



# Grounding the Quran Through the Thousand Hafiz Movement in Muslim-Majority Countries

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## Abstract

Learning and memorizing the Quran is a demanding process that requires patience, time, and effective pedagogical strategies. Many students experience fatigue, boredom, and discouragement during this journey, which calls for innovative approaches to sustain motivation and strengthen memorization quality. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* in enhancing Quranic memorization among students in Islamic educational institutions. A qualitative case study design was employed, with data collected from 100 informants consisting of teachers and students, selected through purposive sampling. The primary instrument was an in-depth interview guide, supported by audio recordings and field notes. Data were analyzed thematically using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, including data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the implementation of the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* significantly improves students' memorization achievements, discipline, and spiritual motivation. Moreover, the program strengthens the institution's role in shaping religious character and fostering commitment to Quranic values. The implications highlight the importance of replicating similar initiatives in Muslim-majority countries as a strategy for grounding the Quran in daily life, while also serving as a scholarly reference for Islamic education and waqf-based policy development.

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## INTRODUCTION

Learning to read and memorize the Quran is a fundamental aspect of Islamic education. This process requires not only technical accuracy in recitation but also patience, perseverance, and strong spiritual motivation. Many students experience fatigue, boredom, and even despair during the long journey of memorization (Fafrina, 2025; Hutami & Almadini, 2025; Kusmaryono et al., 2024). Consequently,

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Islamic educational institutions are required to design innovative and sustainable strategies to ensure that students remain consistent in their memorization efforts. One such innovation is the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program*, which integrates the concept of waqf as a socio-religious instrument to strengthen Quranic memorization among students.

The Quran, as the greatest miracle of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), holds an eternal position until the end of time. Allah SWT guarantees its preservation (QS. Al-Hijr: 9). Memorization of the Quran thus becomes part of the realization of this divine promise, while also serving as a means of grounding Quranic values in daily life. Mass movements such as the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* are expected to accelerate the emergence of Quranic generations who are not only fluent in recitation but also internalize spiritual and moral values in the context of modern Muslim societies (Mohamed & Abbas, 2021; Rahman et al., 2018).

Furthermore, waqf as a socio-religious instrument has great potential to support Islamic education. Waqf is not only a form of perpetual charity but also a mechanism for community empowerment. Integrating waqf with Quranic memorization programs represents an innovative approach to strengthening the quality of Islamic education (Hidayat, 2022; Hidayat, 2020; Munir, 2025; Murdiono, 2024; Nasution, 2025). Through waqf support, institutions can provide facilities, qualified teachers, and conducive learning environments for students.

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* in enhancing Quranic memorization among students in Islamic educational institutions. The primary focus is to examine how the program motivates students to be more diligent in memorization, strengthens their learning discipline, and shapes their religious character based on Quranic values.

In addition, the study seeks to identify supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of the program. By understanding these factors, institutions can design more effective strategies to improve the quality of Quranic memorization. The research also evaluates the extent to which waqf contributes to the sustainability of Quranic education in Muslim communities.

Another objective is to provide academic contributions in the form of scholarly references for students, researchers, and practitioners of Islamic education. The findings are expected to serve as a foundation for developing innovative and sustainable Quranic education policies, while enriching the literature on the integration of waqf into Islamic education.

The urgency of this study lies in the pressing need to develop Quranic education models that are relevant to contemporary challenges. In the midst of globalization and modernization, many young Muslims face distractions that reduce their focus on religious learning (Maesaroh et al., 2023; Maghfiroh et al., 2024). This phenomenon raises concerns about the weakening of the younger generation's connection to the Quran.

The *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* offers a solution by combining spiritual, social, and educational dimensions. Through waqf, communities can directly contribute to supporting Quranic education, while students gain greater motivation and improved facilities for memorization. This study is also important for strengthening academic literature on the integration of waqf into Islamic education, which remains relatively limited.

Moreover, this research is highly relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 4) on Quality

Education and Sustainable Development Goals 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. Quranic education based on waqf can serve as an innovative model for improving the quality of religious education while reinforcing social cohesion in Muslim societies.

