URGENCY OF THE QUR'AN MEMORIZATION PROGRAM IN SHAPING THE CHARACTER OF URBAN COMMUNITIES

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Abstract

This study examines the urgency of Qur'an memorization programs in urban communities through a qualitative library-based approach, employing thematic analysis of relevant academic sources. Modernization and secularization in urban environments have significantly influenced the spiritual and moral orientation of younger generations, thereby creating increasingly complex challenges in character formation. The results of the literature review indicate that Qur'an memorization programs play a strategic role in shaping Qur'anic character through the internalization of religious values and moral development. The implementation of these programs has evolved into various models, including tahfidz houses, integrated Islamic schools, and digital tahfidz communities, with their effectiveness influenced by family support, educator competence, facility readiness, and adaptability to the digital environment. The main challenges identified include limited participant time, inadequate supporting facilities, and pressure from a less conducive digital culture. Therefore, strengthening tahfidz programs in urban areas requires strategic institutional management, enhanced educator capacity, targeted integration of digital technology, and supportive public policies. This research contributes to the field of Islamic education by reinforcing the conceptual understanding of the strategic role of *tahfidz al-Qur'an* in shaping Qur'anic character within urban society.

INTRODUCTION

Rapid social and cultural changes in urban society have given rise to various fundamental issues, such as a moral crisis (Marlisa, 2023), the rise of hedonism (Munawaroh, 2022), and a process of secularization that marginalizes religion from the public sphere (Harris, 2021). These dynamics influence mindsets, lifestyles (Nuronia, 2025), and societal value systems, particularly in the spiritual and societal value systems,

particularly in the spiritual and religious dimensions (Salamah, 2023). Modernization and technological advancement have accelerated the erosion of Islamic values, especially among the younger generation of urban communities living within competitive, individualistic, and material-oriented cultures (Aulia Herawati, 2025). As a result, spiritual orientation among youth is weakening, the role of religion in character formation is increasingly marginalized (Hastini, 2020), and the regulatory function of religious values in shaping social attitudes and behavior continues to decline (Fuadi, 2019). These conditions are further exacerbated by the intensity of digital media use, which diverts attention from educational and religious activities (Pahlevi, 2021) (Karunia, 2021).

These conditions indicate that the challenges faced by urban society are not merely structural, but also deeply affect character formation and religious identity. The shift in moral values is reflected in a decline in social awareness, a weakening of role models, and a strengthening of individualistic life orientations (Arianto, 2024). The hedonistic culture fostered by modernization (Andini, 2024) has led to the measurement of happiness in material terms, thereby diminishing spiritual orientation (Chalim, 2023). Meanwhile, the ongoing process of secularization in urban spaces has resulted in the suboptimal function of religion as a guide for social ethics (Damanik, 2023). In parallel, the rapid flow of digitalization has further weakened the internalization and control of religious values in the lives of the younger generation (Wibiosono, 2020).

In this context, Islamic education plays a strategic role as an instrument for developing values capable of responding to social change in both valuable (Lestari, 2021) and meaningful ways (Hakim, 2025). One fundamental form of Islamic education is Qur'an memorization (*tahfidz alqur'an*), which positions the Qur'an as the primary source of values internalized through memorization, habituation, and continuous mentoring (Mubarokah, 2025). The *tahfidz* process is not merely cognitive and verbal but also encompasses social and psychological dimensions (Nuha, 2023). It contributes to the development of concentration, self-control, perseverance, and and resilience, enabling learners to face the pressures of competitive urban life (Putri, 2024). Through the internalization of Qur'anic values, *tahfidz* plays a vital role in forming a disciplined, honest (Nuryupa, 2024), and responsible character (Kusumaningrum, 2025), while simultaneously strengthening Islamic identity in response to popular culture (Murtopo,

2024) and the growing tendency toward liberalism in urban environments (Munawir, 2024).

