

Spiritual Resilience in Multicultural Schools: *Tahfidz* High School Students' Efforts in Maintaining Qur'an Memorisation

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ABSTRACT: *This study was motivated by the development of the Tahfidz Qur'an programme in public schools and the limited research on the spiritual resilience of tahfidz students in public secondary schools that are multicultural in terms of religion and social background. This study aims to analyse the commitment, challenges, and adaptive strategies of tahfidz students in maintaining their memorisation of the Qur'an at SMA Negeri 3 Semarang. The research used a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data collection techniques included unstructured interviews, non-participatory observation, and documentation, with primary data sources in the form of interviews and observations, and secondary data sources in the form of supporting documents for the tahfidz programme. Data analysis was carried out using the Miles and Huberman model, while data validity was maintained through triangulation and member checking techniques. The results of the study show that the Tahfidz Programme at SMA Negeri 3 Semarang was born from the initiative of parents, supported by the school, PPPA (Program Pelatihan Penghafal Al-Qur'an) Darul Qur'an, and alums. Commitment to memorisation was formed through religious socialisation and intrinsic motivation. Multicultural challenges were relatively minor, in the form of awkwardness and peer distraction. Students applied social adaptation and self-regulation to maintain consistent and continuous muraja'ah.*

Penelitian ini dimotivasi oleh perkembangan program Tahfidz Qur'an di sekolah negeri dan terbatasnya penelitian tentang ketahanan spiritual siswa tahfidz di sekolah menengah negeri yang multikultural dalam hal agama dan latar belakang sosial. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis komitmen, tantangan, dan strategi adaptasi siswa tahfidz dalam mempertahankan hafalan Qur'an di SMA Negeri 3 Semarang. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data meliputi wawancara tidak terstruktur, observasi non-partisipatif, dan dokumentasi, dengan sumber data primer berupa wawancara dan observasi, dan sumber data sekunder berupa dokumen pendukung program tahfidz. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman, sedangkan validitas data dipertahankan melalui teknik triangulasi dan pengecekan anggota. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Program Tahfidz di SMA Negeri 3 Semarang lahir dari inisiatif orang tua, didukung oleh sekolah, PPPA (Program Pelatihan Penghafal Al-Qur'an) Darul Qur'an, dan alumni. Komitmen untuk

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menghafal terbentuk melalui sosialisasi keagamaan dan motivasi intrinsik. Tantangan multikultural relatif kecil, berupa rasa canggung dan gangguan dari teman sebaya. Siswa menerapkan adaptasi sosial dan pengaturan diri untuk mempertahankan *muraja'ah* yang konsisten dan berkelanjutan.

Keywords: *Spiritual Resilience, Tahfidz Qur'an Programme, Qur'anic Memorisation, Multicultural Environment, Self-Regulated Learning, Islamic Education.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The *Tahfidz* Qur'an program, both in the form of special and extracurricular classes, shows rapid development at various levels of general education in Indonesia, including elementary, junior high, and high school/vocational (SMA/SMK) levels. Many schools, both public and private, consider the *Tahfidz* Qur'an program as a superior program and show increased interest from the public (Fuziah et al., 2023). At the elementary and junior high school levels, the program is generally integrated as extracurricular, cocurricular, intracurricular, or superior class activities (Sholihah & Zaenurrosyid, 2025). Meanwhile, in high school/vocational schools, some schools have developed special *Tahfidz* classes with an integrated curriculum between academics and Qur'an memorisation, especially in integrated Islamic-based schools (Kosim et al., 2019). The prospects for the development of *Tahfidz* classes in public schools are quite promising, supported by the "Freedom of Learning" policy that provides curriculum autonomy, although this curriculum adaptation requires adjustments.

One of the public schools that implements the *tahfidz* Qur'an program is SMA Negeri 3 Semarang, which is a pioneer in organising *tahfidz* class programs at the state high school level in Semarang City. This initiative is an important breakthrough because *tahfidz* programs are generally synonymous with religious-based educational institutions, not public schools. As a public school, SMA Negeri 3 Semarang implements the *tahfidz* program in a multicultural environment, religiously and socially. This religious diversity is reflected in the background of students who not only come from Muslims, but also Christians, Catholics, Hindus, and Buddhists who, all of whom coexist harmoniously in one school community (Jatengdaily.com, 2022). In addition to being religiously multicultural, *tahfidz* students at SMA Negeri 3 Semarang are also in a multicultural social context, especially in terms of educational background. *Tahfidz* students do not only come from graduates of Islamic boarding schools who already have a basic memorisation of the Qur'an, but also from graduates of public junior high schools and religious-based junior high schools who have diverse experiences and levels of *tahfidz* competence. This condition creates a distinctive learning dynamic, as well as presents challenges and opportunities in fostering Qur'an memorisation in an inclusive public school environment.

