friday Imtaq (Faith and Piety) activities. It starts at 7:15 a.m. and ends at 9:55 a.m. and is generally held on the school grounds. The *tahlil* practice is carried out by reciting *tahlil* together, guided by specially invited community leaders, so that students can learn directly from competent figures. Meanwhile, female students participate in women's activities at the same time. In addition to *tahlil* and women's activities, students also always perform the Dzuhur prayer in congregation. The presence of the *Amaliyah Tahlil* and women's activities programs is an alternative to strengthening religiosity in addition to the *Tahfidz* Class, while complementing the school's efforts to build the quality of education based on Islamic values in remote school environments.

¹ Kanthi Tri Setyawati (Kepala Sekolah SMPN 3 Karangmoncol), wawancara oleh peneliti, 22 Mei 2025.

The quality of education is a reflection of the quality of the educational process and outcomes that are able to meet or even exceed the expectations of students, parents, and the community.² In the context of management, the quality of education is not only seen from academic achievement alone, but also includes aspects of service, character development, curriculum relevance, and the efficiency and effectiveness of educational governance. Educational quality management is a systematic approach to managing and improving the quality of education on an ongoing basis. This concept refers to the principles of Total Quality Management (TQM), in which every element within an educational organization, including educators, students, educational staff, and management, is actively involved in the quality improvement process. The goal is to create a learning environment that is responsive, participatory, and oriented toward customer satisfaction, in this case students, parents, and the community.

According to Wess-Burnham (1997)³, Quality management in educational institutions encompasses all organizational functions that are integrated into a comprehensive philosophy. This philosophy is based on the principles of teamwork, increased productivity, sustainable performance, and customer satisfaction orientation. In practice, quality management emphasizes the importance of self-evaluation, improvement of the learning process, and the use of data for appropriate decision-making in order to improve the quality of educational services. Quality management is also directed at the implementation of nationally and internationally applicable educational standards as part of efforts to improve the competitiveness of educational institutions. In this case, schools as learning organizations need to continue to innovate, adapt to the needs of the times, and ensure that every educational process carried out leads to continuous quality improvement.

From an Islamic educational perspective, educational management is not solely focused on academic achievement, but also includes strengthening faith, morals, spirituality, and life skills based on Islamic teachings. The quality of Islamic education aims to shape a perfect human being, namely an individual who has a balance between intellectual, emotional, and skill abilities, based on the values of monotheism.⁴ The implementation of this principle is evident at SMPN 3 Karangmoncol through the implementation of religious programs such as *Tahfidz* Classes and *Amaliyah Tahlil*. Based on field observations, the *Tahfidz* Class has been attended by 78 students under the guidance of two hafidz teachers, while *Amaliyah Tahlil* is held regularly every

² Amiruddin Siahaan et al., "Upaya Meningkatkan Mutu Pendidikan Di Indonesia," *Journal on Education* 5, no. 3 (2023): 6933–41, <https://doi.org/10.31004/joe.v5i3.1480>.

³ Sukirman Sukirman and Achadi Budi Santosa. Suyono, *Manajemen Pendidikan Mutu Terpadu*, 2023.

⁴ Iskandar Zulkarnain et al., "Konsep Mutu Pendidikan Dalam Perspektif Manajemen Pendidikan Islam" 04, no. 02 (2025): 151–56.

Friday and attended by all male students. These activities not only strengthen students' ability to read and memorize the Qur'an, but also train them in leadership and social responsibility in a religious context. Therefore, the *Tahfidz* class program at SMPN 3 Karangmoncol is not only seen as a strategy for improving quality, but also as an implementation of the principles of Islamic education management based on Qur'anic values.

As an alternative to the *Tahfidz* Class Program, schools can also consider international benchmarking models as suggested in the study Enhancing Islamic Education in the Merdeka Curriculum through International Benchmarking by Shalihin (2023)⁵, which shows that the application of benchmarking, whether internal, external, strategic, process, performance, or functional benchmarking, can strengthen the quality of Islamic education and make it more competitive at the national and global levels. Thus, *Amaliyah Tahlil* is not only a local program, but can also be developed in such a way as to meet the Islamic education quality standards recommended in international benchmarking literature. The quality of education is not an instant result, but a dynamic process that requires long-term commitment from all parties involved. The quality management approach is a strategic foundation for creating educational institutions that are superior, adaptive, and relevant to future challenges.⁶

In the field of education, quality can be defined as a combination of learning processes and outcomes that include inputs, implementation (processes), and outputs. The quality of education is determined by the extent to which the education system is able to respond to the needs of society and equip individuals with the skills to face life's challenges and obtain decent employment after completing their studies. However, the education system in Indonesia still faces three major challenges that affect the quality of education, namely: (1) low levels of equitable access to education among the population, (2) weak education management systems, and (3) suboptimal management and quality of education itself. Of these three challenges, issues related to education quality are the most dominant and have a major impact on the national education system as a whole.⁷

However, the implementation of educational quality management in remote schools faces different challenges compared to schools in developed areas. Various studies have shown that remote schools often face limitations

⁵ Rahmat Ryadhush Shalihin, "Enhancing the Islamic Education in Kurikulum Merdeka through International Benchmarking: A Transdisciplinary Study," *Tarbawi: Jurnal Keilmuan Manajemen Pendidikan* 9, no. 01 (2023): 1-16, <https://doi.org/10.32678/tarbawi.v9i01.7985>.

⁶ Sulis Rokhmawanto, *Buku Deming*, n.d.