As urban communities increasingly recognize the importance of Quranic education, Qur'an memorization programs have been adapted into various flexible and contextual models. At the community level, *Rumah Tahfidz Indonesia* (RTI) integrates family-based coaching with structured memorization targets (Nuzula, 2021). In formal educational institutions, such as SIT Luqman Al-Hakim Surabaya, a level-based-*tahfidz* curriculum is implemented (Raharja, 2023). Meanwhile, within technology-based non-formal settings, the One Day One Juz (ODOJ) community utilizes online platforms to accommodate the high mobility of urban populations (Laksono, 2024). However, the implementation of *tahfidz* programs in urban areas continuous faces challenges, including limited participant time, low family involvement, and insufficient facilities and permanent educators (Latif, 2024). Empirical data indicate that although the RTI network has expanded to more than 1,800 units, approximately 64% still experience constraints related to learning space and the availability of permanent teachers (Sangsoko, 2020). Similarly the consistency rate of ODOJ remains relatively low, ranging from 52–55% (Yasin, 2025).

Various empirical studies have demonstrated that Qur'an memorization programs contribute significantly to the formation of religious attitudes (Sholihah, 2024) and religious character (Nugroho, 2024) (Ramadhan, 2024). In parallel, studies examining the thoughts of Islamic education figures such as Mahmud Yunus (Asror, 2023), KH. Ahmad Dahlan (Azzahra, 2023), Ibn Miskawaih (Hanifah, 2024), Al-Ghazali, and Ikhwan Al-Shafa (Firdasari, 2024) emphasize the importance of value habituation (Apriliani, 2024), exemplary role models (Novita, 2021), and synergy between educators, institutions, and the community in character formation (Nafiah, 2021). However, these studies tend to remain normative or are limited to specific institutional contexts, and have not comprehensively connected *tahfidz* practice with the complex socio-cultural dynamics of urban society (Abu Bakar, 2024). Therefore, the novelty of this research lies in examining the urgency of *tahfidz al-Qur'an* programs within urban society through a literature-based analysis that integrates theological, sociological, and pedagogical perspectives, aiming to formulate strategies for strengthening tahfidz programs that are contextual, effective, and sustainable in urban environments.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative library-based research approach to examine the urgency of Qur'an memorization (*tahfidz al-Qur'an*) programs in the context of urban society. The research data consist of secondary sources, including scientific books, national and international journal articles, conference proceedings, and other relevant academic documents related to Qur'an memorization, character education, and urban community dynamics. These sources were selectively chosen based on their relevance and academic credibility (Roziqi, 2025).

Data collection was conducted through documentary analysis, involving the systematic searching, selection, and classification of relevant literature. The data were analyzed using thematic descriptive analysis, which included data reduction, thematic categorization, and critical interpretation, in order to generate a systematic and comprehensive conceptual synthesis (Arikunto, 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Qur'an Memorization Programs in Urban Society

The implementation of Qur'an memorization (*tahfidz al-Qur'an*) programs in urban society has undergone significant transformation in response to the changing needs, lifestyles, and challenges of urban communities. One widely adopted model is the establishment of community-based *Rumah Tahfidz* located in residential areas, operating at both neighborhood and household levels (Nuzula, 2021). These institutions are commonly initiated by community leaders, mosques, or Islamic foundations and are primarily targeted at children and adolescents living nearby. The main strength of this model lies in its flexibility of time and personalized learning approach, which allows adaptation to the dynamic rhythm of urban life.

In addition to community-based models, integrated Islamic schools in urban areas have developed as formal educational institutions that incorporate *tahfidz al-Qur'an* into their curricula across various educational levels, ranging from kindergarten and elementary school to secondary education and higher education institutions (Raharja, 2023). In these schools, Qur'an memorization programs are generally implemented through daily memorization routines with clearly defined targets per semester, integrated with Qur'anic character development. The effectiveness of this model is strongly influenced by parental involvement and a supportive school environment,

although its implementation often requires adjustment to the high academic demands characteristic of urban educational settings.

The emergence of digital-based Qur'an memorization communities represents a response to the technology-oriented lifestyle of urban society. Various platforms—such as mobile applications, online study groups, and virtual memorization classes—have become alternative means for engaging with the Qur'an (Laksono, 2024). These digital initiatives enable adults and young professionals with limited offline time to remain connected to Qur'anic learning. However, this model faces challenges related to consistency, self-discipline, and limited personal supervision, despite offering advantages such as broader access and temporal flexibility.

