

## Implementation of Al-Qur'an Memorization Learning to Improve Soul Cleansing from an Islamic Counseling Perspective in Islamic Junior High School in Deli Serdang District

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### Abstract

This study analyzes the implementation of Al-Qur'an memorization as a means of cleansing the soul (tazkiyah an-nafs) from an Islamic counseling perspective in two Islamic junior high schools in Deli Serdang Regency: Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Junior High School and Bintang Islamic Junior High School. Using a qualitative, phenomenological approach, the study involved the principal, the memorization teacher, the guidance counselor, the homeroom teacher, and the students as informants. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The results of the study show: (1) The planning of the tahfidz program in both schools is oriented towards memorization as well as cleansing the students' souls in the context of Islamic counseling; (2) Implementation focuses on the integration of spiritual values through the talaqqi method and independent learning; (3) Evaluation includes cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects through monthly tasmi', tasmi' akbar, and jilsat itqon; (4) Obstacles include differences in students' cognitive abilities, heterogeneous educational backgrounds, and limited learning time; (5) The program's advantages are seen in the improvement of students' noble morals, discipline, and peace of mind. This research provides theoretical and practical contributions to the development of a holistic and meaningful tahfidz learning model within modern Islamic education.

**Keywords:** tahfidz Al-qur'an, tazkiyah an-nafs, islamic counseling, character education

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis implementasi pembelajaran tahfidz Al-Qur'an sebagai sarana pembersihan jiwa (tazkiyah an-nafs) dalam perspektif konseling Islami di dua sekolah Islam Kabupaten Deli Serdang: SMP Islam Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif dan SMP Islam Bintang. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode fenomenologi, penelitian melibatkan kepala sekolah, guru tahfidz, guru BK, wali kelas, dan siswa sebagai informan. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan: (1) Perencanaan program tahfidz di kedua sekolah berorientasi pada hafalan sekaligus pembersihan jiwa siswa dalam konteks konseling Islami; (2) Implementasi fokus pada integrasi nilai-nilai spiritual melalui metode talaqqi dan pembelajaran mandiri; (3) Evaluasi mencakup aspek kognitif, afektif, dan spiritual melalui tasmi' bulanan, tasmi' akbar, dan jilsat itqon; (4) Hambatan meliputi perbedaan kemampuan kognitif siswa, latar belakang pendidikan heterogen, dan keterbatasan waktu pembelajaran; (5) Keunggulan program terlihat pada peningkatan akhlak mulia, kedisiplinan, dan ketenangan jiwa siswa. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi teoretis dan praktis untuk pengembangan model pembelajaran tahfidz yang holistik dan bermakna dalam konteks pendidikan Islam modern.

**Keywords:** tahfidz Al-qur'an, tazkiyah an-nafs, konseling islami, pendidikan karakter

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## INTRODUCTION

In the midst of the rapid modernization and complex psychosocial challenges of adolescence, education in Islamic junior high schools (Islamic Junior High School) has a dual mandate: not only to develop students' intellectual capacity, but also to shape character and purify the soul (*tazkiyah al-nafs*) as the foundation of Muslim personality. This process of cleansing the soul is central to Islamic counseling, which aims to restore the individual to his natural state through an integrative approach that combines psychology and divine values. In this context, learning tahfidz Al-Qur'an (memorizing the Qur'an) emerged as an educational-spiritual practice believed to have a transformative impact on students' cognitive development and mental and spiritual health.

The landscape of tahfidz learning implementation in the contemporary era shows a variety of adaptive methods. As Susanto et al (2021) found, schools such as Islamic Junior High School Plus Babussalam and Tahfidz Yatim Dhuafa Islamic Boarding School use different approaches ranging from voice-based online learning to traditional Pakistani methods that demonstrate flexibility in maintaining continuity of memorization. Further innovation is achieved through technology integration, where the *blended-learning flipped-classroom* model successfully increases students' motivation and memorization effectiveness without neglecting spiritual values (Zakariyah et al, 2025). Structured approaches such as the "One Day One Verse" program have also proven effective in fostering habituation patterns through formation, which involves memorizing, understanding, and applying Qur'anic values, supported by parents' active role (Suryana et al., 2024).

