

Evaluating Hifdhul Qur'an Learning for Santri at Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum Simo Boyolali

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Abstract

Traditional Qur'anic memorization programs in *salafiah pesantren* require systematic evaluation to ensure that established pedagogical practices effectively support both memorization attainment and recitation quality. This study aims to evaluate *Hifdhul Qur'an* learning for *santri* at Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum Simo Boyolali by examining program planning, implementation, *muraja'ah*, teacher supervision, memorization assessment, and students' perceptions. A descriptive qualitative design was employed and supplemented by questionnaire data from 43 *santri*. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with pesantren leaders, *ustadz*, and *musyrif*, questionnaires addressing planning, implementation, and evaluation, and relevant documentation. The findings indicate that *Hifdhul Qur'an* learning is organized through daily memorization targets, routine submission after the Subuh prayer, scheduled *muraja'ah*, and multiple learning activities, including *sabaq*, *sabqi*, *tasmi'*, *sima'an*, *binadbor*, *bil ghoib*, *manzil*, and *mukammal*. The *santri* generally understood the established targets and evaluated the program positively. Specifically, 48.8% strongly agreed that they understood the memorization targets, 46.5% strongly agreed that learning was conducted routinely, 58.1% strongly agreed that teachers listened attentively, and 44.2% strongly agreed that accurate *tajwid* constituted a central assessment criterion. Nevertheless, the program faced challenges related to boredom, fluctuating motivation, inadequate time management, limited supervisory personnel, and declining memorization quality outside the pesantren environment. The study concludes that effective *Hifdhul Qur'an* learning requires

a balanced emphasis on quantitative memorization targets, recitation accuracy, consistent *muraja'ah*, constructive teacher feedback, and student-centered mentoring. These findings contribute to Islamic education evaluation by demonstrating how traditional Qur'anic pedagogy in a classical pesantren can be strengthened through systematic program assessment.

Keywords: Hifdhul Qur'an Learning; Memorization Evaluation; Muraja'ah; Salafiah Pesantren; Santri

INTRODUCTION

Hifdhul Qur'an learning occupies a central position in Islamic education because it connects textual preservation, spiritual discipline, and moral formation. In many pesantren, memorizing the Qur'an is not treated as a narrow cognitive exercise. It is placed within a broader educational culture that trains santri to regulate time, control speech, respect teachers, repeat learning patiently, and attach daily conduct to Qur'anic values. This position makes Hifdhul Qur'an relevant to contemporary Islamic education studies, especially when educational institutions face increasing pressure to measure learning quality, not only learning activity.

The pesantren tradition gives a distinctive form to Qur'anic memorization. A pesantren does not only provide a classroom or a curriculum. It creates a living environment where learning, worship, discipline, and social interaction shape one another. Salafiah or classical pesantren give special attention to direct guidance, religious authority, classical routines, and teacher-student transmission. In this setting, Hifdhul Qur'an learning grows through repeated recitation, talaqqi, musyafahah, correction of tajwid and makhraj, and collective discipline. Such practices show that memorization depends on a learning ecology, not merely on individual memory (Afwadzi & Miski, 2021; Hanif, Wahyudin, & Sholahuddin, 2025; Sumadi, Nugroho, & Syah, 2025).

Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum Simo Boyolali represents this salafiah learning character. The pesantren maintains a classical environment in which santri learn through fixed daily routines, teacher supervision, and oral correction. The Hifdhul Qur'an program is integrated into the rhythm of pesantren life. Santri prepare memorization, submit new verses, repeat recent memorization, review old memorization, and join evaluation activities.

The program reflects a traditional Qur'anic pedagogy that values consistency, patience, and accuracy.

Evaluation is a major issue in Hifdhul Qur'an learning. Many memorization programs set ambitious targets, such as one page per day or one juz per month. These targets help santri organize effort and give teachers measurable indicators. Yet an excessive focus on target quantity can weaken recitation quality if the program does not balance it with muraja'ah, tajwid correction, and periodic evaluation. A santri may increase the number of memorized pages but lose older memorization. Another santri may recite fluently but still make tajwid or makhraj mistakes. This condition shows that memorization evaluation must cover both quantity and quality (Anisaturrizqi, Hanifiyah, & Crismono, 2025; Ayyusufi, Anshori, & Muthoifin, 2022; Mardiyah, 2023).

Recent Islamic education research emphasizes the need to evaluate learning as a system. Learning quality is not produced by one component only. It emerges from planning, implementation, teacher competence, student engagement, feedback, institutional culture, and follow-up (Abbas & Mukhlisah, 2026). The same logic applies to Hifdhul Qur'an. A strong program requires clear targets, effective scheduling, sufficient supervisors, disciplined submission, structured muraja'ah, and evaluation that can detect progress and weakness. Evaluation also needs to consider the learner's perspective. Santri are not passive objects of assessment. They experience the target, schedule, teacher correction, peer support, pressure, boredom, and success directly (Gunawan, Aziz, & Wahyuni, 2026; Rizza, Rifaldi, Muttaqin, Nursobah, & Zain, 2026).