Beyond purely online or offline models, several urban *tahfidz* institutions have adopted hybrid learning models that combine face-to-face instruction with digital platforms to enhance memorization outcomes (Pangestu, 2025). This approach applies structured memorization targets similar to digital programs, while still requiring periodic offline evaluations conducted at *Rumah Tahfidz* or Qur'anic learning councils. The hybrid model is considered highly adaptive to urban life, as it offers flexibility without compromising the quality of memorization, which is maintained through direct guidance from *mushyrif* or qualified mentors.

Overall, the design and implementation of *tahfidz al-Qur'an* programs in urban communities demonstrate creative and contextual adaptation to contemporary social change. Each model community-based *Rumah Tahfidz*, integrated Islamic schools, digital communities, and hybrid programs possesses distinct strengths and limitations. The success of these initiatives is largely determined by family involvement, institutional support, and the effective utilization of technology. Therefore, strengthening collaboration among families, educational institutions, religious organizations, and digital platforms is essential to positioning *tahfidz al-Qur'an* as an effective spiritual and educational instrument within urban society.

Empirical findings further confirm this diversity of implementation models. A study conducted in Medan City highlights that community-based *Rumah Tahfidz* emphasize environmental proximity, the *talaqqi* method, and parental involvement, making them effective for school-age learners, although their sustainability depends on the availability of competent educators (Asari, 2023). Meanwhile, digital *tahfidz* programs in Jakarta and Banten provide flexibility and broad access for adolescents and

young adults through online platforms, but face limitations in terms of intensive personal mentoring (Rohman, 2023). Additionally, mosques as centers of Qur'an memorization such as the Al-Akbar National Mosque in Surabaya utilize prayer times to facilitate inclusive memorization circles, although these initiatives are constrained by limited mentoring time and participant continuity.

Analytically, these models reveal that the success of *tahfidz* programs in urban society is influenced by accessibility, social support, and temporal flexibility, while their limitations relate to mentor availability, intensity of guidance, and program sustainability. These findings underscore the urgent need for an integrative and adaptive approach in developing Qur'an memorization programs that are responsive to the complex socio-cultural dynamics of urban life.

Urgency of Qur'an Memorization Programs in Urban Society

The urgency of Qur'an memorization (*tahfidz al-Qur'an*) programs in urban society can be pedagogically understood as a strategic effort to shape students' character and spirituality from an early age through a continuous educational process. Within urban environments characterized by fast-paced lifestyles and limited family interaction, Qur'an memorization functions as a medium of spiritual cultivation that strengthens students' connection with religious and moral values. Conceptually, *tahfidz al-Qur'an* is not merely oriented toward cognitive achievement in the form of memorization, but also toward the internalization of moral and spiritual values embedded in Qur'anic verses.

Furthermore, Qur'an memorization programs serve as an important instrument for moral development amid the complexity of moral challenges in urban society, including growing individualism, hedonistic lifestyle pressures, and shifting patterns of social interaction among younger generations (Sholihah A. M., 2025). Within the framework of Islamic education, students' participation in *tahfidz* programs facilitates a gradual habituation of noble moral values through sustained processes of memorization, comprehension, and practical application of Qur'anic teachings. This process has significant implications for the development of honesty, discipline, and responsibility in both personal and social contexts.

In addition, Qur'an memorization functions as a medium for strengthening Islamic identity among Muslim youth living in multicultural and secular urban environments (Baihaqi, 2025). In such contexts, religious expression is often marginalized by the strong

influence of liberal popular culture. *Tahfidz al-Qur'an* plays a crucial role in fostering a deep and continuous internalization of Islamic values, thereby building students' spiritual resilience and their capacity to critically navigate social influences that conflict with Islamic principles.

From a social perspective, Qur'an memorization programs contribute to the formation of productive religious communities within urban society. These initiatives are implemented through various models, including school-based *tahfidz* programs (Raharja, 2023), community-based *Rumah Tahfidz* (Nuzula, 2021), and digital platforms that serve as alternative spaces for positive and value-oriented social interaction (Laksono, 2024). Analytically, the presence of these communities creates a supportive social ecosystem that encourages mutual guidance, strengthens social cohesion grounded in Islamic values, and fosters a collective culture conducive to character development in urban contexts.