⁷ Aulia Rachma Dinayanti et al., "Analisis Tantangan Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan Pada Pembelajaran Sekolah Dasar," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Dan Sosial Humaniora* 3, no. 9 (2024): 627-36, <https://doi.org/https://bajangjournal.com/index.php/JPDSh>.

in educational infrastructure, with many remote areas lacking schools, having overcrowded classrooms, and substandard building conditions. In addition, limited human resources are a serious problem. Remote areas often lack trained and experienced teachers, especially for specialized skills, which affects the quality of the curriculum and teaching. Access and mobility challenges are also significant. Difficult geographical conditions and limited transportation make it difficult for students to reach school and reduce parental involvement. Finally, technological limitations and lack of digital access remain obstacles. Minimal telecommunications infrastructure and a lack of technological devices hinder the implementation of digital learning, widening the digital divide.⁸

This condition is also experienced by SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol, located in a remote area of Purbalingga Regency. Based on observations, this school faces challenges in providing religious teachers and adequate learning facilities. However, the community's stigma against public schools, which are considered less religious, has motivated the school to introduce innovations through the *Tahfidz* Class program. This program was initiated by the principal as a strategic solution to strengthen religious education while improving the school's image and quality in the community.

Therefore, the *Tahfidz* Class Program is considered a wise choice to strengthen students' moral and spiritual foundations while improving the community's perception of the school. In general, this program has two main objectives, namely short-term and long-term objectives. The short-term objective is to improve students' ability to memorize the Qur'an so that they have an adequate foundation and knowledge of religion. Meanwhile, the long-term objective is to shape students' religious character so that they are able to resist negative environmental influences and improve their religious awareness. Thus, this program is expected to contribute to improving the overall quality of education.

The impact of *Tahfidz* programs on education has been discussed in several previous studies, including: First, research by Himda Iqlima and Ali Mahsun (2022) at MI Islamiyah Ngoro Jombang⁹ which share a common focus, namely researching the implementation of the *Tahfidz* Class Program as an effort to improve the quality of education, particularly in the aspect of Al-Qur'an education. Both emphasized that the *Tahfidz* program not only improves students' memorization skills, but also shapes their religious

⁸ Safiq Maulido, Popi Karmijah, and Pendidikan Luar Sekolah, "Upaya Meningkatkan Pendidikan Masyarakat Di Daerah Terpencil Vinanda Rahmi," *Jurnal Sadewa: Pembelajaran Dan Ilmu Sosial* 2, no. 1 (2024): 3021-7377, <https://doi.org/10.61132/sadewa.v2i1.488>.

⁹ Himda Iqlima and Ali Mahsun, "Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan Al Quran Melalui Program Kelas Tahfidz Di Mi Islamiyah Ngoro Jombang," *Al-Adawat : Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* 1, no. 01 (2022): 40-49, <https://doi.org/10.33752/aladawat.v1i01.2246>.

character and discipline, and contributes to their overall academic achievement. In both madrasah and public school studies, this program involves the active participation of school principals, supervising teachers, students, and support from parents, which are indicators of the success of the *Tahfidz* program. Both used qualitative approaches, with data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews, and documentation. However, there are a number of differences that make this research unique. Himda Iqlima's research was conducted in a madrasah environment that is religiously based and culturally supportive of *Tahfidz* learning, and has been integrated into the curriculum of institutions under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Meanwhile, this study was conducted in public schools located in remote areas that structurally have no obligation to provide *Tahfidz* education because they are under the Ministry of Education and Culture. This context presents its own challenges, ranging from the limited number of *Tahfidz* teachers, the absence of an official *Tahfidz* curriculum, to the limited time in the formal learning schedule.

Second, research by Adril (2025) in the 3T (Underdeveloped, Frontier, and Outermost) Regions.¹⁰ Both studies share similarities in their focus on the Al-Qur'an memorization program as an important instrument in improving the quality of education based on Islamic values. Both use a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through interviews, observation, and documentation. In addition, both studies were conducted in contexts with limitations, both geographically and in terms of educational infrastructure, namely in remote areas and in communities with limited access to formal educational facilities. Both this study and Adril's thesis highlight the importance of community involvement in the success of memorization programs. Adril's research shows the support of religious leaders and local governments in the formation of *Kampung Qur'ani*, while this study shows how the synergy between schools and parents can create a religious atmosphere that supports the students' memorization process. Both also emphasize the importance of methods and strategies in the *Tahfidz* learning process that are tailored to the characteristics of the students and their social environment. However, there are a number of significant differences that also constitute the novelty of this study. Adril's research focuses on the development of a *Tahfidz* learning model as part of a socio-religious movement to form *Kampung Qur'ani* in the 3T region. The context is more oriented towards community-based non-formal education centered at the *Tahfidz* House. Meanwhile, this study places the *Tahfidz* program in the context of formal education, namely in public schools (junior high schools), which structurally and curricularly do not have an obligation to provide in-depth religious education like *madrasahs* or Islamic boarding schools.

¹⁰ Direktorat Program Pascasarjana and Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, "Model Pembelajaran Tahfidz Al- Qur'an Dalam Membentuk Kampung Qur'ani Di Wilayah 3t," 2025.

Third, Analysis of the Strategy for Improving Education Quality Through the Tajdied Method *Tahfidz* Program at MI Muhammadiyah 21 Kapas Bojonegoro" by Muhammad Yusron and Muhammad Tamyiz,¹¹ Both studies highlight the importance of the *Tahfidzul Qur'an* Program as a strategy for improving the quality of education. In both madrasahs and public schools, the *Tahfidz* program is seen as an effort to shape students' religious character and morals, as well as to improve the overall quality of learning. Both studies used a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through interviews, observation, and documentation, as well as Miles and Huberman's data analysis model.