Santri perception therefore becomes an important source of data. Teacher interviews can explain policy, method, and expectations. Santri responses can explain whether the target is clear, whether the schedule is understood, whether correction is useful, and whether evaluation feels meaningful. Without santri perception, an evaluation of Hifdhul Qur'an learning can become one-sided. It may describe what the institution intends but not what santri experience. By combining interview data and questionnaire data, a study can produce a more balanced picture of program implementation.

This study contributes to Islamic education research by examining Hifdhul Qur'an learning as an integrated pedagogical system in a salafiah pesantren. It connects memorization targets, muraja'ah routines, teacher correction, santri perceptions, and evaluation practices. This focus is important because Qur'anic memorization programs often

emphasize the amount of memorized verses, while recitation quality, memorization retention, supervision, and learner experience require deeper empirical attention (Gunawan et al., 2026).

The study also responds to an empirical problem found at Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum. Interview data indicate that the program is intensive and generally effective, yet several issues remain. Some santri reach or even exceed the target, while others struggle to manage time. Some santri can add new memorization but face difficulty during mukammal. Some santri lose strength in older memorization when they focus on new pages. Ustadz and musyrif also face supervision challenges, especially when available time and the number of supervisors do not fully match the number of santri. These conditions require a systematic evaluation.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on evaluating Hifdhul Qur'an learning in a salafiah pesantren through two complementary data sources: interviews with program actors and perception data from santri. The study does not only ask whether santri memorize the Qur'an. It asks how memorization is planned, how it is implemented, how muraja'ah supports retention, how teachers correct recitation, how evaluation works, and how santri perceive the program. This focus positions Hifdhul Qur'an as a learning system rather than a single religious activity.

Based on this background, this study aims to evaluate Hifdhul Qur'an learning for santri at Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum Simo Boyolali. The study addresses four main questions. First, how is Hifdhul Qur'an learning planned in the pesantren? Second, how is the program implemented through submission, muraja'ah, and teacher supervision? Third, how do santri perceive the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program? Fourth, what challenges and follow-up strategies appear in the program? The answers are expected to provide practical recommendations for improving Hifdhul Qur'an learning while preserving the strengths of salafiah pesantren tradition.

The distinction between salafiah and modern pesantren also matters in evaluating learning. A modern pesantren may emphasize formal class structures, graded curricula, and wider integration with state educational systems. A salafiah pesantren tends to prioritize classical religious authority, habituation, kitab-based learning, and direct teacher supervision. These categories are not absolute because many pesantren combine elements from both models. Yet the salafiah identity of Bahrul Ulum helps explain why Hifdhul Qur'an learning

is organized around oral submission, repeated review, and teacher approval. These practices are not merely technical routines. They are part of an epistemic culture that values accuracy, adab, and continuity of transmission.

In Qur'anic memorization, learning quality must be understood through three layers. The first layer is input, which includes santri readiness, reading fluency, availability of teachers, schedule, and memorization target. The second layer is process, which includes sabaq, sabqi, muraja'ah, correction, peer listening, and daily discipline. The third layer is output, which includes the amount of memorization, accuracy of tajwid, precision of makhraj, fluency, retention, and santri confidence. A program may show strong output in one layer but still need improvement in another. For instance, a santri may reach the target number of pages but still need tajwid correction. Another santri may recite correctly but struggle to retain older memorization. This layered view is useful for program evaluation.

A student-centered perspective is also needed because santri carry different levels of readiness. Some santri enter the pesantren already fluent in Qur'anic reading. Others still need basic correction. Some santri have strong family support for religious learning. Others need time to adapt to boarding school discipline. Some santri are internally motivated, while others require continuous encouragement from teachers and peers. These differences affect how they respond to the same target. Therefore, Hifdhul Qur'an evaluation should avoid assuming that one uniform target produces the same learning experience for every santri.

METHODS

This study used a descriptive qualitative design supported by descriptive questionnaire data. The design was selected because the study sought to explain a learning process in its natural setting. The object of the study was not an experimental treatment but the real implementation of Hifdhul Qur'an learning in a salafiah pesantren. Qualitative inquiry is appropriate when researchers aim to understand meanings, practices, perceptions, and institutional contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In this study, the qualitative approach helped describe the program from the perspectives of pesantren leaders, ustadz, musyrif, and santri.

The research site was Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum Simo Boyolali. The pesantren was selected because it implements a Hifdhul Qur'an program within a salafiah or classical boarding school culture. This context is important because salafiah pesantren learning is

usually characterized by direct teacher guidance, discipline, repetition, adab, and strong attachment to religious tradition. The research did not treat this institutional identity as a mere background. It was analyzed as part of the learning ecology that shapes santri memorization habits.

The participants consisted of pesantren leaders, ustadz, musyrif, and santri. Pesantren leaders provided data on policy, program direction, and institutional expectations. Ustadz provided data on recitation submission, tajwid correction, and memorization evaluation. Musyrif provided data on daily supervision and santri learning discipline. Santri provided perception data through a questionnaire. The questionnaire involved 43 santri who had direct experience in the program. The selection of interview informants followed purposive sampling because the study required participants who understood and experienced the Hifdhul Qur'an program directly (Patton, 2015).