Departing from the conditions and situation of the *tahfidz* program at SMA Negeri 3 Semarang, this research is based on a number of interrelated theoretical concepts. Spirituality is understood as the internal capacity of students to maintain their values, commitments, and religious practices consistently, especially in maintaining the memorisation of the Qur'an through *muraja'ah*, prayer, and the discipline of worship

(Pargament, 1997). Multicultural schools refer to an educational environment that is characterised by a diversity of religious, social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, thus demanding students to be able to adapt socially without losing their spiritual identity (Banks, 2003). Within such a framework, religious multiculturalism reflects a situation in which students interact with individuals who have different religious beliefs and practices, which has the potential to influence the spiritual atmosphere and religious patterns in schools (Casanova, 1997). Meanwhile, social multiculturalism refers to the diversity of friendship relationships, social norms, and interaction dynamics that require tolerance skills, self-regulation, and behaviour adjustment so that spiritual activities are maintained (Bandura, 1986). *Tahfidz* students are defined as students who have a special commitment to memorising the Qur'an, with a level of internalisation of religious values that varies according to their educational background and spiritual experience (Al-Nawawi, 2010). In this context, the *tahfidz* student's success in retaining memorisation is determined not only by individual capacity but also by his or her ability to navigate the complexities of a multicultural school environment in an adaptive and reflective manner.

In response to this phenomenon, researchers have conducted research on various aspects. Several studies focus on memorisation patterns and methods in the *tahfidz* program, such as the previous research which examined the memorisation patterns in the *tahfidz* program and the translation of the Qur'an, with an emphasis on pedagogical and technical memorisation strategies (Suryana et al., 2024). Other research highlights internal psychological factors, particularly emotional and spiritual intelligence, which was found to have a significant influence on the ability of junior high school students to memorise the Qur'an (Safiinatunnajah & Khilmiyah, 2025). At the high school level, Izzah (2025) focuses his study on the role of *tahfidz* learning as a medium for adolescent emotional management, while Tamimi et al. examined the implementation of the *tahfidz* program in encouraging students' spiritual growth in religious-based schools (Tamimi et al., 2024).

Although research on the *tahfidz* Qur'an program in public schools has developed, most studies still focus on memorisation methods, internal psychological factors of students, and the implementation of *tahfidz* in a relatively homogeneous educational environment. Until now, research that comprehensively examines the spiritual dynamics of *tahfidz* students in public high schools that have a multicultural character, especially in the aspects of religious diversity and variations in spiritual levels in the school environment, is still limited (Berglund & Gent, 2018). In addition, the heterogeneous educational background of *tahfidz* students gives rise to diverse social dynamics and religious experiences, which have not received much attention in previous studies. Therefore, this study is here to fill the gap by highlighting how *tahfidz* students maintain their memorisation in a multicultural school environment, religiously and socially.

The uniqueness of this research lies in the study of the spiritual dynamics of *tahfidz* students in a public high school environment that is multicultural in terms of religion and society. It is different from previous research that was mostly conducted in religious-based educational institutions or a homogeneous spiritual environment. This study examines the practice of *tahfidz* in the context of an environment that has a diversity of beliefs and religious backgrounds. In addition, this study also highlights the social multicultural dimension among *tahfidz* students, especially related to diverse educational backgrounds, both from Islamic boarding school graduates and from public schools. Differences in religious experience, level of memorisation competence, and

previous learning patterns form variations in students' commitments, challenges, and strategies in maintaining the memorisation of the Qur'an. The diversity of religious experiences and the level of initial ability to memorise the Qur'an create a distinctive coaching dynamic, while enriching the understanding of the adaptation of *tahfidz* practices in a heterogeneous educational environment.

Departing from the condition of the research location and the gaps found in previous research, this study aims to analyse the dynamics of *tahfidz* students in maintaining the memorisation of the Qur'an at SMA Negeri 3 Semarang in the context of a multicultural school environment. In particular, this study examines the forms of spiritual commitment, personal discipline, and social support shown by *tahfidz* students in maintaining memorisation in the midst of religious diversity in the school environment. In addition, this study aims to identify the challenges that arise in social interaction and differences in the educational background of *Tahfidz* students, who come from Islamic boarding schools and public schools. Furthermore, this study reveals the adaptive strategies developed by *Tahfidz* students, both individually and collectively, in responding to these dynamics. With the formulation of this goal, the research is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the spiritual dynamics of *tahfidz* students in the context of inclusive and plural public secondary education.