In addition, in both studies, the implementation of the *Tahfidz* program involved planning, learning processes, evaluation, and the involvement of various parties such as teachers, principals, and parents. However, there were fundamental differences between the two that demonstrated the novelty of this study. Yusron and Tamyiz's research was conducted in the environment of MI Muhammadiyah, an Islamic-based educational institution that has a strong orientation towards religious education and has, from the outset, placed Al-Qur'an learning as an integral part of the curriculum. The *Tahfidz* program uses a special method called tajdied, which combines reading, singing, storytelling, and kinesthetic techniques such as clapping to distinguish between long and short mad readings. Evaluation is conducted continuously and classically, with full support from the Tajdied Institution of the East Java Muhammadiyah Regional Leadership.

Meanwhile, this study was conducted at SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol, a public junior high school located in a remote area that is not a religious educational institution. This condition shows a fundamental difference from previous studies, which were generally conducted in Islamic-based institutions such as madrasahs or Islamic boarding schools, where the *Tahfidz* program has become an integral part of the curriculum. A research gap exists in the context of implementing *Tahfidz* programs in non-religious public schools that have limited resources and do not yet have a strong religious tradition. Therefore, this study attempts to fill this gap by examining how the innovative *Tahfidz* Class program can be a strategy for improving the quality of education in remote schools.

The implementation of the *Tahfidz* Class Program at SMPN 3 Karangmoncol differs from previous studies that focused on madrasahs or pesantren-based areas. This program is implemented in public schools whose curriculum is not based on religion. This shows that *Tahfidz* learning can be integrated into the secular formal education system, even in remote schools with limited resources. The goal is not only to improve students'

¹¹ Muhammad Yusron and Muhammad Tamyiz, "Analisis Strategi Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan Melalui Program Tahfidz Metode Tajdied Di Mi Muhammadiyah 21 Kapas Bojonegoro," *Studia Religia : Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 2 (2022): 228-33, <https://doi.org/10.30651/sr.v6i2.14624>.

memorization of the Qur'an, but also to respond to the stigma of "schools lacking in religion" and prevent the negative influence of the community environment. On this basis, the researcher was interested in studying the *Tahfidz* Class Program in response to the challenges of educational quality in remote schools, namely SMPN 3 Karangmoncol.

This study was conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of the design and implementation of the *Tahfidz* program at SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol as part of a strategy to address the challenges of education quality in remote areas. This study also aims to explore the role of the program in improving the quality of education, particularly in the aspect of Islamic religious education; identify factors that support or hinder its implementation; and analyze its impact on character building among students, particularly in terms of discipline and religiosity, which are important indicators of educational quality.

Methods

This study uses descriptive field research with a qualitative approach. The objective is to study and understand the phenomenon comprehensively in its natural context, particularly in relation to the implementation and impact of the *Tahfidz* Class Program at SMPN 3 Karangmoncol. As explained by Luthfi and Wiza (2022)¹², Field research is a method that involves researchers going directly to the research location, whether it be a community, institution, or specific place, to conduct observations, interviews, and intensive data collection. In this way, researchers seek to understand the context of the problem, social dynamics, and cultural background. This method allows researchers to gain a comprehensive and contextual understanding of the situation being studied. As a result, the data produced is comprehensive, in-depth, and authentic, in line with the characteristics of qualitative research that emphasizes the meaning and understanding of the subject's experience.

This study uses three main techniques in data collection, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. First, observation is a data collection method conducted by directly observing activities, behaviors, and situations that occur in the field without intervention from the researcher. In this context, the researcher is physically present at the research location to record all relevant phenomena, both verbal and nonverbal. Observations can be participatory, where researchers are involved in the activities being observed, or non-participatory, where researchers are only observers. This technique is useful for obtaining natural and contextual data, especially regarding social interactions, communication patterns, or dynamics that are not always revealed through interviews or documentation.

¹² Nani Isnawati and Mokhamad Choirul Hudha, "Implementasi Program Tahfidz Al-Qur'an Di SMA Muhammadiyah Pacitan," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 14, no. 1 (2024): 9–21, <https://doi.org/10.38073/jpi.v14i1.1492>.

Second, interviews are a data collection technique conducted through direct conversation between researchers and informants who are considered to have knowledge or experience related to the research topic. Interviews in qualitative research are in-depth, flexible, and open, allowing researchers to explore the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of subjects extensively. This process allows researchers to understand the meaning behind the informant's statements and capture the social and cultural context that influences their perspectives. Interviews can be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured depending on the needs and approach of the research.

Third, documentation is a data collection technique that involves collecting and analyzing written documents, both official and unofficial, that are relevant to the research focus. Documents can include diaries, school records, activity reports, correspondence, brochures, photos, videos, written policies, and curricula. Through documentation, researchers can trace historical records, support or confirm findings from observations and interviews, and obtain objective and permanent data. This technique is very useful for obtaining longitudinal data or data that cannot be obtained directly from the research subjects. By combining these three techniques, researchers can obtain comprehensive, in-depth, and valid data, enabling them to present a complete and comprehensive picture of the phenomenon being studied.¹³

The subjects in this study were students participating in the *Tahfidz* Class Program at SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol. They were the focus of this study because they were directly involved in the *Tahfidz* learning process and served as a benchmark for the success of the program. The subjects of this study include the principal, *Tahfidz* supervising teachers, and parents of students. These three groups were selected purposively because they are directly involved and play a strategic role in the implementation, supervision, and evaluation of the *Tahfidz* class program. The principal acts as the policy maker and main person responsible for the continuity of the *Tahfidz* program at the school. The principal's perspective is needed to understand the vision, managerial strategies, and institutional support provided to support this program. *Tahfidz* teachers are technical implementers who interact directly with students in the process of learning to memorize the Qur'an.

The experience and pedagogical approach used by the supervising teachers are an important part of describing how this program is implemented in practice. Meanwhile, parents are involved because they are partners in guiding their children at home, while also acting as informal observers of their children's *tahfiz* abilities. Parents' views are important in assessing the extent to which the program has an impact on children's learning habits, character, and motivation.