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore the planning of targets, daily submission mechanisms, muraja'ah routines, learning methods, teacher roles, evaluation forms, obstacles, and follow-up actions. This type of interview enabled the researcher to use guiding questions while allowing informants to explain their experience in detail (Moleong, 2017). The questionnaire was used to capture santri perceptions regarding planning, implementation, and evaluation. Documentation was used to support the analysis of questionnaire charts and program-related information.

The questionnaire used a five-point response scale consisting of strongly inappropriate, inappropriate, moderately appropriate, appropriate, and strongly appropriate. It covered three dimensions. The first dimension was planning, including knowledge of memorization targets, clarity of targets, gradual arrangement of targets, clarity of submission schedule, and organization of muraja'ah schedule. The second dimension was implementation, including routine learning, orderly submission, teacher carefulness, correction of recitation mistakes, and opportunity to improve weak memorization. The third dimension was evaluation, including routine evaluation, assessment of recitation quality, tajwid accuracy, and makhraj accuracy.

Table 1. Methodological Design and Data Sources

Component	Description	Research Function
Approach and design	Descriptive qualitative research supported by santri perception questionnaire data	To evaluate the learning process in its natural salafiah pesantren context
Research site	Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum Simo Boyolali	To examine Hifdhul Qur'an learning in a classical Islamic boarding school
Participants	Pesantren leaders, ustadz, musyrif, and 43 santri	To obtain institutional, pedagogical, supervisory, and learner perspectives
Data collection	Semi-structured interviews, questionnaire, and documentation	To triangulate field narratives and santri perception data
Questionnaire dimensions	Planning, implementation, and evaluation of Hifdhul Qur'an learning	To describe santri responses to program clarity, routines, supervision, and assessment
Data analysis	Thematic analysis and descriptive percentages	To interpret patterns and support qualitative findings with numerical summaries

Source: Developed by the authors based on research design, interview guidelines, questionnaire data, and documentation analysis, June to July 2026.

It explains that the research used a descriptive qualitative approach supported by santri perception questionnaire data. The primary data were obtained through interviews with pesantren leaders, ustadz, and musyrif, while supporting data were collected from santri questionnaires and documentation. The table also confirms that the study focuses on evaluating the Hifdhul Qur'an learning process within a salafiah pesantren context. Thus, Table 1 clarifies the connection between research design, data sources, data collection techniques, and analytical functions in addressing the research focus.

Data analysis used qualitative thematic analysis supported by descriptive percentages. Interview data were condensed by selecting relevant statements related to planning, implementation, evaluation, obstacles, and follow-up. The data were then displayed in narrative form and summarized in tables. Questionnaire data were analyzed descriptively by identifying the percentage of santri responses for each indicator. The percentages were not used to test hypotheses. They functioned as supporting evidence to strengthen the qualitative interpretation (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The credibility of the data was strengthened through source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation compared information from leaders, ustadz, musyrif, and santri. Technique triangulation compared interview data, questionnaire data, and documentation (Sanjaya, 2015). This procedure helped reduce the risk of relying on a

single data source. Ethical considerations were maintained by protecting informant identity, presenting santri responses as academic data, and avoiding personal judgment. The focus of the analysis was the learning program, not individual weakness.

The study also used the principle of contextual interpretation. Each interview statement was read in relation to the pesantren schedule, the role of the informant, and the stage of santri memorization. A statement from an ustadz was interpreted mainly as a pedagogical view because ustadz directly listen to memorization and correct recitation. A statement from a musyrif was interpreted as a supervisory view because musyrif follow santri routines more closely. A statement from the pengasuh was interpreted as an institutional view because the pengasuh understands program direction and overall evaluation. This distinction helped the analysis avoid mixing different levels of experience (Sugiyono, 2016).

The questionnaire findings were treated as supportive descriptive evidence. The percentages were not used to claim causal relationships. They were used to identify response patterns and compare them with interview data. For example, when teachers stated that the target was clear, the questionnaire was used to see whether santri also perceived the target as clear. When teachers stated that evaluation included tajwid and makhraj, the questionnaire was used to confirm whether santri recognized those elements in the evaluation process. This procedure strengthened the internal coherence of the analysis (Creswell, 2002).

The analysis also paid attention to negative and moderate responses. Positive percentages were important, but moderate responses and small negative responses were not ignored. In educational evaluation, moderate responses can indicate that some students understand the program but still experience limitations. A small number of less positive responses can point to practical weaknesses that need attention. Therefore, the study did not interpret high agreement as proof that no problem exists. It interpreted high agreement as evidence of program strength while still examining challenges found in interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Creswell & Poth, 2016).

RESULTS

The results show that Hifdhul Qur'an learning at Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum Simo Boyolali is structured through clear targets, daily submission, repeated review, direct teacher correction, and layered evaluation. Interview data indicate that the program is considered effective by the pesantren actors, although they also acknowledge several points

that need improvement. One ustadz described the program as good and effective but still open to improvement. Another informant stated that the program is intensive because santri are guided through daily memorization and regular evaluation. The pengasuh also emphasized that the program runs well but requires continuous evaluation for the benefit of santri.