This research makes a theoretical and practical contribution to the study of Islamic education in multicultural public schools. Theoretically, this study enriches the understanding of the spiritual dynamics of *tahfidz* students in religiously diverse environments, as well as how religious identity and commitment to memorise the Qur'an are maintained in an inclusive context. In addition, this study adds insight into the development of *tahfidz* students with heterogeneous educational backgrounds, both graduates of Islamic boarding schools and public schools. Practically, the findings of this study can be a reference for schools and educators in designing and managing *tahfidz* programs that are adaptive, inclusive, and responsive to social and religious diversity, so that the development of Qur'an memorisation can run effectively and sustainably.

II. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to examine in depth the dynamics of *tahfidz* students in maintaining the memorisation of the Qur'an in a multicultural school environment, so that contextual exploration of processes, interactions, and strategies that develop naturally in the field is needed (Wijayanto et al., 2024). The case study design allows for an intensive assessment of one social unit, namely the *tahfidz* student community at SMA Negeri 3 Semarang, as a public school with an integrated *tahfidz* program in a multicultural curriculum and environment. This approach results in a contextual, holistic, and in-depth understanding (Roosinda et al., 2021).

This study uses three data collection techniques, namely interview, observation, and documentation (Chand, 2025). The interviews used are unstructured to explore the experiences, commitments, challenges, and strategies of *tahfidz* students in depth. The informants consisted of eight *tahfidz* students, one religious teacher, and one *tahfidz* trainer who were selected purposively. Observation was carried out in a non-participatory manner with the aim of observing memorisation discipline, interaction between students, and the atmosphere of *tahfidz* learning in the school environment.

Documentation is used to complement the data through analysis of memorisation schedules, progress records, and reports on the *tahfidz* program activities. The entire data collection process was carried out during the period of 7-22 August 2025. Thus, the use of these three data collection techniques allows researchers to obtain a comprehensive and in-depth picture of the dynamics of the implementation of the *tahfidz* program and students' experiences in maintaining the memorisation of the Qur'an in the school environment.

The primary data source in this study was obtained through in-depth interviews with eight *tahfidz* students, one Religious Education teacher, and one *tahfidz* supervisor. The data from the interviews were further strengthened through observation of the activities of *tahfidz* students in maintaining the consistency of memorisation of the Qur'an and their social interaction patterns with non-Muslim students in the school environment. Secondary data comes from supporting documentation, such as memorisation journals, activity schedules, and school archives. Data validation is carried out through triangulation of sources, methods, and researchers by comparing findings from interviews, observations, and documentation to ensure data consistency (Nha, 2021). In addition, member verification is implemented by reconfirming interview transcripts and summaries of findings to participants to ensure the accuracy of the information (Candela, 2019). Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman model, which includes three main stages. First, reduce data by sorting and selecting information relevant to the focus of the research, namely the commitments, challenges, and strategies of *tahfidz* students. Second, the presentation of data in the form of thematic narratives and matrices to identify patterns. Third, drawing conclusions thematically and contextually by relating field findings to the theoretical framework of the research (Vebrianto et al., 2020).

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Existence of the *Tahfidz* Program in the Context of Multicultural Schools

The *Tahfidz* program at SMA Negeri 3 Semarang began in 2022 as a response to the students' parents' concern for the sustainability of their children's Qur'an memorisation while attending the high school. This initiative began with a request from a student's guardian to the supervisor of PPPA Darul Qur'an so that the memorisation that his child already had would not be neglected. As stated by P, the *tahfidz* supervisor:

"There are parents of students who ask one of the administrators of PPPA, Ustadz, who teaches at SMA 3? My son already has memorised the Qur'an and is now studying at SMA 3. He has memorised eight juz; it is a pity if he is not taken care of."

The request was then followed up by PPPA Darul Qur'an by collaborating with the school through the establishment of the "*Tahfidz* Student" program as a forum for fostering the memorisation of the Qur'an. In the first batch, this program opened a special class which was attended by around 34-35 students with various memorisation achievements, ranging from one to eight juz. In the initial stage, the *tahfidz* program is carried out as an extracurricular activity that requires operational fund support. Due to budget limitations from PPPA, the school then collaborated with Alste (SMA Negeri 3 Semarang alum community), which provided positive support for the sustainability of the program.