¹³ Ardiansyah, Risnita, and M. Syahrani Jailani, "Teknik Pengumpulan Data Dan Instrumen Penelitian Ilmiah Pendidikan Pada Pendekatan Kualitatif Dan Kuantitatif," *Jurnal IHSAN: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 2 (2023): 1-9, <https://doi.org/10.61104/ihsan.v1i2.57>.

Through the involvement of various subjects, this study is expected to be able to holistically describe the dynamics of the implementation of the *Tahfidz* class program, starting from the aspects of planning, implementation, to evaluation and its impact on students from various perspectives. After all data has been collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, the next step in the research process is data analysis techniques.

Data analysis is a systematic process of organizing, processing, and interpreting data in order to gain a deep understanding of the phenomenon being studied. The main purpose of this analysis is to identify patterns, themes, and meanings hidden in the data, so that it can comprehensively answer the research questions and objectives. In this study, data analysis techniques were carried out through three main stages as described by Miles and Huberman, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification.

The data reduction stage is the process of selecting and simplifying raw data obtained from the field. Researchers select relevant information, group data based on specific categories, and summarize important findings to facilitate further analysis. This reduction aims to make the collected data more focused and not deviate from the research objectives. Next, in the data presentation stage, the summarized information is organized in a systematic and easy-to-understand form, such as in the form of descriptive narratives, tables, charts, or matrices. This stage allows researchers to see the relationships between pieces of information, compare informants, and find patterns or trends that emerge from the classified data.

The final stage is drawing conclusions and verification, which is the process of interpreting the meaning of the data presented to answer the research questions. At this stage, researchers reflect on all findings, look for hidden meanings, and test the validity of preliminary results through triangulation or cross-testing between data sources. The conclusions obtained are tentative and subject to change if new, stronger data is found, making the verification process crucial to ensuring the validity of the findings¹⁴ by applying these three stages systematically and continuously, the data analysis in this study is expected to produce valid, in-depth, and relevant findings with a focus on the implementation of the *Tahfidz* Class Program at SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol.

Results and Discussion

Planning is the initial stage in management, including in education. Good planning is crucial to the success of an education program. SMP Negeri

¹⁴ Perspektif Spradley and Miles Huberman, "Kajian Teoritis Tentang Teknik Analisis Data Dalam Penelitian Kualitatif : اما يهو قدالما دهج نم لولا ينتهج نم نوكي اطلخوا سابقلا : في اطلخوا نع زائر حلا جاتنلا تحص نم بجاو لا قداص فيضقب قدساف فيضق سبتلت نابف ننعلما فيحنا نم اماو لاق نا لنا 1 2 (2024): 77-84, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.52620/jomaa.v1i2.93>.

3 Karangmoncol, a school located about 23 kilometers from the center of Purbalingga Regency, faces considerable challenges in developing the quality of its education. One of them is the high expectations of the surrounding community that the school can develop religious education, especially Islam, even though it is a public school.

In order to meet the expectations of the community and overcome the negative stigma regarding weak religious values at SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol, the *Tahfidz* Class Program was developed. The planning process began with identifying the needs and expectations of the surrounding community regarding Islamic education. This was done through informal discussions between the school, parents, teachers, and community leaders. From these various communications, various proposals were analyzed using the SWOT approach. This analysis, which applies the situational analysis method, is used to evaluate four main aspects, namely Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. This method helps researchers obtain a comprehensive picture of the internal and external conditions that influence the success of a program.¹⁵

Based on the analysis, it was found that SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol has internal strengths in the form of leadership commitment from the principal. In addition, it has a resource in the form of a competent Islamic Education (PAI) teacher named Isnanto who is skilled in *Tahfidzul Qur'an*. There is also an Indonesian Language teacher who is competent in the field of *Tahfidzul Qur'an*. The background of this Indonesian language teacher is that he once taught *Tahfidz* at an orphanage called Sugiyono. These two teachers can be the main drivers of the Islamic Education quality improvement program at SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol.

The weaknesses identified are that schools and teachers have not had experience in developing special religious programs. Until now, the educational quality improvement programs developed by schools have not been directly related to improving students' religious character. From the external environment, opportunities have been identified in the form of strong support from parents and the community around the school for school quality improvement programs in the field of Islamic religious character.

Meanwhile, the identified threats include the stigma of some people who doubt the quality of Islamic education at SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol. In addition, there is competition with other educational institutions located around SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol, namely MTs Nu 04 Tamansari and Pondok Pesantren Darul Ulum.

Based on the SWOT analysis above, an idea emerged to develop a *Tahfidz* Class Program at SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol. This idea also adopted suggestions and input from the community through teachers. Furthermore,

¹⁵ Zuhud Suriono, "Analisis SWOT Dalam Identifikasi Mutu Pendidikan," *ALACRITY: Journal of Education* 1, no. 20 (2022): 94-103, <https://doi.org/10.52121/alacrity.v1i3.50>.

the principal held internal discussions with teachers who had competence and experience in the field of religion, especially those who were accustomed to coaching Al-Qur'an memorization. This discussion aims to assess the feasibility of the program, formulate an initial implementation concept, and map out the resources available to the school. Once the initial concept is finalized, the idea for the *Tahfidz* Class program is brought to a large meeting with the teachers' council and school committee, which is the strategic decision-making forum. In this forum, all stakeholders express their views, offer criticism and suggestions, and assess the potential benefits of the program for the school and students.

After reaching a collective agreement, the *Tahfidz* Class Program was officially established as one of the school's flagship programs starting in the 2023/2024 academic year. This program is intended not only as additional learning, but also as an instrument for improving the spiritual and character of students and enhancing the school's image as a formal school capable of improving the religious character of students.