Viewed from the perspective of educational psychology, *tahfidz al-Qur'an* programs have important implications for strengthening mental resilience, consistency, and stress-management skills among learners, both in early childhood and adolescence (Nuha, 2023). The memorization process demands focus, perseverance, and discipline, which indirectly cultivates self-control and emotional stability. These psychological competencies are increasingly relevant in urban life, which is often marked by academic pressure and intense social competition.

Thus, the urgency of Qur'an memorization programs in urban society can be conceptually understood as a comprehensive spiritual education strategy operating simultaneously across pedagogical, moral, social, and psychological dimensions. Through diverse forms and implementation approaches, *tahfidz al-Qur'an* contributes to preserving Qur'anic values amid the complexities of urban life and strengthens the foundation for forming a Qur'anic generation that is adaptive to contemporary challenges.

Challenges in the Implementation of Qur'an Memorization Programs in Urban Society

The implementation of Qur'an memorization (*tahfidz al-Qur'an*) programs in urban society faces a range of challenges that can be categorized into personal, structural,

cultural, psychological, and collaborative dimensions. These challenges significantly influence the effectiveness and sustainability of *tahfidz* initiatives in urban contexts.

First, family-related personal challenges primarily stem from the limited time and attention provided by parents (Ramdani, 2024). The busy lifestyles of urban communities driven by work demands and social activities often reduce the intensity of parent child interaction, particularly in terms of communication. In fact, parents play a crucial role as companions and motivators in supporting children's memorization processes. Insufficient parental involvement can lead to a lack of emotional support and supervision, both of which are essential for maintaining consistency in Qur'an memorization.

Second, structural challenges are associated with limited access to quality Qur'an memorization institutions (Ma'ruf, 2024). Not all urban areas are equipped with adequate *Rumah Tahfidz* or Islamic educational institutions in terms of qualified teachers, learning facilities, and systematic instructional models. In major cities such as Surabaya, Jakarta, and Malang, the rapid growth of commercial Qur'an memorization programs with relatively high tuition fees restricts access for lower-middle-income families. This situation creates inequality in access to Qur'anic education and hinders the equitable expansion of *tahfidz* programs.

Third, cultural challenges arise from the dominance of digital media and popular culture, which significantly affects the implementation of *tahfidz* programs in urban settings (Rahmad, 2024). High exposure to gadgets and digital content often diverts children's attention from constructive activities, including Qur'an memorization (Sholihah A. N., 2025). Additionally, popular culture that emphasizes entertainment, consumerism, and liberal values gradually reduces young people's interest in religious activities. Consequently, Qur'an memorization is frequently perceived as monotonous or irrelevant to modern urban life.

Fourth, psychological challenges relate to low internal motivation among students (Saharani, 2025). Unlike the immersive environment of Islamic boarding schools, urban children do not always experience a social atmosphere that consistently encourages memorization. The absence of a supportive learning environment, combined with weak monitoring systems from families or institutions, often leads to inconsistency in memorization practices.

Fifth, institutional challenges concern the availability and quality of *tahfidz* educators (Fajarwati, 2025). Many urban Qur'an memorization institutions struggle to

recruit permanent and competent teachers, particularly due to competition with formal educational institutions that offer higher salaries. Moreover, some educators lack adequate pedagogical training to accommodate the diverse learning styles and critical thinking tendencies of urban learners.

Sixth, collaborative challenges emerge from the lack of coordination among families, schools, and community institutions in implementing *tahfidz* programs (Rahma, 2025). Weak collaboration causes memorization initiatives to operate partially and unsustainably. Ideally, *tahfidz al-Qur'an* programs require integrated support from educational institutions, families, and the broader community, as Qur'an memorization is not solely the responsibility of schools. Without strong collaboration, achieving optimal outcomes becomes increasingly difficult amid the complex and dynamic conditions of urban life.