From the perspective of Islamic counseling, memorizing the Qur'an is not merely a repetitive cognitive activity. It is a spiritual discipline with the potential to serve as a therapeutic medium. Tawba (repentance) and *istighfar* (begging)- based therapies, embedded in the ethics of a Qur'an memorizer, have been studied by Uyun et al. (2019) and shown to significantly improve the mental and physical health of Muslim students. The repetitive process of memorization, accompanied by contemplation of its meaning, can serve as a form of *dhikr* that calms the heart, cleanses negative thoughts, and strengthens spiritual connections. Routine evaluation and guidance from supervisors (*murabbi*) in the tahfidz program, as described by Alwi et al (2023), also serve as a form of counseling that supports the development of students' Islamic character.

However, implementing tahfidz for *tazkiyah al-nafs* is not without challenges. Variations in students' cognitive capacity and memory are the main inhibiting factors that affect the speed and durability of memorization (Dimyathi et al., 2025). On the other hand, uneven infrastructure and digital literacy readiness can hinder the adoption of a more effective blended learning model (Zakariyah et al., 2025). These challenges indicate the need for an approach that is not only uniform but also sensitive to individual differences and local contexts.

In particular, in Deli Serdang Regency, which has a socio-cultural character and a wealth of distinctive Islamic educational institutions, how tahfidz learning is implemented at the Islamic Junior High School level and how it correlates with soul-cleansing efforts from the perspective of Islamic counseling still need to be mapped comprehensively. Understanding this dynamic is important to optimize the role of religious education in answering the mental anxiety of the younger generation.

Based on the description above, the gap in this study lies in the absence of research specifically investigating the implementation of Qur'an tahfidz as a structured Islamic counseling intervention to improve *tazkiyah al-nafs* (cleansing of the soul) among Islamic



Junior High School students in Deli Serdang Regency. Previous studies have focused more on memorization methods, cognitive effectiveness, or spiritual benefits in general, without highlighting Islamic counseling as a key theoretical framework and how the process is operationalized in formal school settings in this region.

This research aims to: (1) Analyze various methods and models of the implementation of tahfidz Al-Qur'an learning in Islamic Junior High Schools in Deli Serdang Regency; (2) Explain the mechanism and process of tahfidz learning as a form of Islamic counseling intervention for the cleansing of the soul (*tazkiyah al-nafs*) from the perspective of teachers, counselors, and students; and (3) Identify supporting and inhibiting factors in integrating the goals of tahfidz with the goals of Islamic counseling in the school environment.

The novelty of this research lies in the integration of three domains of knowledge: tahfidz education, Islamic counseling, and educational psychology, which are studied in a specific geographical and institutional context (Islamic Junior High School in Deli Serdang). This research not only views tahfidz as a religious curriculum but also positions it as a therapeutic modality in Islamic counseling, carried out through pedagogical routines in schools. Thus, the resulting contribution will inform the development of tahfidz-based Islamic guidance and counseling models in Islamic schools.

## METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method. Phenomenology aims to understand the deeper meaning of an individual's life experiences in a particular context. Research Location and Time: The research was conducted at two schools: Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Junior High School, North Sumatra (Percut Sei Tuan District), with 457 students (269 males, 188 females), with Accreditation: A; and Bintang Islamic Junior High School (Batang Kuis District), with 47 students (21 males, 26 females), with Accreditation: B. Research Time: September-December 2024. Research informants were purposively selected and included: 2 Principals, 6 Tahfidz Teachers, 2 Guidance and Counseling Teachers, 6 Homeroom Teachers, and 6 Students (2-3 from each grade level), for a total of 22 informants.

Data Collection Techniques: In-depth Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore informants' experiences, perceptions, and understanding of the implementation of tahfidz learning and spiritual cleansing. Non-Participatory Observation: Direct observation of the tahfidz learning process, worship activities, and students' social interactions within the school environment. Documentation: Collection of documents related to the tahfidz program, curriculum, student journals, teacher notes, and photos/videos of learning activities.