Once the program has been established, the next step is to disseminate information to external stakeholders, particularly school committees and parents, as parties that play an important role in supporting the program's success. Dissemination is carried out using a persuasive and educational approach through various strategic moments, such as regular parent-teacher meetings, annual school committee meetings, and School Environment Introduction Period (MPLS) activities.

In addition, the active participation of *Tahfidz* class students in various school activities, such as farewell ceremonies, Islamic holidays, and religious competitions, is part of an effective socialization strategy. Through direct performances and real involvement of students in school activities, the existence of this program is not only introduced, but its results are also displayed in concrete terms. Thus, the success of students in memorizing and reading the Qur'an becomes tangible evidence that can build trust and enthusiasm from the wider community towards the continuity of the *Tahfidz* Class program.¹⁶

This program consists of four phases, namely *Tasmi'* (listening to memorization), *Tahsin* (reading improvement), *Tahfidz* (memorization), and *Muraja'ah* (memorization review). These four phases are designed to ensure that the memorization process is systematic and in accordance with the abilities of each student. From a technical standpoint, the school has set a schedule for the program to be implemented three times a week. It is held in the morning before the first class. This is designed so as not to interfere with formal lessons. The schedule has been determined taking into account the students' ability to attend school. Although SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol is

¹⁶ Kanthi Tri Setyawati (Kepala Sekolah SMPN 3 Karangmoncol), wawancara oleh peneliti, 22 Mei 2025.

located in a suburban area, the rate of students arriving late to school in the morning is relatively low. This means that students do not experience significant obstacles in attending and carrying out learning activities at school starting at 7:00 a.m.

To meet the challenges of administrative effectiveness, this program was designed with a student attendance system, learning curriculum, assessment, and reporting based on digital technology through the Google Forms platform. During the planning stage, the principal, Kanthi Tri Setyawati, provided tremendous support. She played an active role in formulating policies related to this program and allocated time for discussions and provided various school resources to support the program. With a gradual and systematic planning approach, the *Tahfidz* Class Program at SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol can be prepared very well and become an innovative program in order to improve the quality of education and enhance the school's image.

***Tahfidz* Class Program as a Strategy for Improving Education Quality.**

The *Tahfidz* Class Program at SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol not only focuses on increasing the quantity of students' Quran memorization, but also emphasizes improving the quality of reading and understanding of the memorized verses. This program is designed not only to pursue the number of juz memorized, but also to ensure that each recitation complies with the rules of tajwid, correct pronunciation of letters (makhraj), and appreciation of meaning. Therefore, the school has developed an internal curriculum tailored to the capabilities of its resources and the characteristics of its students, while still referring to the principles of Al-Qur'an learning commonly used in more established Islamic educational institutions.

The curriculum is structured in a gradual and systematic manner through four main stages, namely *Tasmi'*, *Tahsin*, *Tahfidz*, and *Muraja'ah*. Each stage complements the others and is designed to build students' competence in reading, memorizing, and maintaining their memorization of the Qur'an on an ongoing basis. The first stage is *Tasmi'*, which is the process where students actively recite their memorization by reading aloud the verses of the Qur'an that they have memorized to others, whether to their supervising teacher, peers, or *Tahfidz* group. In this context, students are also assigned to listen to each other's recitations in turn, creating a cooperative and mutually supportive learning environment. The main objective of this stage is to build students' confidence, while testing the accuracy of their memorization and recitation in front of others. *Tasmi'* is also an effective means of identifying recitation errors, such as mistakes in makhraj (pronunciation), application of tajwid rules, and clarity of articulation.

Through *Tasmi'* practice, students are guided to be more sensitive to small mistakes that are often overlooked in personal memorization, and can gradually correct and perfect their memorization. Through this process, the

quality of memorization is not only measured in terms of fluency, but also in terms of the purity of recitation in accordance with the rules of tajwid. In addition, the atmosphere of mutual listening and recitation in *Tasmi'* also instills the values of discipline, responsibility, and respect for the Qur'an, which are an important part of character building for students in this *Tahfidz* Class program.¹⁷

After students have mastered the correct pronunciation of the Hijaiyah letters through the *Tasmi'* stage, the learning process in the *Tahfidz* Class Program continues to the next stage, namely *Tahsin*. The *Tahsin* stage is a process of improving the recitation of the Qur'an in greater depth, with an emphasis on the aspects of tajwid quality, makhraj letters, length and shortness (*mad-qasr*), and the beauty of the verses. At this stage, the supervising teacher provides intensive guidance to each student to perfect their reading in accordance with the standards of tajwid and correct recitation. This process is carried out individually and in groups, using methods such as rereading, direct correction, and repeated training through reading examples from teachers or audio recordings. *Tahsin* is an important foundation before students proceed to the memorization stage so that their memorization is correct in terms of reading and has sharia value.¹⁸

Once students' reading skills are deemed adequate and fluent, they enter the *Tahfidz* stage, which is the core stage of the program, focusing on the process of memorizing verses from the Qur'an in stages according to individual abilities. At this stage, students are given daily or weekly memorization targets based on their individual abilities. The *Tahfidz* process emphasizes three main principles: consistency, intensive repetition, and mentoring. Consistency is built through a daily routine that integrates specific times for memorization. Repetition is done both independently and under guidance to strengthen long-term memory. The role of teachers is vital in providing technical guidance, motivation, and correction. In addition, the presence of peer tutors is also an important element in this stage, as they can serve as role models and emotional support for their friends.