Strengthening Strategy and Recommendations

Based on the structural and personal challenges identified particularly students' limited time and the weak integration of Qur'an memorization into formal education systems the first strategic step is to integrate *tahfidz al-Qur'an* into the formal curriculum at both elementary and secondary education levels. Urban educational institutions can allocate specific learning time for Qur'an memorization activities. This integration should not merely take the form of additional religious instruction hours, but rather be implemented through engaging and applicable approaches, such as thematic Qur'anic learning, memorization competitions, and regular *murāja'ah* practices in the classroom (Sholihah Z. M., 2025). This strategy directly addresses the challenges of limited time and low student consistency by positioning memorization as a structured and sustainable component of the learning system.

The second strategy aims to address cultural and structural challenges, including limited access to Qur'an memorization institutions and the dominance of digital activities in urban life. The development of community-based *Rumah Tahfidz* needs to be aligned with the strategic use of digital technology as a learning medium, such as online memorization applications and digital motivational groups via platforms like WhatsApp and Telegram (Sholihah M. A., 2025). In addition, *tahfidz* educators should be equipped with digital literacy competencies to adapt teaching methods to the learning characteristics of urban students. The effective utilization of technology enables *Rumah*

Tahfidz to expand their reach and flexibility, reducing dependence on physical space and rigid schedules.

The third strategy focuses on overcoming collaborative structural challenges, particularly the weak synergy among families, educational institutions, and community organizations. Strengthening collaboration between local governments, educational institutions, and community stakeholders is a strategic move toward creating an integrated *tahfidz* ecosystem. Local governments can contribute by providing operational support, facilities, and educator training, while formal educational institutions can establish partnerships with nearby *Rumah Tahfidz*. At the community level, parents and religious leaders play a vital role in revitalizing a culture of Qur'an memorization. Such collaboration addresses the issue of fragmented and unsustainable program implementation.

Furthermore, to respond to challenges related to educator quality and weak inter-institutional coordination, particularly in major urban centers such as Surabaya and Jakarta, it is essential to establish a communication and coordination forum among *Rumah Tahfidz* and Qur'an memorization communities. This forum would function as a platform for sharing best practices, conducting program evaluations, and developing common standards for memorization quality and character education. Through this mechanism, *tahfidz* institutions can mutually strengthen one another, minimize program overlap, and optimize local potential in advancing Qur'anic education within urban settings.

The final strategy is directed at addressing cultural challenges, particularly low public awareness and appreciation of Qur'an memorization education. Accordingly, public awareness campaigns are necessary to highlight the urgency of *tahfidz al-Qur'an* in the modern era, utilizing mass media, educational seminars, and the involvement of public figures (Nuruzzaman, 2025). These efforts aim to cultivate public perception that Qur'an memorization is not merely a religious ritual, but a long-term moral and educational investment in character development. With increased collective awareness, sustained support for *tahfidz* programs across various urban contexts is expected to grow stronger and more enduring.

CONCLUSION

Qur'an memorization (*tahfidz al-Qur'an*) programs demonstrate strategic urgency in urban societies characterized by fast-paced lifestyles, social pressures, and the influence of globalization, all of which contribute to the moral vulnerability and identity challenges faced by younger generations. The findings of this study indicate that *tahfidz al-Qur'an* functions effectively as a means of forming Qur'anic character through processes of memorization, habituation, and internalization of Qur'anic values, fostering discipline, perseverance, and religious commitment among students from an early age.

The success of Qur'an memorization program implementation in urban environments is largely determined by the synergy among families, educational institutions, and communities, supported by contextual learning approaches and the strategic use of digital technology. Through cross-sector collaboration and learning systems that adapt to the rhythm of urban life, *tahfidz al-Qur'an* can be positioned as a relevant and sustainable strategy for character education, contributing to the development of an urban generation that is both academically competent and spiritually resilient.

Accordingly, local governments are encouraged to support the development of *Rumah Tahfidz* and Qur'an memorization programs through supportive policies, educator training, and the provision of adequate facilities, ensuring optimal program implementation in urban communities. Educational institutions are advised to integrate *tahfidz al-Qur'an* into their curricula and allocate dedicated time for Qur'an memorization activities. Furthermore, public awareness should be strengthened through the active involvement of community and religious leaders in promoting Qur'anic education as a foundational pillar of character development for future generations.

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