The institutional target is one of the clearest findings. The pesantren sets a general direction that santri should complete memorization within the first three years of study. Several informants explained that santri are encouraged to memorize one page per day. This target is connected to a monthly target of one juz. The target is not applied in a fully rigid way. Santri with stronger ability may submit more than the daily target. Santri who struggle may receive additional guidance or a divided target. This flexibility shows that the pesantren combines institutional standards with attention to individual differences.

The santri profile supports the need for differentiated guidance. The questionnaire involved 43 santri with varied lengths of stay. A total of 32.6% had stayed in the pesantren for one to two years, 25.6% for less than one year, 16.3% for three to four years, and 25.6% for more than four years. This distribution indicates that the program includes both new santri and senior santri. Their experience with Hifdhul Qur'an therefore differs. New santri need adaptation to the schedule and method, while senior santri need stronger support for retention and mukammal.

The initial Qur'anic reading ability of santri also varied. Before joining the program, 34.9% of santri reported that they were moderately fluent, 32.6% fluent, 27.9% not yet fluent, and a smaller proportion very fluent. This data is important because Hifdhul Qur'an success depends on reading readiness. Santri who are not yet fluent need stronger binadhor, tahsin, tajwid correction, and makhraj training before intensive bil ghoib submission. Without this early support, memorization may develop with pronunciation mistakes.

The current memorization achievement also varied. The questionnaire showed that 18.6% of santri had memorized one to five juz, 18.6% had memorized five to ten juz, 11.6% had memorized more than fifteen juz, and 11.6% had memorized less than one juz. The largest group, 39.5%, selected the category of other achievement. This distribution indicates that the program serves santri at different memorization stages. Therefore, evaluation cannot rely on a single standard. It must consider the stage of each santri, the stability of old memorization, and the quality of recitation.

Table 2. Santri Profile and Memorization Readiness

Indicator	Main Percentages	Interpretive Meaning
Length of stay	32.6% stayed 1-2 years, 25.6% less than 1 year, 16.3% 3-4 years, 25.6% more than 4 years	The respondents represented new and senior santri
Initial Qur'anic reading ability	34.9% moderately fluent, 32.6% fluent, 27.9% not yet fluent, 4.6% very fluent	Santri entered the program with varied reading readiness
Current memorization	18.6% had 1-5 juz, 18.6% had 5-10 juz, 11.6% had more than 15 juz, 11.6% had less than 1 juz, 39.5% other achievement	The program serves different memorization levels and requires differentiated mentoring

Source: Developed by the authors based on santri questionnaire data and documentation analysis at Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum Simo Boyolali, June to July 2026.

The table includes data on the length of stay in the pesantren, initial Qur'anic reading ability, and current memorization achievement. It shows that santri had diverse learning experiences and different levels of readiness. Some santri were still adapting to the pesantren learning system, while others had longer experience in Qur'anic memorization. These differences indicate that Hifdhul Qur'an learning requires gradual guidance and cannot rely on one uniform mentoring pattern for all santri.

Planning data show strong clarity. On the statement that santri knew the memorization target, 48.8% strongly agreed, 30.2% agreed, and 18.6% moderately agreed. On the statement that the target was clear, 37.2% strongly agreed, 41.9% agreed, and 18.6% moderately agreed. These responses show that most santri understand the expected learning direction. Target clarity is important because santri live in a busy pesantren schedule. When the target is clear, santri can prepare daily memorization more consistently.

The target is also perceived as gradual. On the statement that memorization targets were arranged daily, weekly, or monthly, 37.2% strongly agreed and 44.2% agreed. Interview data confirm this pattern. Informants mentioned one page per day, one quarter juz per week, and one juz per month. Gradual planning helps santri avoid excessive burden. It also allows teachers to monitor progress more closely. This finding shows that the pesantren does not only state the final goal of 30 juz. It breaks the goal into smaller learning units.

The schedule for submission and muraja'ah is also clear. On the statement that the submission schedule was communicated clearly, 41.9% strongly agreed and 48.8% agreed. On the statement that muraja'ah was scheduled in an organized way, 34.9% strongly agreed and 58.1% agreed. These percentages show that santri generally understand when they should submit and review memorization. The schedule also reflects the classical pesantren

pattern of linking learning with prayer times. Main submission is commonly conducted after Subuh prayer, while muraja'ah and tasmi' are often conducted after Ashar or at night.

Implementation data show that daily submission is a central activity. The main mechanism is sabaq or adding new memorization. Santri submit memorization individually to an ustadz or musyrif. Several informants stated that this activity is conducted after Subuh prayer. Other learning times are used for preparation and review. The method creates a daily cycle: santri prepare memorization, submit it, receive correction, and then repeat the memorization through sabqi or muraja'ah. This cycle is important because it connects new memorization with immediate reinforcement.