The existence of the *tahfidz* program for students who memorise the Qur'an is in line with the theory of educational ecology (Bronfenbrenner), which explains that the development of students is influenced by the interaction of various environmental systems, such as family, school, and community (Crawford, 2022). The establishment of the *tahfidz* program reflects the synergy of the three elements, where the family plays the role of an initial trigger through parental care and support which is important for the sustainability of memorisation motivation, the school provides a formal environment conducive to *tahfidz* coaching, as well as the community through the role of PPPA Darul Qur'an and alums act as supporting partners in supervising and strengthening the program (Ritonga & Nasution, 2023). This collaboration creates an educational ecosystem that is conducive to the sustainability of students' memorisation of the Qur'an, even though they are in public schools with high academic demands.

The results showed that *tahfidz* students' commitment to maintaining memorisation was influenced by a combination of program factors, family support, and previous educational backgrounds. The educational background of *tahfidz* students reflects a multicultural social form, which includes graduates of Islamic boarding schools, religious schools, and public schools, so that the level of religious and spiritual experience of students is diverse. Students with Islamic boarding school backgrounds generally show a stronger commitment because they have a deep basis in memorisation and internalisation of spiritual values, so they view memorisation as a religious mandate that must be maintained in an ongoing manner. This is reflected in the statement of one of the students (S6), revealing:

"Because I already have memorisation from the Islamic boarding school, I feel that I have to continue and do not want to waste it."

Meanwhile, in students who graduate from public schools, the initial commitment to memorisation is greatly influenced by parental direction and encouragement to start memorising the Qur'an, which is then strengthened through structured coaching in the *tahfidz* program at school. This is reflected in the statements of other students (S3):

"My parents are very supportive and always remind me to keep my memorisation, that is what keeps me motivated".

These findings show that the *tahfidz* students' commitment is formed through the interaction between spiritual backgrounds, parental direction as an initial trigger, and continuous strengthening through the *tahfidz* program coaching.

The results of the research regarding the commitment of *tahfidz* students in maintaining the memorisation of the Qur'an can be understood through the Theory of Religious Socialisation. This theory is relevant in explaining how educational background and family environment shape a student's spiritual orientation. Students who graduate from Islamic boarding schools tend to have a stronger commitment because they have experienced the process of intensively internalising religious values, so memorisation is seen as a spiritual mandate that must be maintained in an ongoing manner. Meanwhile, in students who graduate from public schools, the initial commitment is greatly influenced by parental direction and encouragement, which acts as the main agent of religious socialisation in instilling the value of the importance of memorising the Qur'an (Hasanah, 2021).

These findings are also in line with the Self-Determination Theory, which shows that student commitment is strengthened when the needs for connectedness (parental and

supervisor support), competence (structured coaching in *tahfidz* programs), and autonomy (personal awareness to maintain memorisation) are met. Thus, the commitment of *tahfidz* students is formed through a combination of religious socialisation from an early age and strengthening intrinsic motivation through family support and coaching of *tahfidz* programs at school (Supendi et al., 2021).

The existence of the *tahfidz* program at SMA Negeri 3 Semarang shows that the development of Qur'an memorisation can run continuously in the context of public schools that have diverse social and educational backgrounds. The results of the study show that this program functions as a strategic space for *tahfidz* students to maintain the continuity of memorisation in the midst of a diversity of educational backgrounds, both from graduates of Islamic boarding schools, religious schools, and public schools. The presence of the *tahfidz* program encourages the formation of students' spiritual commitment, especially for those who have memorised the basics before, as well as a means of coaching for students who are just starting the *tahfidz* process. The program helps bring together differences in levels of religious experience by providing structured and ongoing coaching.



Figure 1. *The Scheme of Relevance to The Development of Islamic Education*

On the other hand, the *tahfidz* program at SMA Negeri 3 Semarang also operates in a religiously multicultural school environment, where students with diverse faith backgrounds interact in one educational community. This condition makes the *tahfidz* program not only a means of fostering memorisation, but also a religious practice that takes place in an inclusive and tolerant manner in public schools. These findings show that *tahfidz* programs are able to adapt to a multicultural environment and high academic pressure, while strengthening students' spiritual identities without disrupting the harmony of diversity in excellent schools. As expressed by the religious teacher (G):

"The *tahfidz* program at SMA Negeri 3 Semarang is designed to accommodate students with diverse educational backgrounds, both from Islamic boarding schools, religious schools, and public schools. This program helps maintain the memorisation of students who already have the basics, as well as fostering students who are just starting *tahfidz*. In addition, the practice of *tahfidz* is carried out in a multicultural

school atmosphere religiously while still upholding the values of tolerance and mutual respect."