After reaching a certain amount of memorization, students are directed to the *Muraja'ah* stage, which is the process of reviewing and maintaining what they have memorized. *Muraja'ah* is key to ensuring that what has been memorized is not lost or forgotten over time. This stage is no less important than the memorization process itself, because the quality of a Quran memorizer is not only measured by the amount of memorization, but also by how strong and stable the memorization is in the long term. In this stage, various supporting strategies are used, one of which is the *taqrir* method, which is the periodic and systematic repetition of memorization, both

¹⁷ mahmud salami Ulfah, Nurul Fajri, zulfatmi, "Pengaruh Penerapan *Tasmi'* Dalam Peningkatan Motivasi Menghafal Al-Qur'an Di Sd It Hafizul Ilmi Dan Sd Nurul Fikri Aceh Besar," *Mudarrisuna* 13, no. 4 (2023): 528-39.

¹⁸ Sugiyono (Guru Pembina Tahfidz), Observasi oleh peneliti, 22 Mei 2025.

individually and in groups. In addition, in the muroja'ah process, based on observation results, teachers also begin to introduce the use of artificial intelligence-based technology, such as the Tarteel AI application, which can help students monitor errors in memorization independently. According to the supervising teacher, this application is very helpful because it allows students to identify their mistakes in memorization anytime and anywhere, even without the guidance of a teacher or friend.

To strengthen the *Muraja'ah* process, peer groups were also formed, in which students with better memorization skills were assigned as tutors for their classmates. This system is not only effective in strengthening students' memorization, but also encourages collaboration, caring, and a spirit of learning together. Interactions between students in these groups create an active, participatory learning atmosphere that supports the values of ukhuwah islamiyah (Islamic brotherhood). Through the four stages – *Tasmi'*, *Tahsin*, *Tahfidz*, and *Muraja'ah*—the *Tahfidz* Class Program is expected to produce students who are not only able to memorize the Qur'an, but also read it correctly, maintain their memorization well, and make the Qur'an a guide for their daily lives.

This program is in line with Al-Ghazali's thinking, which emphasizes the importance of balance between intellectual and spiritual dimensions in the educational process.¹⁹ According to Al-Ghazali, ideal education is holistic education, which integrates knowledge (rational knowledge) with morals and spirituality (moral and spiritual values). He strongly criticized educational systems that only emphasize rationality without spiritual reinforcement, because this will produce individuals who are intellectually intelligent but morally dry. Conversely, he also rejects education that focuses only on spiritual aspects without an intellectual foundation, as this will hinder understanding of the reality of the world and holistic personal development.

In this context, the *Tahfidz* Class program provides space for students to develop both simultaneously. Students are not only guided to memorize, but also to understand the meaning of the verses of the Qur'an they are learning, including aspects of tajwid, makhraj, and simple interpretation.²⁰ This strengthens the cognitive aspect. On the other hand, values such as sincerity, discipline, politeness, and responsibility for memorization tasks strengthen the character and spirituality of students in their daily lives.

The implementation of the *Tahfidz* Class Program at SMP Negeri 3 Karangmoncol is designed effectively so as not to interfere with core learning activities, while still providing optimal time for students to focus on

¹⁹ Kholili Hasib and Neneng Uswatun Khasanah, "The Integration of Rationality and Spirituality: Imam Al-Ghazali's Experience through Ta'lim Rabbani Approach in Acquiring Knowledge," *Afkaruna: Indonesian Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Studies* 21, no. 1 (2025): 65–83, <https://doi.org/10.18196/afkaruna.v21i1.25377>.

²⁰ Salwa (Salah satu peserta program Kelas Tahfidz), Wawancara oleh peneliti, 22 Mei 2025.

memorizing the Qur'an. This program is held three times a week, specifically on Tuesdays to Thursdays, starting at 7:15 a.m. to 7:45 a.m., before the start of regular classes. The morning time slot was chosen based on psychological and pedagogical considerations, as the morning atmosphere tends to be calmer and students' minds are still fresh, thus supporting the memorization process that requires high concentration.

Participants in this program are all students from grades VII to IX, provided that they are fluent in reading the Qur'an. There is no formal selection process to determine student eligibility for the program. Instead, teachers directly observe students' ability to read the Qur'an in daily activities, such as during congregational prayers, religious activities, or Islamic education lessons. This reflects an inclusive approach based on mapping students' natural abilities.

This program is guided by two teachers from SMPN 3 Karangmoncol, namely an Islamic Education (PAI) teacher and an Indonesian Language teacher. Although they come from two different subjects, both are religious figures who play a strategic role in the community and have a background and experience in *Tahfidz* coaching. This strengthens the quality of the program's implementation because the teachers are not only academically competent, but also have moral and spiritual authority that is recognized by students and the community.

In order to integrate technology and provide a modern and transparent learning experience, the school uses Google Forms as a daily reporting tool for students. Students are asked to fill out the form each time the program is held, reporting the number of verses or letters they have memorized.²¹ Interestingly, this system can also be accessed by parents, allowing them to directly monitor their children's memorization progress. This demonstrates the collaboration between the school and families in supporting the success of the program.

The evaluation system in this program is carried out through two main approaches. First, directly through memorization recitation to the supervising teacher. In the early stages of memorization, students submit their memorization gradually to their groupmates who have been appointed as peer tutors. However, after completing one letter, students are required to submit it formally to the supervising teacher. Memorization that has been submitted will be recorded on the student's memorization control card, which serves as a document of their progress while participating in the program.

The supervising teacher also evaluates the quality of memorization through the verse continuation method, which involves giving students a portion of a verse and asking them to continue it. This evaluation is conducted in both formal and informal settings, both in class and in general activities

²¹ Absensi dan Pelaporan Hasil Tahfidz, SMPN 3 Karangmoncol, diakses pada 22 Mei 2025.

such as end-of-year class farewells, as a way of publicizing the results of the program to the school community and parents.