Studies on Quranic education have been widely conducted, particularly regarding teaching methods and memorization strategies (Mubarokah, 2019; Najib, 2018; Nasrullah, 2019; Rahman et al., 2018). However, research specifically examining the relationship between waqf programs and the improvement of Quranic memorization remains scarce. Most studies emphasize pedagogical or psychological aspects of learning, while socio-religious dimensions such as waqf have not been sufficiently explored.

Previous research has tended to focus on the effectiveness of memorization methods such as *tikrar*, *muraja'ah*, or *talqin* (Hutami & Almadini, 2025; Kusumastuti et al., 2022; Solong & Jazimi, 2020). Yet, external factors such as institutional support, funding, and community participation through waqf also play a significant role in students' success in memorizing the Quran. This study therefore fills the gap by presenting a new perspective on the role of waqf as an instrument for empowering Quranic education.

Thus, this research not only enriches the academic discourse on Quranic education but also opens opportunities for developing more comprehensive Islamic education policies. It is expected to serve as a reference for institutions, policymakers, and communities in designing innovative waqf-based programs to support Quranic memorization.

Based on the background, objectives, urgency, and research gap outlined above, this study seeks to answer the following: how is the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* implemented in Quranic educational institutions, to what extent does the program enhance students' motivation and discipline in memorization, what are its implications for shaping religious character, and how does it contribute to grounding Quranic values in Muslim societies?

## METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research method with a case study design. Qualitative research is particularly suitable for exploring complex social and educational phenomena because it allows researchers to capture participants' experiences, perceptions, and meanings in depth (Creswell, 2018; Engkizar et al., 2023, 2025; Putri et al., 2025; Rahman et al., 2025). The case study design was chosen to provide a detailed and contextualized understanding of how the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* operates within a specific Quranic educational institution.

By focusing on a single institution, the case study approach enables the researcher to examine the dynamics of program implementation, the challenges faced, and the strategies adopted to enhance Quranic memorization. This method is not intended to generalize findings to all contexts but rather to generate rich insights that can inform theory and practice in similar educational settings (Baroud et al., 2025; Busral et al., 2025; Eltoukhi et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2024; Rahman et al., 2025; Yin, 2014).

The primary data sources in this study were teachers and students (*santri*) involved in the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program*. A total of 100 informants were selected using purposive sampling, ensuring that participants had direct experience with the program and could provide relevant information. Teachers contributed

perspectives on instructional strategies and institutional support, while students shared their experiences of motivation, discipline, and memorization progress.

Secondary data sources included institutional documents, program guidelines, and records of student achievements. These materials provided contextual information that complemented interview data and helped triangulate findings. The combination of primary and secondary sources strengthened the credibility and validity of the study (Engkizar et al., 2024; Kaema & Ulwi, 2025).

The main instrument used in this study was an in-depth interview guide. Interviews are a common tool in qualitative research because they allow participants to express their thoughts and experiences in their own words. The interview guide was structured around themes such as program implementation, student motivation, memorization strategies, and institutional support.

In addition to interviews, the researcher employed field notes to capture observations during interactions with participants. Field notes provided contextual details about the learning environment, student behavior, and teacher-student interactions. This combination of instruments ensured that the data collected reflected both verbal accounts and observed practices, thereby enriching the analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1997; Engkizar et al., 2022).