The results of this study are closely related to previous research, especially studies by Ritonga & Nasution (2023), which emphasise that the *tahfidz* program plays a role in maintaining the continuity of memorisation through structured coaching and strengthening of students' spiritual commitment. In common, the three studies both found that the success of *tahfidz* was influenced by the consistency of *muraja'ah*, the support of the educational environment, and the internalisation of religious values as the basis for long-term commitment. However, the main difference lies in the social context and characteristics of the learners. Ritonga and Nasution's research (2023) focuses more on the pesantren environment with a relatively homogeneous student background and a strong religious foundation from the beginning, while this study highlights the implementation of *tahfidz* in public schools with diverse educational backgrounds and religious experiences, including graduates of Islamic boarding schools, religious schools, and public schools. In addition, this study expands on previous findings by adding the dimension of a religiously multicultural school environment, where the practice of *tahfidz* takes place in an inclusive and tolerant atmosphere. Thus, this study not only confirms previous findings but also makes a new contribution to understanding the adaptation of *tahfidz* programs in the context of plural and heterogeneous general education.

Challenges of *Tahfidz* Students in Maintaining Memorisation in a Multicultural Environment

The existence of *tahfidz* students at SMA Negeri 3 Semarang, which is in a multicultural school environment, religiously and socially, presents its own dynamics in an effort to maintain the memorisation of the Qur'an. The religious composition of the students consisted of 1,163 Muslim students, 68 Christian students, 52 Catholic students, and 2 Hindu students, so that interfaith interaction took place in the same academic space (Semarang, 2026). In the midst of this context, there are 107 students who are members of the *Tahfidz* Program, who specifically have a commitment to maintain and continue memorising the Qur'an (Qur'an, 2025). The existence of *tahfidz* groups as functional minorities in this plural public school structure places them in a unique social position, where specific religious practices must be carried out in an atmosphere of diversity. This condition presents challenges as well as opportunities for students to internalise *tahfidz* values more inclusively and contextually.

The results of the study show that the challenge of *tahfidz* students in maintaining the memorisation of the Qur'an in a multicultural school environment is at a relatively light level. Most students consider that religious diversity does not significantly affect the practice of *tahfidz*, although at first, there is an awkwardness. These feelings are more psychological and temporary, especially related to worries being perceived differently by peers. However, over time, students can adapt and carry out memorisation activities normally in a tolerant school atmosphere. A student (S4) revealed:

"At first it was a bit awkward, afraid of being considered different, but after a while it was normal and did not interfere with memorisation."

This condition is mostly felt by *tahfidz* students who have an educational background from Islamic boarding schools or religious schools. Students with such backgrounds are generally accustomed to being in a religiously homogeneous environment, so moving to a public school with religious diversity demands a greater process of social

adaptation. Awkwardness in interacting with friends of different religions arises because of concerns that they are considered too religious, differ in identity, or have difficulty adjusting to more diverse social patterns. In addition, the strong internalisation of religious values from an early age makes some students feel the need to maintain certain social boundaries in order to maintain their spiritual identity. A student with a pesantren background (S7) stated:

"I graduated from a boarding school, so previously almost all my friends were Muslim, and the environment was very religious. When I entered public school with friends of different religions, at first I felt awkward and afraid that I looked too different. I am also more careful in getting along because I want to maintain my attitude and identity as a memoriser of the Qur'an."

The results of this study show a strong relevance to the Social Identity Theory put forward by Tajfel and Turner, especially in explaining the experience of *tahfidz* students with a background in Islamic boarding schools or religious schools when interacting in a religiously multicultural school environment. The awkwardness and caution that arise in the early phases reflect the students' efforts in maintaining their social identity as Qur'an memorisers, which have been strongly internalised through a previously homogeneous religious environment. Concerns about being considered "different" or "too religious" indicate a sensitivity to the boundaries between "self" and "other" groups, as described in social identity theory of the need for social acceptance (Pertwi & Faturachman, 2023).