The pesantren uses several methods in an integrated way. Sabaq is used to add new memorization. Sabqi is used to review recently memorized pages, often the last five pages. Manzil is used to review old memorization, sometimes half a juz in one session. 'Tasmi' and sima'an are used when santri listen to and test one another's memorization. Binadhoh is used before bil ghoib to improve reading accuracy. Mukammal is used when santri submit larger units, such as one juz and multiples of five juz. This methodological variety indicates that the program does not depend on one technique only.

Santri perceptions of implementation are positive. On the statement that Hifdhul Qur'an learning is conducted routinely according to schedule, 46.5% strongly agreed, 44.2% agreed, and 9.3% moderately agreed. On the statement that memorization submission is conducted in an orderly manner, 41.9% strongly agreed, 41.9% agreed, and 11.6% moderately agreed. The data show that routine and order are two strengths of the program. This is consistent with interview data describing daily submission and regular review sessions.

Teacher supervision is one of the strongest aspects. On the statement that ustadz or supervisors listen carefully to santri memorization, 58.1% strongly agreed and 34.9% agreed. On the statement that recitation mistakes are directly corrected by ustadz or supervisors, 51.2% strongly agreed and 37.2% agreed. These findings show that the program maintains the traditional Qur'anic learning principle of direct correction. Teachers are not only recorders of memorization progress. They are guardians of recitation quality.

Santri are also given opportunities to improve weak memorization. On this indicator, 48.8% strongly agreed and 44.2% agreed. This finding is important because Hifdhul Qur'an learning can become stressful when santri are pushed to continue without stabilizing previous

memorization. The opportunity to improve weak memorization shows that the pesantren recognizes the need for corrective learning. It prevents the target from overriding quality.

Evaluation is conducted through several layers. Daily submission evaluates new memorization. Sabqi evaluates recent memorization. Manzil and muraja'ah evaluate older memorization. 'Tasmi' and sima'an test fluency in front of others. Mukammal evaluates memorization in larger units. Informants explained that santri must complete mukammal at one juz and then continue to larger units such as five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, and thirty juz. Some informants added that one juz mukammal may be repeated three times to strengthen memorization.

Questionnaire data support this evaluation pattern. On the statement that memorization evaluation is conducted routinely, 27.9% strongly agreed, 51.2% agreed, and 20.9% moderately agreed. On the statement that evaluation does not only assess the amount of memorization but also recitation quality, 37.2% strongly agreed, 46.5% agreed, and 14% moderately agreed. These responses indicate that santri recognize the quality dimension of evaluation.

Tajwid and makhraj are also included in evaluation. On the statement that tajwid accuracy is an important part of assessment, 44.2% strongly agreed, 41.9% agreed, and 11.6% moderately agreed. On the statement that makhraj accuracy is an important part of assessment, 41.9% strongly agreed, 39.5% agreed, and 16.3% moderately agreed. These findings show that the pesantren evaluates Qur'anic memorization as recitation performance, not only as memory recall. Correct sound production remains essential.

Table 3. Santri Perceptions of Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation

Dimension	Indicator	Strongly Agree	Agree	Key Finding
Planning	Santri know the memorization target	48.8%	30.2%	Most santri understand the target
Planning	The target is clear for santri	37.2%	41.9%	The program has clear learning direction
Planning	Muraja'ah schedule is organized	34.9%	58.1%	Review is structured in the daily program
Implementation	Learning is conducted routinely	46.5%	44.2%	Routine is a strong feature of the program
Implementation	Teachers listen carefully	58.1%	34.9%	Teacher supervision is strongly perceived
Implementation	Mistakes are corrected directly	51.2%	37.2%	Immediate correction supports recitation quality

Dimension	Indicator	Strongly Agree	Agree	Key Finding
Evaluation	Evaluation is routine	27.9%	51.2%	Assessment is conducted consistently
Evaluation	Tajwid accuracy is assessed	44.2%	41.9%	Quality of recitation is part of evaluation
Evaluation	Makhraj accuracy is assessed	41.9%	39.5%	Sound articulation is recognized as important

Source: Developed by the authors based on interview, questionnaire, observation, and documentation analysis at Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum Simo Boyolali, June to July 2026.

It shows that most santri understood the memorization targets, perceived the murāja'ah schedule as organized, and experienced the learning process as routine. Santri also perceived that ustadz and musyrif listened to their memorization carefully, corrected recitation mistakes directly, and included tajwid and makhraj as important parts of assessment. The findings in this table strengthen the argument that the Hifdhul Qur'an program at Bahrul Ulum does not only emphasize the number of memorized juz, but also pays attention to recitation quality and santri mentoring.

Interview data show that teachers use several strategies to improve recitation quality. Some informants mentioned tahsin and the use of Syifaul Jinan to strengthen tajwid and makhraj. Others explained that santri are asked to read binadhior before submitting sabaq or bil ghoib. This sequence helps prevent wrong memorization. If a santri memorizes a verse with incorrect pronunciation, the mistake may become fixed and difficult to correct later. Therefore, the pesantren places correction before and during memorization.