Analysis Technique: Data was analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model with three steps: Data Reduction: Selection, focus on simplification, and transformation of raw data from the field; Data Presentation: Arranging information to enable conclusions and action; Conclusion Drawing: Verification through data triangulation. Data Validity Test: Credibility: Triangulation of sources (interviews, observations, documentation); Transferability: Detailed description of the research context; Dependability: Audit trail and documentation of the research process; Verifiability: Confirmability audit by peer review.



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

Tahfidz comes from the Arabic hafaza, meaning "to memorize or preserve." Terminologically, tahfidz of the Qur'an is the process of memorizing all verses of the Qur'an from beginning to end with thoroughness and precision. True memorizers of the Qur'an are required to master memorization as a whole, both in terms of accuracy of recitation and understanding the meaning contained in each verse.

Common tahfidz learning methods used in Indonesia include: 1) The *Talaqqi* Method. The Talaqqi method is a direct learning approach between teacher and student, in which the teacher first reads the Qur'anic verses, then the students imitate. This process continues until students can read correctly according to the rules of tajweed, after which they may begin memorizing. 2) The *Sorogan* Method. The Sorogan method is a face-to-face learning method in which students recite their memorization in front of the teacher for evaluation and correction. 3) *Mudzakarah* Method: This method involves group discussions to deepen collective memorization of the Al-Qur'an.

*Tazkiyah An-Nafs* (Soul Cleansing) comes from the word *zakka*, meaning to purify or cleanse. In the Islamic context, *tazkiyah an-nafs* refers to the process of purifying the soul of despicable qualities and cultivating noble ones through worship and spiritual practices. The *tazkiyah* process can be achieved through three methods: 1) *Takhalli*: Cleansing oneself from despicable qualities through repentance and istighfar, 2) *Tahalli*: Accustoming oneself to noble qualities through continuous training and practice, 3) *Tajalli*: The concrete manifestation of the purity of the soul through closeness to Allah SWT.

Islamic counseling is the process of providing assistance to individuals so they can live according to Allah's provisions and guidance, thereby achieving happiness in this world and the hereafter. In the context of education, Islamic counseling functions as: 1) Preventive: Preventing the emergence of problems in students, 2) Curative: Solving problems currently experienced by students, 3) Developmental: Optimally developing students' positive potential. The integration of tahfidz learning with Islamic counseling creates a holistic approach that not only develops memorization skills but also fosters students' spiritual and psychological transformation.

The tahfidz learning plan at this school includes: 1) Learning Schedule: Monday-Friday, 7:30-9:30 AM (2 hours), with special placement on Monday after the flag ceremony, and the Memorization Target is as follows: 1) Per semester: 1 Juz, 2) Per year: 2 Juz, 3) For 3 years (Junior High School): minimum 6 Juz, and as for student memorization achievements, some students reach 10 Juz, students with difficulty at least 5 Juz. The tahfidz learning method at Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Middle School is Talaqqi (the teacher reads, students imitate) with tajweed verification before entering the memorization phase. And Tahsin Class: Provided for students who are not yet fluent in reciting the Quran, with a focus on improving their recitation.

The Tahfidz learning plan at Bintang Islamic Junior High School includes: Learning Schedule: Monday-Saturday, with 1 lesson per hour (40 minutes) per day; Memorization Targets: Per year: 1 Juz; Over 3 years: minimum 3 Juz. Reality: Most students have not reached the target. The learning method at Bintang Islamic Junior High School is independent memorization with submissions (*tasmi'*) to the tahfidz teacher. Because students go home every day, family support is one of the keys to successful memorization. The Tahfidz program involves parents in supporting students' memorization at home.



Both schools implement structured planning, but with different approaches. Al-Azhar Junior High School allocates a longer time (2 hours) with a frequency of 5 days, while Bintang Islamic Junior High School applies a shorter time distribution but more frequently. From an Islamic counseling perspective, both plans integrate the spiritual dimension through: morning implementation, which is believed to carry spiritual blessings; integration with other worship activities; and emphasis on the meaning and values of the Qur'an, not just mechanical memorization.