The results of this study have similarities with the study by Fauziyyah & Karyani (2017), which examines students' religious resilience in maintaining religious practices in diverse social environments. Both studies show that students' main challenges are not structural, but psychological and social, such as awkwardness, perceived differences, and the need to adjust religious identities in heterogeneous environments. However, the main difference lies in the context and subject of the study. Fauziyyah and Karyani's research focuses on the religiosity of students in general in a relatively religiously homogeneous educational environment, while this study specifically examines *tahfidz* students in religiously multicultural public schools. In addition, this study adds the dimension of educational background (graduates of Islamic boarding schools or religious schools) as factors that affect the intensity of awkwardness and social adaptation strategies.

However, there are some students who admit that the multicultural environment has little effect on the consistency of memorisation, especially in the form of mild social distractions. This challenge arises from friendship interactions, such as an invitation to skip *muraja'ah* time. However, these influences are not dominant and can still be controlled by students. This is reflected in the statement of one of the student informants (S2):

"Sometimes there are friends who invite me to play during the *muraja'ah* time, but it does not affect me too much because I can still maintain memorisation."

This social distraction is more felt by *tahfidz* students who have an educational background from public schools. In contrast to students who graduate from Islamic boarding schools, who are used to a structured religious environment, students from public schools are generally used to interacting in a heterogeneous social environment from the beginning, so they do not experience awkwardness when associating with non-Muslim friends. However, this social openness actually makes them more susceptible

to light distractions, such as invitations to play, chat, or participate in friendship activities at the time that should be used for *muraja'ah*. The distraction does not come from religious pressure, but from the dynamics of daily association that are more flexible and fluid. As expressed by *Tahfidz* (S5), students from public schools:

"I am from a public school, so I am used to being friends with anyone, including those of different religions. I do not feel awkward, but sometimes I get distracted because I am invited to play or chat during the *muraja'ah* time, even though it can still be controlled."



Figure 2. *Tahfidz Student Interaction in School*

This social distraction is most relevant explained through Peer Influence Theory, which emphasises that individual behaviour in the context of adolescence is strongly influenced by the dynamics of the peer group and the social norms around it. In the results of this study, the mild social distractions experienced by *tahfidz* students with a public school background can be understood as a consequence of social openness and the intensity of friendship interactions that have been formed since previous educational experiences. Students from public schools have generally become accustomed to being in a heterogeneous and flexible social environment, so they do not experience psychological barriers or awkwardness when interacting with friends from different backgrounds (Lou, 2023). However, these social skills and closeness of friendships simultaneously increase exposure to invitations to play, chat, or postpone *muraja'ah*, which has the potential to disrupt memorisation consistency. This distraction does not stem from a conflict of religious values but from a negotiation process between the demands of personal commitment and peer group norms (Agustina & Zainuddin, 2023).

The results of this study are related to the study of Alexander and his colleagues (2024), which confirms that adolescent behaviour is strongly influenced by peer dynamics, especially in an open and heterogeneous social environment. Both studies show that friendship interactions can trigger mild distractions, such as delaying major responsibilities due to invitations to play or following group norms. The main similarity lies in the understanding that social distraction is not solely caused by a conflict of values, but rather by the need for social affiliation and closeness to peer groups. However, the main difference in this study lies in the religious and *tahfidz* contexts,

where social distractions are analysed specifically in relation to the consistency of Qur'an memorisation as well as the educational background of *tahfidz* students. The study also found that students with public school backgrounds are more susceptible to distractions due to social openness that has been formed before. In contrast, students with Islamic boarding school backgrounds tend to be more structured in maintaining spiritual discipline.