The main internal challenges include fluctuating motivation, weak time management, boredom, lack of focus, and forgetfulness during mukammal. Several informants stated that some santri had not yet developed strong awareness of time management. Others noted that santri sometimes experience unstable seriousness. This condition affects the achievement of daily targets. It also affects the strength of older memorization. Santri who add new pages but do not review consistently tend to forget older sections.

External challenges include limited supervisors, limited time, dense community activities, and weaker memorization control when santri are outside the pesantren. One informant stated that the limited number of ustadz receiving submissions can reduce the effectiveness of setoran. Another informant mentioned community activities around the

pesantren that sometimes affect schedule efficiency. Home leave also creates a challenge because the structured environment of the pesantren is not fully present at home.

The follow-up strategies include motivation, briefing, additional muraja'ah, special mentoring, and target adjustment. When santri struggle with mukammal, the target can be divided into half a juz before returning to one full juz. This strategy shows that the pesantren does not abandon the standard but adjusts the path toward it. Santri who are weak in memorization are also directed to improve daily muraja'ah. Teachers and musyrif try to build closer relationships so that obstacles can be detected earlier.

Overall, the results indicate that Hifdhul Qur'an learning at Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum is systematic but still needs improvement. Its strengths are clear targets, routine submission, method variation, careful teacher correction, and layered evaluation. Its weaknesses are related to time management, uneven santri readiness, supervisor limitations, and unstable memorization retention outside the pesantren. These findings support the need for a stronger mentoring system and more systematic monitoring of muraja'ah.

Another important finding is the role of peer support. Although teacher correction remains central, santri also strengthen memorization through listening to peers during tasmī' and sima'an. Peer learning helps santri identify errors before formal submission. It also reduces anxiety because santri can practice before facing the ustadz. In a boarding school environment, peer support is not only an additional technique. It becomes part of the learning culture. Santri who are stronger can help those who are weaker, while weaker santri can learn discipline from peers who are more consistent.

The data also show that time after Subuh has a strategic function. It is not chosen randomly. The morning period is relatively free from other activities, and santri are expected to have prepared memorization the night before. This schedule creates a daily accountability system. Santri know that each morning they must appear before a teacher or supervisor. The schedule pushes them to prepare, but it can also create pressure when preparation is weak. Therefore, the effectiveness of Subuh submission depends on the quality of night preparation and sleep discipline.

The relationship between new memorization and old memorization remains a key issue. Interview data show that the pesantren uses sabqi, manzil, and muraja'ah to protect older memorization. Yet some santri still struggle when facing mukammal. This indicates that daily review may need more precise monitoring. A santri may be present in muraja'ah

sessions but may not repeat the weakest pages sufficiently. The program would benefit from a personal muraja'ah record that identifies which pages are strong, which pages are unstable, and which pages require teacher checking.

The use of Syifaul Jinan and tahsin also indicates that the pesantren recognizes the foundation of reading accuracy. Hifdhul Qur'an cannot be separated from correct recitation. When santri memorize before correcting basic reading, mistakes can become fixed in memory. The pesantren's emphasis on binadhor before bil ghoib shows a preventive approach. It reduces the risk of memorizing incorrect pronunciation. This is especially important because 27.9% of respondents reported that they were not yet fluent before joining the program.

The findings further show that the pesantren has a flexible response to difficulty. When santri cannot complete one juz mukammal, the target may be divided into half juz sections. This response is educationally important. It avoids two extremes. The first extreme is lowering the standard too much. The second is forcing the same standard without considering readiness. Bahrul Ulum maintains the target but adjusts the path. This approach helps santri continue progressing without losing confidence.

The overall pattern of findings can be read as a program that is strong in structure but still developing in individualized monitoring. The structure is visible in target setting, schedules, methods, and evaluation. The need for improvement appears in the management of individual differences, supervisor workload, and memorization retention outside the pesantren. These findings do not weaken the program. They clarify the direction of improvement.

DISCUSSION

The findings show that Hifdhul Qur'an learning at Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum Simo Boyolali reflects the strength of the salafiah pesantren tradition. The program relies on daily discipline, oral transmission, direct teacher correction, and repeated review (Lukens-Bull, 2019). This pattern is consistent with the broader character of pesantren education, where learning is not separated from daily religious formation. In this setting, Hifdhul Qur'an becomes both a learning program and a moral discipline (Dasrizal, Suhail, & Pradipta, 2024; Hanif et al., 2025).

The clearest strength of the program is target clarity. Santri generally understand that they are expected to memorize one page per day and gradually reach one juz per month. The target supports self-regulated learning because santri know what they must prepare before submission. This finding is relevant to Gunawan, Aziz, and Wahyuni (2026), who show the importance of self-regulated learning among students memorizing the Qur'an. A clear target can help santri plan effort, monitor progress, and evaluate their own readiness.

However, target clarity alone is not enough. Hifdhul Qur'an requires a balance between adding new memorization and protecting old memorization. The field data show that the pesantren addresses this issue through *sabqi*, *manzil*, *muraja'ah*, *tasmi'*, and *mukammal*. These practices function as retention mechanisms. They prevent the program from becoming a race to add pages without preserving earlier sections. This balance is essential because the quality of Qur'anic memorization is measured by durability, not only by accumulation (Ishomuddin, Rizquha, & Mubaroq, 2023).