The implementation strategy at Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Junior High School is Spiritual Counseling, a soul-cleansing program conducted through dhikr (remembrance of God) and sholawat (prayer) after prayer, and self-reflection (*muhasabah*) on relationships with parents and social interaction. The implementation of Quran memorization at Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Junior High School is consistent, occurring five days a week. Based on observations of learning outcomes, students are calmer during teaching and learning, more devout in prayer, communication is more organized and polite, and there is no evidence of rude behavior towards peers (Indainanto et al., 2023).

The implementation strategy for Islamic Spiritual Counseling in the Soul-Cleansing Program includes regular *Tausyiah* (spiritual sermons), teachers' educational advice, and daily Quran memorization. Their observations showed that students were more disciplined in class, accepted the teacher's advice well, behaved more civilly, and had better manners in their interactions. Students from both schools reported their experiences during the soul-cleansing program: Damar Ghali (Grade 9, Al-Azhar) initially felt uncomfortable, but over time he felt comfortable and happy and memorized 4 Juz (chapters). Rivaldi Dzahab (Grade 8, Al-Azhar): He felt calm, less anxious, and more enthusiastic about worship. He memorized 2 Juz (chapters). Rizky Ananda (Grade 9, Bintang): He memorized 2 Juz (chapters), but faced challenges from the temptations of television and gadgets at home. Arfi Nabil (Grade 8, Bintang): He memorized 1 Juz (chapters), and he experienced an improvement in his memorization of other subjects.

1. Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Junior High School implements a tiered evaluation system: Monthly *Tasmi'*: Monthly evaluation using the verse-connection method, tested by other tahfidz teachers for objectivity. It serves to foster discipline and regular self-reflection. *Tasmi'* Akbar: An annual evaluation that reflects a student's spiritual journey. It measures not only memorization but also character development and discipline. Jilsat Itqon: The highest level, with the recitation of 6-15 Juz (chapters) of the Quran in one sitting, assessed by an external examiner with a sanad (chain of narration). It represents the pinnacle of achievement in the spiritual journey.
2. Bintang Islamic Junior High School implements a simpler evaluation system: End-of-Year *Tasmi'* (Grades 7-8). Students recite the memorized text according to the target (1 Juz per year), which is reviewed by a tahfidz teacher. Sidang Munaqasyah (Grade 9): The final exam for graduation using the verse-connection method for a total of 3 Juz. From an Islamic counseling perspective, the evaluation system aims not only to measure memorization but also to provide opportunities for regular *muhasabah* (introspection), to build discipline and consistency in worship, to measure spiritual and psychological transformation, and to create a profound spiritual experience.

Obstacles at Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Junior High School include differences in Cognitive Abilities: not all students have the same memorization ability, leading to significant variations in achievement. Heterogeneous Educational Background: Students come from various elementary schools with different Qur'an learning bases (Chinese



Elementary School, Public Elementary School, Islamic Elementary School). Minimal Basic Quran Reading Ability: Some students are not yet fluent in reading the Quran and require a remedial Tahsin Class program. Implications: This inequality can hinder the cleansing of the soul, as students left behind may lose motivation and self-confidence.

Obstacles at Bintang Islamic Junior High School include the Day-After System: as a day-after school, many students do not memorize at home. Time Limitations: The allocation of time for tahfidz at school is limited (40 minutes/day), not enough for intensive guidance. Lack of Family Support: The home environment is filled with distractions (television, gadgets) that interfere with memorization and concentration. Impact on Target Achievement: Most students have not met the minimum target of 3 Juz. These obstacles indicate that the success of the tahfidz program depends not only on school facilities but also on students' initial readiness, family support, a conducive environment, consistent learning, and integration with effective counseling programs.