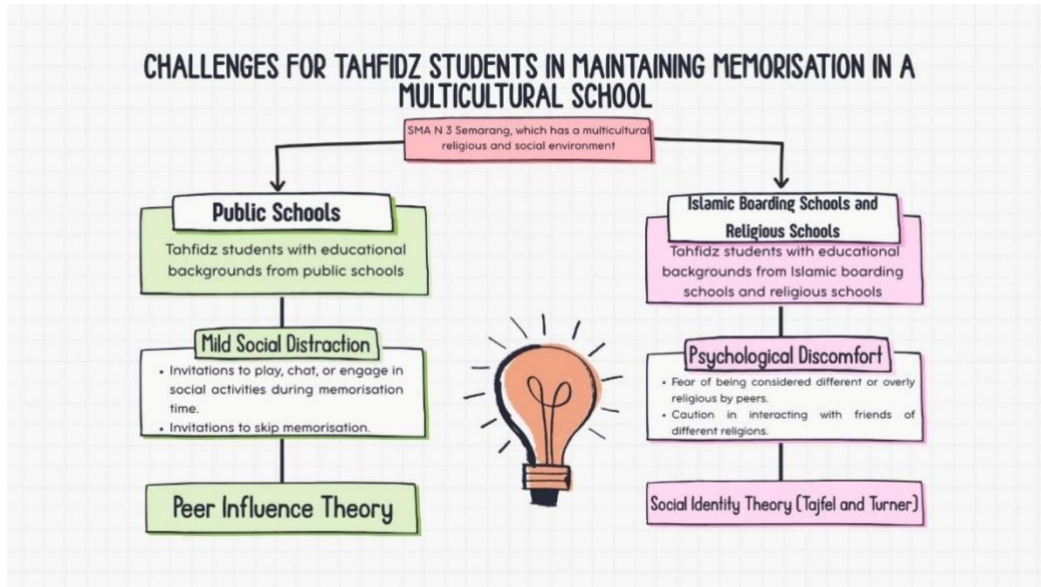


Figure 3. Challenges Faced by Tahfidz Students

Figure 3 illustrates the challenges faced by *tahfidz* students in maintaining the memorisation of the Qur'an in a multicultural, religious, and social environment at SMA Negeri 3 Semarang. The diagram highlights that a student's educational background influences the types of challenges they face. *Tahfidz* students from public school backgrounds tend to experience mild social disturbances, such as inviting friends to play, chat, or participate in social activities during *muraja'ah* time. This challenge can be explained through Peer Influence Theory, which emphasises how adolescent friendship dynamics and group norms strongly influence behaviour. On the other hand, students from Islamic boarding schools and religious schools more often report psychological discomfort, especially feelings of awkwardness and concerns about being perceived differently or being overly religious when interacting with peers of other faiths. These experiences reflect the relevance of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner), as students negotiate their identity as memorisers of the Qur'an in a heterogeneous school context. Overall, these findings suggest that these challenges are relatively mild and are largely psychological or social rather than structural, and that students are gradually adapting to sustain memorisation practices in a tolerant multicultural environment.

Adaptive Strategies of *Tahfidz* Students in Maintaining the Memorisation of the Qur'an

The various challenges faced by *tahfidz* students, especially those originating from a school environment that is socially and religiously multicultural, demand a response that is not purely spontaneous, but managed consciously and sustainably. The success of students in maintaining the memorisation of the Qur'an is not only determined by the level of difficulty they face, but also by their ability to formulate adaptive strategies to

remain consistent in the midst of diverse social interaction dynamics. In this context, the strategies applied by *tahfidz* students are an important aspect to understand, as they reflect the negotiation process between spiritual commitment, religious identity, and social relations in an inclusive school environment.

Responding to the challenges in a religiously multicultural school environment, *tahfidz* students apply a number of adaptive strategies to maintain the sustainability of Qur'an memorisation. The main strategy that is seen is the ability to adapt socially without reducing the commitment to the practice of *tahfidz*. This strategy is mostly applied by *tahfidz* students who have an educational background from Islamic boarding schools or religious schools, who have become accustomed to religious discipline, *muraja'ah* routines, and the internalisation of strong spiritual values from an early age. In the early stages, students manage awkwardness by building confidence and getting used to carrying out memorisation activities reasonably in a heterogeneous public school environment. Over time, they developed an open and tolerant attitude towards diversity, so that the practice of *muraja'ah* was no longer perceived as something different or exclusive. This adaptability suggests that a strong religious background not only strengthens students' spiritual commitments but also helps them navigate social interactions more maturely in a multicultural school context. As explained by a *tahfidz* student (S8):

"At first, it was a bit awkward to go to school because my environment was different, but after a while, I was normal. I still get along as usual, it is just that I prefer time and activities so as not to disturb the *muraja'ah*. Friends also end up understanding and supporting."

The results of this study show a strong relevance to social adaptation theory, particularly in explaining how *tahfidz* students adapt effectively in a religiously multicultural school environment without sacrificing their spiritual commitment. The strategies applied by students, such as managing awkwardness, building confidence, and adjusting social interaction patterns, reflect an active and sustainable adaptation process. *Tahfidz* students with a background in Islamic boarding schools or religious schools, who have internalised religious values and *muraja'ah* discipline from an early age, show a more mature capacity for adaptation in balancing religious identity with the demands of heterogeneous social interaction (Terziev, 2019). The finding that students are able to move from the initial phase of awkwardness to an open and tolerant attitude illustrates the success of the social negotiation process that is at the core of social adaptation. The practice of *muraja'ah*, which was originally perceived as a different activity, is gradually normalised through behavioural adjustments and communication with peers. Thus, the theory of social adaptation provides a conceptual framework that explains how *tahfidz* students not only survive spiritually, but are also able to build harmonious social relations in the context of school diversity (Moguilner et al., 2024).