The clarity of memorization targets at Bahrul Ulum confirms that Hifdhul Qur'an learning requires systematic management. A tahfidz program does not only depend on students' personal motivation. It also needs planning, target mapping, teacher coordination, monitoring, and periodic evaluation. Studies on Hifdzil Al-Qur'an management show that pesantren with structured planning tend to have clearer memorization flow, stronger student discipline, and better control over students' memorization progress (Ishomuddin et al., 2023). Therefore, the daily target at Bahrul Ulum should be read not merely as a memorization demand, but as an institutional strategy to organize santri learning behaviour.

Teacher supervision also emerges as a key factor. Santri strongly perceive that ustadz and supervisors listen carefully and correct mistakes directly. This finding confirms the importance of human guidance in Qur'anic learning. The Qur'an is not only memorized through silent reading. It is transmitted through sound, listening, correction, and repetition. Tajwid and makhraj cannot be fully controlled by self-study alone. A teacher is needed to detect small errors, correct articulation, and ensure that santri do not memorize mistakes (Alkouatli, 2023; Saputra, Fawaidi, & Salabi, 2024).

The evaluation model at Bahrul Ulum is significant because it includes quality indicators. Many institutions risk overemphasizing the number of juz. Bahrul Ulum still uses quantitative targets, but it also evaluates tajwid, makhraj, and recitation quality. The questionnaire confirms that santri recognize these elements as part of assessment. This

quality-oriented evaluation aligns with the purpose of Qur'anic education, where accuracy and reverence are inseparable from memorization (Albayrak, 2022; Saputra et al., 2024).

The use of mukammal as a periodic evaluation also has pedagogical value. Mukammal requires santri to integrate fragmented memorization into a larger unit. It tests not only memory but also concentration, stamina, and confidence. The difficulty santri experience during mukammal is therefore not a sign that the method should be removed. It is a sign that preparation should be strengthened. Dividing mukammal into half-juz stages for struggling santri is a reasonable corrective strategy. It preserves the standard while reducing excessive pressure (Ayyusufi et al., 2022; Farida, Maarif, & Kartiko, 2021).

Santri perceptions reveal an important affective dimension. They recognize the benefit of the program but also experience boredom, pressure, and unstable motivation. This finding shows that memorization learning requires emotional support. Repetition can build mastery, but it can also create fatigue. Teachers and musyrif need to combine firmness with motivation. They need to explain the purpose of targets, appreciate progress, and help santri manage difficulty. Without such support, a strong program structure can feel heavy for some santri (Gunawan et al., 2026; Muttaqin, Hambali, Ismail, Mulyadi, & Hady, 2024; Rohani, Gunawan, & Suroyya, 2025).

Time management appears as a central challenge. Interview data repeatedly mention the need for better awareness of time. This issue is common in boarding school contexts because santri follow many activities in one day. A santri who fails to manage small time segments may miss preparation, weaken muraja'ah, and struggle during submission. Therefore, the pesantren needs not only memorization targets but also explicit training in learning planning. Santri can be guided to prepare nightly targets, identify weak pages, and record muraja'ah completion (Al-Shawarghi, 2024).

Supervisor availability is another practical issue. Hifdhul Qur'an learning requires careful listening. If too many santri submit to too few supervisors, the quality of correction may decline. The program can respond by strengthening peer tasmī' under teacher control. Senior santri may help listen to muraja'ah, but final assessment should remain with ustadz. This layered supervision can reduce the burden on teachers while preserving authority and quality (Jannah, Yusrizal, & Khairuddin, 2023).

The decline of memorization outside the pesantren environment indicates that retention depends on learning ecology. Inside the pesantren, santri are surrounded by

schedule, peers, teachers, and worship routines. At home, these supports may weaken. The pesantren should therefore develop a holiday muraja'ah monitoring system. This can include a simple mutaba'ah book, online reporting, scheduled remote tasmi', or family guidance. The goal is not to move the entire pesantren system into the home but to maintain continuity during breaks (Alkouatli, 2023).

The study also suggests that salafiah pesantren can benefit from systematic evaluation without losing their classical identity. Evaluation does not have to weaken tradition. It can strengthen tradition by helping teachers identify which parts of the program work well and which parts need improvement. The data in this study show that classical methods such as sabaq, sabqi, binadhor, bil ghoib, and mukammal become stronger when they are supported by clear indicators, santri perception data, and structured follow-up (Diana & Zaini, 2023; Mardiyah, 2023).

This discussion has practical implications. First, Bahrul Ulum should maintain its daily target because santri generally understand and accept it. Second, the pesantren should strengthen individualized mentoring for santri whose reading ability or memorization level is still low. Third, muraja'ah should be monitored more systematically, especially for older memorization. Fourth, the pesantren should improve supervisor distribution and involve senior santri carefully. Fifth, evaluation should continue to assess tajwid, makhraj, fluency, and memorization durability, not only the number of memorized pages (Afwadzi & Miski, 2021; Alkouatli, 2023).