Meanwhile, the school evaluates the overall effectiveness of the program through direct communication between the principal and the supervising teacher. Although there is currently no formal and structured evaluation instrument, the supervising teacher periodically reports on student progress, implementation challenges, and recommendations for improvement. The evaluation is more qualitative and conditional in nature, conducted based on the needs and dynamics that occur in the field. This reflects the flexibility and adaptability of the program in responding to the real context of the school, although it also indicates the need to develop a more standardized monitoring and evaluation system in the future.

The implementation of the *Tahfidz* Class Program at SMPN 3 Karangmoncol not only demonstrates the success of the strategy to improve the quality of education, but also is a concrete manifestation of the application of the principles of Islamic education management as stated by Langgulang. According to him, there are seven main principles in Islamic education management, namely: faith and morals, justice and equality, deliberation, division of labor and tasks, adherence to management functions, social interaction, and sincerity.²²

The principles of faith and morals are reflected in the main orientation of the program, which instills the values of the Qur'an into the character of students. Justice and equality are evident in the inclusiveness of the program, which is open to all students without formal selection. The principle of deliberation is embodied in the program planning process, which involves teachers, principals, and school committees collectively. The division of roles between PAI teachers and Indonesian language teachers in assisting students also reflects an effective division of tasks and work. Management functions such as planning, implementation, and evaluation are carried out systematically in this program, in line with the principle of adhering to management functions. The harmonious relationship between teachers, students, and parents illustrates the principle of good social interaction, while the spirit of dedication and volunteerism of the supervising teachers demonstrates sincerity in the implementation of the program.

Thus, the *Tahfidz* Class Program is not only an academic strategy, but also a practical application of holistic and applicable Islamic education management in public schools located in remote areas.

²² Syarhani Syarhani, "Manajemen Pendidikan Islam, Konsep, Fungsi Dan Prinsip," *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 16, no. 6 (2022): 2007, <https://doi.org/10.35931/aq.v16i6.1258>.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of *Tahfidz* Classes

In order for the program that has been designed to run sustainably and have a significant impact on improving the quality of education, schools must pay attention to various factors that support or hinder the program.

The school environment and surrounding community, which are culturally religious, provide a good environment for building students' religious character. Because they have a strong religious background and are legitimized by the community, the guidance process becomes easier and the program fosters parental trust. Schools, especially principals, who are committed to incorporating Islamic values into learning activities are a major factor in ensuring that the program runs according to plan. Not only that, technological assistance is very important to facilitate monitoring of students' memorization. Schools and families work together using Google Forms to report memorization and parental involvement in tracking their children's progress. Another advantage is that this program can be run without the need for expensive facilities and infrastructure. The *Tahfidz* program can run well without reducing the school budget if it has the enthusiasm, commitment, and the right methods.

However, there are still several challenges that need to be overcome when implementing this program. The limited number of *Tahfidz* teachers available at the school is one of the biggest problems. SMPN 3 Karangmoncol does not have an official curriculum for *Tahfidz* learning because of its status as a public school. As a result, coaching is carried out privately by teachers who are skilled in this field. In addition, the busy formal learning schedule means that the time allocated for this program is quite limited. Therefore, careful time management is required so as not to interfere with other subjects.

The lack of special training for *Tahfidz* teachers is also a unique obstacle that can affect the long-term sustainability of the program. In addition, the tangible results of this program must address the stigma in society that public schools do not emphasize religious aspects. Furthermore, other technical problems arise. For example, limited internet access in schools, which sometimes disrupts the online reporting of memorization progress. In order for the *Tahfidz* class program to continue running and developing optimally, solutions to all these problems require policy support and cross-sector collaboration.

Regardless of the various supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of the *Tahfidz* Class Program, one of the main strengths of this program lies in the active involvement of all elements of the school, from the principal, supervising teachers, to parents. This involvement reflects the application of the Total Quality Management (TQM) principle in the context of education, where quality is not only seen from the final results, but also

from the process and collaboration between elements in the education system itself.²³

TQM in education emphasizes the importance of collective cooperation and shared awareness of the vision and mission of education. In implementing the *Tahfidz* Class Program at SMPN 3 Karangmoncol, the principal plays an important role as a transformational leader who creates direction and provides motivation in developing religious values in the school environment. On the other hand, *Tahfidz* teachers are at the forefront of the technical implementation of the program through intensive guidance, individualized approaches, and management of student memorization. Meanwhile, the involvement of parents reflects the synergy between families and schools in shaping the spiritual character of students. Parents are not merely passive observers but also active partners in monitoring and supporting their children's memorization progress, particularly through the online reporting system established by the school.

The basic principle of TQM, which requires every individual in the organization to thoroughly understand the objectives and direction of education, is highly relevant to this program. Without a shared understanding and commitment from all parties, it will be difficult for the *Tahfidz* program to run optimally. With the participation of all elements, each process in the program is not only the responsibility of certain individuals, but the collective responsibility of the entire school community.

In addition, the implementation of TQM also requires continuous improvement, which in the context of this program is carried out through regular reflection, joint evaluation, and improvement of *Tahfidz* learning methods. This approach encourages all parties to not only focus on memorization results, but also pay attention to character building, learning motivation, and learning methods that are more effective and enjoyable for students.

Thus, the implementation of the *Tahfidz* Class Program, which involves all school stakeholders, reflects the essence of total quality management, namely building a culture of quality rooted in collaboration, active participation, and a shared understanding of the educational goals to be achieved. This is the strength of the *Tahfidz* program as part of value- and quality-based educational innovation.