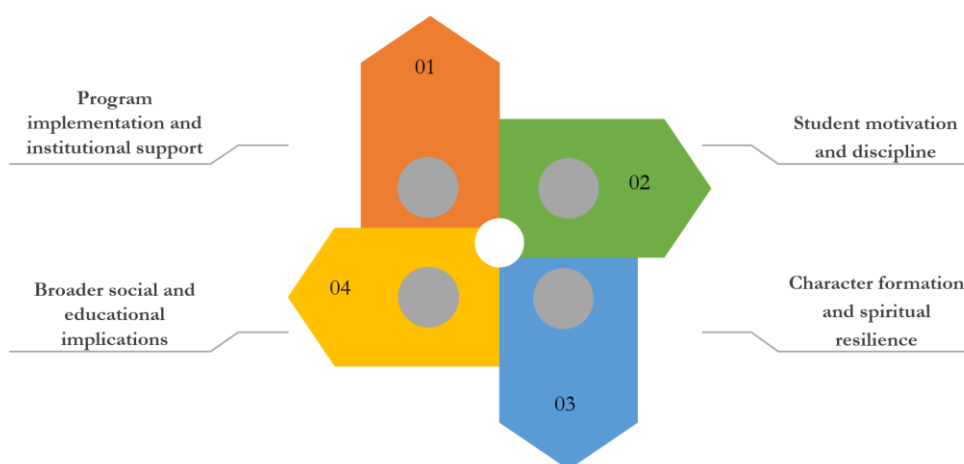
The tools used to support data collection included audio recorders and transcription software. Audio recording ensured that interviews were documented accurately, allowing the researcher to revisit participants' responses during analysis. Transcription software facilitated the conversion of spoken data into written text, which is essential for thematic coding and analysis.

Additionally, manual note-taking was employed during interviews and observations to capture non-verbal cues, contextual details, and immediate reflections. These tools collectively enhanced the reliability of data collection and provided multiple layers of information for analysis. The use of both technological and manual tools reflects best practices in qualitative research (Thoifah et al., 2021).

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis guided by Miles and Huberman's interactive model. This model involves three concurrent activities: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction was carried out by coding interview transcripts and field notes into categories related to program implementation, student motivation, and memorization outcomes.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* has had a significant impact on Quranic memorization among students in Islamic educational institutions. The program not only improved the technical ability of students to memorize but also enhanced their motivation, discipline, and spiritual commitment. Thematic analysis of interviews with teachers and students highlights four major themes: i) program implementation and institutional support, ii) student motivation and discipline, iii) character formation and spiritual resilience, and iv) broader social and educational implications.



**Fig 1. the effectiveness of the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* in enhancing Quranic memorization**

**Program implementation and institutional support**

The first theme concerns how the program was implemented within the institution. Teachers consistently emphasized that the integration of waqf resources allowed the school to provide better facilities, such as dedicated memorization halls, structured schedules, and qualified instructors. These resources created an environment conducive to sustained memorization.

One teacher explained: *“Before the program, students often struggled with limited time and space. With the waqf support, we now have dedicated rooms and structured sessions that make memorization more systematic”* (Informant T1). Another teacher added: *“The institution’s commitment is visible. We are not only teaching but also mentoring students spiritually, ensuring they understand the value of memorization beyond technical recitation”* (Informant T3).

Institutional support also extended to monitoring progress. Weekly evaluations were introduced to track the number of verses memorized, and students were encouraged to engage in peer-review sessions. This system created accountability and fostered a sense of collective responsibility. As one student noted: *“We are motivated because our progress is checked regularly. It feels like we are part of a larger mission, not just individual learners”* (Informant S7).

**Student motivation and discipline**

The second theme highlights the role of the program in enhancing student motivation and discipline. Many students admitted that memorization was initially overwhelming, often leading to boredom and discouragement. However, the structured nature of the program, combined with the spiritual significance of waqf, instilled a renewed sense of purpose.

One student reflected: *“At first, I felt tired and sometimes wanted to give up. But knowing that the community supports us through waqf makes me feel responsible to continue. It is not only my effort but also their trust”* (Informant S12). Another student emphasized discipline: *“We have to wake up early, attend sessions, and repeat verses daily. It is hard, but the program teaches us consistency. I now apply this discipline in other parts of my life”* (Informant S18).

Teachers also observed a noticeable change in students’ attitudes. *“The program has transformed their mindset. They are more focused, less distracted, and more determined to achieve their memorization goals. Discipline is no longer imposed but internalized”* (Informant T5). This finding suggests that the program not only supports memorization but also cultivates life skills such as time management and perseverance.

### **Character formation and spiritual resilience**

The third theme concerns the impact of the program on character formation and spiritual resilience. Memorization was not merely seen as a cognitive exercise but as a spiritual journey. Students reported feeling closer to Allah and more committed to practicing Islamic values in daily life.