The study also has theoretical implications for Islamic education research. It shows that Hifdhul Qur'an learning is an integrated pedagogical system. It includes planning, implementation, evaluation, affective support, teacher authority, peer learning, and institutional culture. This finding challenges the assumption that Qur'anic memorization is only repetition. In a pesantren context, repetition is organized, supervised, corrected, and evaluated. It becomes a form of disciplined learning that connects cognition, spirituality, and character (Hasanah, 2021).

The limitation of this study lies in its single-site design and descriptive questionnaire analysis. The findings cannot be generalized statistically to all pesantren. However, they provide a detailed empirical picture of one salafiah pesantren program. Future studies can compare salafiah and modern pesantren, examine the relationship between muraja'ah

frequency and memorization retention, or develop a validated instrument for evaluating Hifdhul Qur'an learning quality (Anisaturrizqi et al., 2025).

The findings also indicate that Hifdhul Qur'an evaluation should use an improvement-oriented framework. Evaluation should not function only as judgment. It should produce information for action. When santri fail to reach the target, the program should identify why. The cause may be weak reading fluency, poor time management, insufficient muraja'ah, anxiety during mukammal, or lack of motivation. Each cause requires a different response. Weak reading fluency requires tahsin. Poor time management requires daily planning. Insufficient muraja'ah requires monitoring. Anxiety requires gradual exposure and encouragement. Lack of motivation requires mentoring and spiritual reinforcement (Ayyusufi et al., 2022).

The salafiah identity of Bahrul Ulum can become a strength in this improvement process. Classical pesantren culture usually has close daily interaction between teachers and santri. This closeness allows teachers to observe changes in discipline, motivation, and behaviour. If used systematically, such closeness can support early detection of learning problems. Teachers and musyrif can notice which santri begin to miss preparation, avoid submission, or repeat the same errors. This makes the pesantren environment suitable for formative evaluation (Sumadi et al., 2025).

The study also shows the importance of connecting evaluation with adab. Hifdhul Qur'an learning is not only about producing hafiz. It is about forming learners who respect the Qur'an, maintain discipline, accept correction, and show responsibility. Therefore, assessment should include learning attitudes. Santri who consistently prepare, attend muraja'ah, accept correction, and help peers show important signs of Qur'anic adab. These signs should be appreciated because they support long-term memorization quality (Syafriinal, 2025).

The use of questionnaire data in this study also shows that salafiah pesantren can adopt simple evaluative tools without losing traditional character. A short perception questionnaire can help leaders understand how santri experience the program. It can reveal whether the target is understood, whether correction is perceived as helpful, and whether evaluation is experienced as fair. This tool should not replace teacher wisdom. It should support decision-making by adding the learner's voice.

For future program development, Bahrul Ulum can build an integrated Hifdhul Qur'an evaluation sheet. The sheet may include daily sabaq, sabqi completion, muraja'ah pages, tajwid notes, makhraj notes, mukammal readiness, and teacher comments. A simple tool like this can help supervisors track progress more precisely. It can also help santri see their own development. Such documentation would strengthen the classical method with transparent monitoring.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Hifdhul Qur'an learning for santri at Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum Simo Boyolali is implemented systematically within a salafiah or classical pesantren tradition. The program has clear memorization targets, routine submission, scheduled muraja'ah, direct teacher correction, and layered evaluation through sabaq, sabqi, tasmi', sima'an, binadhor, bil ghoib, manzil, and mukammal. These practices show that the pesantren maintains classical Qur'anic pedagogy while applying a structured learning process.

Santri perceptions are generally positive. Most santri understand the targets, recognize the order of submission, and perceive teacher supervision as careful. They also understand that evaluation includes recitation quality, tajwid, and makhraj. These findings show that the program does not only emphasize the quantity of memorized juz. It also pays attention to recitation quality and memorization durability.

The main challenges are boredom, fluctuating motivation, weak time management, limited supervisors, difficulty during mukammal, and weaker retention when santri are outside the pesantren environment. These challenges require practical follow-up. The pesantren needs stronger individual mentoring, better supervisor distribution, systematic muraja'ah monitoring, and a holiday-based retention control system.

The study recommends maintaining the strength of classical methods while improving program evaluation. Hifdhul Qur'an learning will be more effective when quantitative targets are balanced with quality assessment, consistent review, teacher feedback, and santri-centered support. This balance is essential for preserving memorization, strengthening recitation, and forming disciplined Qur'anic learners.

The practical contribution of this study is the formulation of a balanced evaluation direction for Hifdhul Qur'an learning in a salafiah pesantren. The program should preserve

its classical strengths, especially direct teacher guidance, daily submission, and mukammal. At the same time, it should strengthen individualized records, peer-supported muraja'ah, holiday monitoring, and santri perception-based evaluation. These improvements can help Pondok Pesantren Bahrul Ulum protect the authenticity of Qur'anic learning while responding to the real needs of santri.

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