The Advantages of Implementing Al-Quran Memorization Learning for Soul Cleansing. Formation of Noble Morals: Consistent memorization of the Qur'an helps internalize its moral values, leading to better behavior. Ease in Guiding Worship: Students who participate in memorization demonstrate greater enthusiasm in performing worship, having built a strong spiritual foundation. Improved Relationships with Teachers: Students who participate in memorization demonstrate more politeness and respect, reflecting the internalization of the value of ta'dhim (respect) taught in Islam. Quality of Relationships Between Students: A strong atmosphere of brotherhood (ukhuwah Islamiyah) is created, with students becoming more tolerant, caring, and able to control their emotions. Improved Cognitive Abilities: The memorization program trains concentration and memory, which in turn positively impact learning in other subjects. Peace of Mind: Memorizing the tahfidz creates inner peace (thuma'ninah al-qalb), which is the primary goal of Islamic counseling. The tahfidz program is a highly effective preventive counseling tool because it cleanses the soul of negative traits, instills positive values, builds psychological resilience, fosters spiritual independence, and develops emotional-spiritual intelligence.

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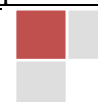
**Table 1.**

Comparative Analysis of the Implementation of the Tahfidz Program as an Islamic Counseling Intervention.

<b>Analysis Category</b>	<b>Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Junior High School</b>	<b>Bintang Islamic Junior High School</b>	<b>Islamic Counseling Perspective &amp; Common Ground</b>
Learning Plan & Target	- Schedule: Mon-Fri (07.30-09.30), 2 hours/day. - Target: 1 Juz/semester, 2 Juz/year, min. 6 Juz in 3 years. - Achievement: Varied, 5-10 Juz.	- Schedule: Mon-Sat, 40 minutes/day. - Target: 1 Juz/year, min. 3 Juz in 3 years. - Reality: Majority have not met the target.	Both schools implement structured planning. Al-Azhar emphasizes time intensity, while Bintang focuses on frequency. Integration with the spiritual dimension (blessings of morning time, internalization of values) forms the basis of Islamic counseling.



Learning Method	Talaqqi & Tahsin: Teacher reads, students imitate with tajweed verification. Tahsin Class for beginners.	Independent & Tasmi': Students memorize independently then recite (tasmi') to the teacher.	The Talaqqi method (Al-Azhar) is more structured and interactive, suitable for direct monitoring. The independent method (Bintang) requires high discipline and family support.
Implementation & Counseling Strategy	Spiritual Counseling: Soul-cleansing (tazkiyah) program through dhikr, sholawat, and muhasabah after prayer.	Spiritual Counseling: Regular Tausyiah (sermons), educational advice from teachers, and daily Quran memorization.	Both integrate tazkiyah an-nafs programs (takhalli, tahalli, tajalli) into routines for students' spiritual and psychological transformation.
Observed Results & Impact	Students are calmer, more devout in prayer, communication is more organized and polite, with no evidence of rude behavior.	Students are more disciplined, accept teacher advice well, and behave more politely in interactions.	The memorization program functions as a curative and preventive intervention in counseling, shaping character, facilitating worship, and improving social relationships.
Student Experience (Testimony)	- Damar Ghali (Grade 9): Initially uncomfortable, then became comfortable and memorized 4 Juz. - Rivaldi Dzahab (Grade 8): Felt calmer, less anxious, more enthusiastic about worship, memorized 2 Juz.	- Rizky Ananda (Grade 9): Memorized 2 Juz, faced challenges from TV/gadget temptations at home. - Arfi Nabil (Grade 8): Memorized 1 Juz, experienced improvement in memorizing other subjects.	Psycho-spiritual transformation is evident (calmness, enthusiasm for worship). External challenges (gadgets, home environment) are highly influential, especially for day schools.
Evaluation System	Tiered: 1. Monthly Tasmi': Verse-connection method assessed by other teachers. 2. Annual Tasmi' Akbar: Measures spiritual development.	Simpler: 1. End-of-Year Tasmi' (Gr.7-8): Recite annual target. 2. Sidang Munaqasyah (Gr.9): Final exam	Evaluation not only measures memorization but also serves as a medium for muhasabah (introspection), builds worship discipline, and creates a profound spiritual experience,