One student shared: *“Memorizing the Quran makes me feel stronger spiritually. When I face difficulties, I remember the verses I have memorized, and they give me peace”* (Informant S25). Another added: *“It is not only about memorization. We are taught to live by the Qur’an. The teachers remind us that being a hafiz means being a role model in society”* (Informant S31).

Teachers echoed this sentiment, noting that the program fostered humility, patience, and sincerity among students. *“We see changes in their behavior. They are more respectful, more disciplined in prayer, and more conscious of their actions. The Quran becomes their guide, not just a text to memorize”* (Informant T8). This illustrates how the program contributes to holistic education, integrating intellectual, spiritual, and moral dimensions.

### **Broader social and educational implications**

The final theme relates to the broader implications of the program for society and education. The *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* was perceived as a collective movement that strengthens community ties and reinforces the role of Islamic education in nation-building.

One teacher explained: *“This program is not only about individual achievement. It is about grounding the Quran in society. When students become hafiz, they inspire others, and the community feels proud”* (Informant T10). A student similarly remarked: *“I feel that I am part of something bigger. My memorization is not only for myself but for the ummah. It is a responsibility and an honor”* (Informant S40).

The program also has implications for policy and curriculum development. Teachers suggested that integrating waqf-based initiatives into national education systems could enhance sustainability and inclusivity. *“If more institutions adopt this model, we can produce thousands of hafiz across the country. It is a strategic investment in our religious and moral future”* (Informant T12).

The findings demonstrate that the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* effectively enhances Quranic memorization by combining institutional support, community participation, and spiritual motivation. Students not only improved their memorization skills but also developed discipline, resilience, and religious character. Teachers observed that the program fostered a holistic educational environment that integrates cognitive, spiritual, and social dimensions. The interview data highlight that the program’s success lies in its ability to connect individual efforts with collective responsibility. Students felt accountable not only to themselves but also to the community that supported them through waqf. This sense of shared mission created a powerful motivational framework that sustained their memorization journey. The *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* represents a transformative model of Quranic education. It demonstrates how waqf can be mobilized to support religious learning, strengthen community ties, and cultivate holistic character development. The program’s success suggests that similar initiatives could be replicated in other Muslim-majority countries, contributing to the grounding of the Quran in everyday life and reinforcing the moral fabric of society.

The findings of this study demonstrate that the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* provides institutional support that significantly enhances Quranic memorization. This aligns with Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the importance

of social context and institutional scaffolding in learning (Ashoumi & Yusuf, 2024; Kurniati, 2025; Saihu & Aziz, 2020; Witasari, 2024). By providing structured schedules, dedicated facilities, and qualified instructors, the program creates a “zone of proximal development” where students can achieve memorization goals that might otherwise be unattainable.

Expert opinion also supports the role of institutional scaffolding in religious education. Quranic learning requires not only individual effort but also collective support from teachers and institutions (Abu Fatih, 2023; Ilham, 2024; Lorenza, 2025; Soleh et al., 2025). The weekly evaluations and peer-review sessions observed in this study reflect best practices in formative assessment, which Black and Wiliam (1998) argue are critical for sustaining motivation and guiding progress. Thus, the program’s implementation resonates with established educational theories and expert recommendations.

Previous research has similarly highlighted the importance of institutional support in Quranic memorization. Sabrina et al., (2024) found that students in well-structured programs achieved higher levels of memorization compared to those in informal settings. The integration of waqf resources in this study adds a novel dimension, demonstrating how socio-religious instruments can be mobilized to strengthen educational infrastructure (Astuti et al., 2025).

The second major theme student motivation and discipline can be interpreted through the lens of self-determination theory (Surya et al., 2024). This theory posits that motivation is sustained when learners experience autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* fosters these conditions by giving students structured autonomy (daily memorization routines), competence (measurable progress through evaluations), and relatedness (community support through waqf).