Impact of the Program on Student and Institutional Quality

There is strong evidence that the *Tahfidz* Class Program at SMPN 3 Karangmoncol has had a significant impact on shaping students' characters to be more religious and virtuous. Changes in student behavior are evident in their daily lives. They have become calmer, more polite, and more disciplined,

²³ Pinkan Annisa,Ayu.Gyfind, "Manajemen Mutu Terpadu Dalam Pendidikan Islam," *Pharmacognosy Magazine* 75, no. 17 (2021): 399-405, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.46799/jst.v2i7.318>.

especially in terms of worship and daily habits. In addition to focusing on strengthening memorization, this program also integrates understanding of the meaning of verses, so that students not only memorize texts mechanically, but are also able to internalize the spiritual values contained therein. This understanding broadens students' religious knowledge and makes them more aware of the importance of living their lives in accordance with Islamic teachings.

Parents of students also felt the positive impact of this program. They reported significant changes in their children's behavior at home. Some parents said that their children had started to wake up earlier for dawn prayers, reduced their use of electronic devices, and focused more on religious activities.²⁴ This shows that the values taught through the program do not only stop in the classroom, but also permeate students' personal lives outside of school.

Islamic values such as maintaining *wudhu*, ethics in speaking, the importance of praying five times a day, and the responsibility of memorization are consistently practiced in this program. This becomes the foundation for the formation of students' religiosity from an early age, which is very important in building the character of a young generation with high morals and integrity. This positive impact also affects the school's image in the eyes of the community. Previously, public schools such as SMPN 3 Karangmoncol were often considered to pay little attention to religious guidance. However, through the implementation of the *Tahfidz* Class Program, this perception has slowly changed. The school has become known as an institution that not only focuses on academics but also pays attention to the spiritual needs of its students. Public trust has increased, as reflected in the increase in the number of applicants. Last year, only 36 students enrolled; however, in May this year, the number of applicants has reached 39 students and is expected to continue to grow until the registration period ends in July. Thus, the *Tahfidz* Class Program not only serves as a medium for strengthening students' Islamic faith, but also as an effective strategy in enhancing the school's image and strengthening its competitiveness amid the growing public demand for holistic education that encompasses cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects.

This is in line with Thomas Lickona's ideas on character education, particularly his comprehensive approach to building multicultural awareness.²⁵ Lickona emphasizes the importance of creating a positive school culture, namely a learning environment that fully supports the values being

²⁴ Nurwidiarti (Orangtua salah satu peserta program kelas tahfidz), Wawancara oleh peneliti, 22 Mei 2025.

²⁵ Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, Syamsul Kurniawan, and Feny Nida Fitriyani, "Thomas Lickona's Idea on Character Education Which Builds Multicultural Awareness: Its Relevance for School/Madrasah in Indonesia," *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 14, no. 1 (2023): 33–53.

taught. In this context, the *Tahfidz* program fosters a spiritual and social climate that supports students to grow in a balanced religious atmosphere.

In addition, the success of this program is also inseparable from the role of the principal, teachers, and other educational staff who serve as models of positive behavior, as emphasized by Lickona. Their exemplary behavior in being polite, disciplined, and practicing religious values serves as a real reflection for students. On the other hand, parental involvement is also an important factor. Parents not only observe changes in their children at home, but also support the character-building process, both directly and through active communication with the school. This reinforces Lickona's point that successful character education requires the involvement of various elements, including parents and the community, as partners of the school in shaping character.

With this approach, the *Tahfidz* Class program also embodies Al-Ghazali's idea that education must be able to "perfect, cleanse, purify, and guide the hearts" of students with Islamic values that shape a well-rounded personality. It not only develops reasoning but also touches the depths of the soul. In practice, students who participate in this program show significant behavioral changes—they become more religious, polite, disciplined, and have better self-control over the temptations of electronic devices—demonstrating the internalization of values that are at the core of Islamic education. In other words, this program is a means to help students get closer to Allah through the integration of knowledge, deeds, and morals in real life.

Conclusion

In response to public concerns about the lack of religious education in public schools, SMPN 3 Karangmoncol initiated a flagship program called the *Tahfidz* Class. This program is designed with a special curriculum that covers four important phases: pronunciation practice (*Tasmi'*), reading quality improvement (*Tahsin*), memorizing the Qur'an verse by verse (*Tahfidz*), and periodic memorization review (*Muraja'ah*). The activities are held three times a week before the main lessons begin and are open to all students in grades VII to IX who are already fluent in reading the Qur'an. The teaching staff involved are internal school teachers who are experts in the field of *Tahfidzul* Qur'an. Student progress is assessed through direct memorization submissions to the supervising teacher and daily reports uploaded via Google Form, so that parents can also monitor their children's progress.

Several factors that greatly contributed to the success of this program included the religious atmosphere in the surrounding environment, the full support of parents, the community's trust in the supervising teachers, and the use of easy-to-use technology, such as Google Forms, to monitor memorization progress. The principal's enthusiasm in implementing Islamic values in teaching and learning activities was also a major driving force. This

program did not require a lot of money because it did not require additional expensive facilities.

However, there are also several challenges that need to be overcome. The small number of *Tahfidz* teachers and the lack of special training are internal problems. Externally, competition with religious schools such as MTs, as well as unsupportive peer groups, are also obstacles. In addition, the busy school schedule makes it difficult to find time, and a poor internet signal in remote areas can hinder online reporting.

This program is considered capable of improving student quality while changing the community's positive perception of the school. From the students' perspective, this program has succeeded in fostering religiousness, discipline, and moral improvement. Students have become more polite, orderly, and have a deeper understanding of religion. In fact, there have been positive behavioral changes, such as not using cell phones as often. From the school's perspective, public trust has increased. This is evident in the increase in the number of new students compared to last year, indicating that this program has been able to improve the quality of the school as an institution that cares about the spiritual needs of students.

This program proves that the application of Islamic education management principles can provide solutions to the quality crisis in public schools, especially in the context of remote schools. The integration of Islamic values into school management is a major strength in building student character and community trust.

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