	3. Jilsat Itqon (Peak): External exam with sanad for 6-15 Juz.	for 3 Juz using verse-connection.	aligning with Islamic counseling goals.
Obstacles & Challenges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Differences in cognitive ability &amp; educational background.</li> <li>2. Minimal basic Quran reading skill (Tahsin) among some students.</li> <li>3. Risks lowering motivation for struggling students.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Day-school system: Lack of preparation at home.</li> <li>2. Limited time (40 mins/day).</li> <li>3. Lack of family support, many distractions (TV, gadgets).</li> <li>4. Majority fail to meet targets.</li> </ol>	<p>Program success depends on students' initial readiness, family support, conducive environment, and program consistency. The tahfidz program is an effective preventive counseling instrument for soul cleansing and building resilience.</p>

### Discussion

The findings reveal that the implementation of tahfidz in both Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif and Bintang Islamic Junior High Schools is not merely oriented toward cognitive memorization but is consciously designed, albeit with varying degrees of depth, to serve as a medium for *tazkiyah an-nafs* (soul purification). The implementation of tahfidz at Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Junior High School and Bintang Islamic Junior High School shows that Qur'an memorization activities are not only directed at the cognitive aspect, but also as a means of *tazkiyah an-nafs*. Hartati (2018) emphasized that *tazkiyatun nafs* is a continuous process of soul purification through the habit of worship and the strengthening of self-control, so that individuals can suppress negative tendencies and develop positive morals. In the context of tahfidz education, memorization accompanied by spiritual guidance helps students not only remember verses but also build a more stable moral and religious awareness. This reinforces the assumption that tahfidz can function as an instrument of personality formation and self-control.

The integration of spiritual aspects and psychological well-being is also evident in the practice of tahfidz. Hasanah and Haris (2023) found that integrating spirituality into the tahfidz program improves students' subjective well-being, including emotional calmness, learning motivation, and mental resilience. This finding is reinforced by Shofiah et al (2025) who developed an Islamic Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (I-CBT) model for tahfidz students. They concluded that a Qur'an-based spiritual approach can improve mental health, reduce stress, and strengthen students' psychological resilience. Thus, tahfidz serves as a medium for spiritual guidance and emotional stability.

Regarding learning patterns, Suryana et al. (2024) explained that the success of the tahfidz program is greatly influenced by a memorization method that combines repetition, understanding of meaning, and spiritual habituation. This pattern allows students not only to memorize mechanically but also to understand the verse's content and internalize its value. Susanto et al (2021) added that adaptive tahfidz learning using a combination of online, offline, and face-to-face methods can still be effective as long as there is teacher control and consistent murajaah routines. This shows that the variety of methods does not reduce the essence of tahfidz as a spiritual development process.

From an educational management perspective, Nasrulloh et al. (2022) emphasized that the success of the tahfidz program depends heavily on structured learning management, active teacher involvement, and a continuous evaluation system. A



systematically managed tahfidz program can improve memorization quality while fostering student discipline. Meanwhile, Mohd Saad et al. (2025) stated that an integrated tahfidz curriculum needs to develop high-level thinking skills (HOTS) so that students not only memorize, but also understand and practice the values of the Qur'an. This means that effective tahfidz must combine memorization, understanding, and reflection on values.

In the context of character development and spiritual education for the younger generation, Ahyar et al. (2023) found that a tahfidz educational environment that emphasizes habituation to worship, discipline, and religious interaction can foster strong religious character. Alwi et al (2023) also stated that tahfidz learning contributes to the formation of Islamic morals through worship routines, responsibilities, and teacher examples. In addition, Shofwan et al. (2019) emphasized that character-based tahfidz learning strategies must be carried out consistently and structured so that moral values can be internalized in students' daily behavior.

Conceptually, the tahfidz approach, integrated with spiritual values and character, aligns with the principles of *Maqasid al-Sharia*. Abdullah et al. (2025) explained that the development of a tahfidz empowerment index based on Maqasid Syariah aims to maintain religion, intellect, and soul simultaneously through Qur'an education. This approach treats tahfidz as an instrument of holistic human development, encompassing religious, intellectual, and social dimensions. Thus, the implementation of tahfidz in both schools can be understood as a systematic effort to make memorization of the Qur'an a means of *tazkiyah an-nafs*, character building, and strengthening students' psychological well-being on an ongoing basis.