Expert perspectives reinforce this interpretation. Fitriya et al., (2025) argues that religious education must cultivate intrinsic motivation by linking learning to spiritual values. The students’ testimonies in this study expressing responsibility to the community and accountability to Allah illustrate how intrinsic motivation is strengthened when memorization is framed as both a spiritual duty and a communal trust. Teachers’ observations of improved discipline further confirm that motivation is not externally imposed but internalized, consistent with Deci and Ryan’s framework.

Prior studies also support the connection between structured programs and enhanced discipline. Ridiawati et al., (2025) found that repetition-based methods (*tikrar*) were effective only when combined with consistent routines and external accountability. The present findings extend this by showing that waqf-based support provides the external accountability necessary to sustain discipline, while simultaneously fostering intrinsic motivation.

The third theme character formation and spiritual resilience can be discussed using Kohlberg’s theory of moral development (Kohlberg, 1981; Wahid, 2024). According to Kohlberg, moral reasoning evolves through stages, culminating in principled reasoning based on universal values. Quranic memorization, as observed in this study, fosters moral development by embedding students in a value-laden environment where discipline, humility, and sincerity are emphasized.

Expert opinion underscores the transformative potential of Quranic education. Humairoh et al., 2025; Jay et al., (2024) notes that memorization is not merely cognitive but deeply spiritual, shaping students’ identities and moral outlook.

Teachers' observations of increased respect, discipline in prayer, and consciousness of actions reflect this transformative process. The program thus contributes to holistic education, integrating intellectual, spiritual, and moral dimensions.

Previous research has documented similar outcomes. [Qibtia et al., \(2024\)](#) reported that students engaged in structured memorization programs exhibited stronger religious commitment and moral behavior compared to peers in less formal contexts. The present study adds evidence that waqf-based initiatives amplify these effects by embedding memorization within a framework of communal responsibility and spiritual accountability.

The broader implications of the program can be analyzed through the lens of social capital theory. Social capital refers to the networks, norms, and trust that facilitate collective action. The *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* builds social capital by linking individual memorization efforts to community support through waqf. Students feel accountable not only to themselves but also to the community, creating a shared mission that strengthens social cohesion.

Experts in Islamic education emphasize the importance of community involvement. [Rosidin et al., \(2025\)](#) argues that education in Muslim-majority societies must integrate social and spiritual dimensions to remain relevant. The findings of this study confirm that waqf-based initiatives achieve this integration, grounding the Quran in everyday life and reinforcing communal identity.

Prior research also highlights the policy relevance of such initiatives. [Arsyad, \(2025\)](#) suggest that sustainable educational programs require community ownership. The *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* exemplifies this principle, demonstrating how waqf can be institutionalized to support long-term educational goals. If replicated nationally, such programs could contribute to achieving SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) by fostering inclusive, value-based education.

Synthesizing the findings with theory, expert opinion, and prior research reveals that the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* is more than a memorization initiative. It is a holistic educational model that integrates institutional scaffolding, intrinsic motivation, moral development, and social capital. Expert perspectives and prior studies confirm that structured, community-supported programs enhance memorization, discipline, and character formation. The unique contribution of this study lies in demonstrating how waqf can be mobilized as a socio-religious instrument to sustain Quranic education and strengthen communal identity.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the *Waqf 1,000 Hafiz Program* effectively enhances Quranic memorization by providing structured institutional support, fostering student motivation and discipline, and shaping religious character, thereby answering the research questions regarding implementation, impact on learners, and contribution to grounding Quranic values in Muslim societies. The findings imply that waqf-based initiatives can serve as a sustainable model for integrating spiritual, social, and educational dimensions, strengthening community participation, and aligning with global development agendas such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 4) (Quality Education) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 16) (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). The novelty of this article lies in its synthesis of pedagogical, psychological, and socio-religious perspectives, showing how waqf traditionally understood as a charitable

instrument can be innovatively mobilized as a strategic educational framework to empower Quranic learning and character formation in Muslim-majority contexts.

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## DECLARATIONS

### Author contribution

**Sindy Wahyuni & Mudhiyatul Huda:** data curation, writing-original draft preparation and editing, **Yufrizal & Mutathahirin:** conceptualization, methodology, **Ikhwan Rahman:** validation, visualization, supervision, software.

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