The implementation of tahfidz Al-Qur'an learning at Islamic Junior High School in the Deli Serdang Regency area shows that the memorization program is not only oriented towards cognitive achievement but also serves as a medium of *tazkiyah an-nafs* in the perspective of Islamic counseling. Various learning methods are used to adapt to students' conditions, ranging from a combination of online and offline approaches to periodic memorization sessions, to the use of the comb method, which emphasizes the consistency of *murajaah* to maintain the quality of memorization (Kurniailah et al., 2023). Research by Susanto et al. (2021). emphasized that the flexibility of tahfidz learning methods, including the use of digital technologies such as voice notes and online platforms, can maintain the effectiveness of memorization while maintaining students' spiritual discipline. Meanwhile, the blended learning and flipped classroom approaches have also been shown to increase students' motivation and the intensity of their interaction with the Qur'an, making the memorization process more active and reflective (Zakariyah et al., 2025).

From the perspective of Islamic counseling, tahfidz learning, when integrated with spiritual practices such as *dhikr*, repentance, and self-reflection, has been shown to improve students' mental health and inner peace. Uyun et al. (2019) show that spiritual therapy based on repentance and *istighfar* can improve psychological health and reduce stress levels, thereby supporting the process of cleansing the soul in a sustainable manner (Aditia et al., 2025). This is strengthened by the findings of Suryana et al. (2024) who stated that memorization patterns accompanied by an understanding of religious meaning and practice are able to encourage the internalization of the value of the Qur'an in students' daily behavior. The integration between memorization, understanding, and worship habits makes tahfidz a comprehensive spiritual development process, not just an academic



activity. Thus, tahfidz can be understood as an effective psycho-spiritual intervention in shaping emotional calm, discipline, and the quality of students' social relationships.

However, the implementation of the tahfidz program also faces various challenges, including differences in students' cognitive abilities, teachers' pedagogical readiness, and the need for family support to maintain consistent memorization. Dimiyathi et al. (2025) emphasize the importance of strengthening working memory strategies to improve memory and retention in students with different abilities. In addition, Mohd Saad et al (2025). highlighting the need to improve teachers' competence in integrating high-level thinking skills (HOTS) into the tahfidz curriculum so that learning is not only mechanical but also reflective. Therefore, a structured memorization routine, the use of supporting technology, and parental involvement are needed to strengthen the continuity of spiritual development between school and home. Overall, the implementation of Islamic counseling-based tahfidz at Deli Serdang Islamic Junior High School shows great potential to purify the soul and holistically form students' character.

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that the tahfidz program at Al-Azhar Asy-Syarif Islamic Junior High School and Bintang Islamic Junior High School not only functions as a cognitive memorization activity but also serves as an instrument for tazkiyah an-nafs transformation when integrated with the principles of Islamic counseling guidance. The spiritual impact of tahfidz is evident not in the amount of memorization alone, but in the depth of integration among spiritual coaching, self-reflection, and structured behavioral assistance. The Al-Azhar model, which emphasizes muhasabah, dhikr, and multi-level spiritual evaluation, leads to emotional stability, inner peace, and stronger moral formation than a more limited approach to family support and coaching time. Program planning that considers students' psychological and spiritual needs, implementation that combines memorization, reflection, and counseling, and multidimensional evaluations have been shown to encourage students' emotional regulation, discipline, and social relationship quality. Theoretically, these findings expand the framework of Islamic counseling from a problem-solving orientation to a preventive-formative model based on spiritual development, while affirming tahfidz as a structured psycho-spiritual intervention in formal education. Although limited to two schools and a qualitative approach, this study confirms that the effectiveness of tahfidz is optimal when it is built as a holistic spiritual counseling ecosystem that integrates schools, teachers, and families in students' inner transformation.

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