The results of this study have similarities with the study by Masyitoh and Muhammad (2024), which highlights the process of internalising religious and multicultural values in the context of formal education. The similarity lies in the finding that the success of religious practices in heterogeneous environments is highly dependent on the gradual process of social adaptation, habituation, and the strengthening of religious identity through daily experiences at school. Both show that students' main challenges are not structural, but psychosocial, such as identity adjustment and the formation of comfort in diverse environments. However, the main difference in this study lies in the focus of

the subject and the form of religious practice studied. The study of Masyitoh and Muhammad emphasises the internalisation of multicultural values in general in the learning of religious education.

Meanwhile, this study specifically examines the adaptation strategies of *tahfidz* students in maintaining the consistency of *muraja'ah* in multicultural public schools, by adding variables of educational background as factors that affect the intensity of adaptation. In addition, this study enriches the discourse by showing that students with pesantren backgrounds tend to have a more structured religious adaptation capacity. In contrast, students from public schools rely more on social flexibility in maintaining memorisation commitments.

In addition, the results of the study show that self-control strategies in association are one of the important ways for *tahfidz* students to maintain the consistency of *muraja'ah* in a multicultural school environment. This strategy is mainly applied by *tahfidz* students with an educational background from public schools, who, from the beginning, have been accustomed to being in a heterogeneous and friendly social environment. Students with this background generally do not experience obstacles in interacting with peers, including those of different religions. However, they are aware of the need to set boundaries so that social activities do not interfere with the time of *muraja'ah*. They are selective about their friends' invitations to play or chat at a time that should be used to repeat memorisation, without having to withdraw from the social environment. The awareness of putting memorisation as a priority encourages students to develop mature self-control, so that mild social distractions can still be controlled. The combination of social openness, personal discipline, and consistency of *muraja'ah* allows *tahfidz* students with public school backgrounds to maintain memorisation in an inclusive and tolerant school atmosphere. A *tahfidz* student who graduated from a public school (S1) revealed:

"Because I am used to hanging out with many friends from different backgrounds, I still make friends as usual. But when it is time for *muraja'ah*, I try to refuse the invitation to play so that memorisation is maintained."

The results of this study are relevant to Self-Regulation Theory, especially in explaining how *tahfidz* students manage social behaviour to remain in harmony and maintain the memorisation of the Qur'an. The findings that students with public school backgrounds are able to limit mild social distractions show the ability to set priorities, monitor behaviour, and control impulses in active and heterogeneous social situations. Students do not completely avoid social interaction, but consciously regulate when to engage in friendship activities and when to focus on *muraja'ah*. This reflects an effective process of self-regulation, in which students are able to postpone short-term social gratification in order to maintain long-term spiritual commitment (Zimmerman, 2015). The strategy of refusing the invitation to play during the *muraja'ah* time, as revealed by the informant, shows self-control, situational evaluation, and behavioural adjustments that are consistent with personal goals. Self-regulation theory provides a strong framework to understand how *tahfidz* students, especially those with public school backgrounds, are able to manage social distractions adaptively without having to sacrifice social relationships and memorisation consistency in a multicultural and tolerant school environment.

The self-control strategies applied by *Tahfidz* students, especially those with public school backgrounds, reflect their ability to regulate social involvement to maintain

consistency in *muraja'ah* in the midst of heterogeneous interactions. This is in line with the findings of the study Latipah (2022), which examines the self-regulation of Qur'an memorisers in Indonesia, especially in maintaining memorisation consistency through behaviour control and priority setting. Both emphasised that the ability to regulate oneself is the main foundation for the continuity of memorisation of the Qur'an. However, there is a fundamental difference in contextual focus, namely in the study Latipah (2022) emphasises more on internal aspects of self-regulation, such as strengthening intentions, understanding the stages of *tahfidz*, and spiritual experiences during the memorisation process, while this study specifically reveals self-control strategies in the dynamics of social relations in a multicultural school environment. The findings of this study will enrich the scientific perspective that students graduating from public schools are actually capable of developing adaptive self-regulation by not avoiding heterogeneous interactions but selectively managing minor social disruptions to maintain *muraja'ah*.

STRATEGIES OF TAHFIDZ STUDENTS IN MAINTAINING MEMORISATION IN A MULTICULTURAL SCHOOL

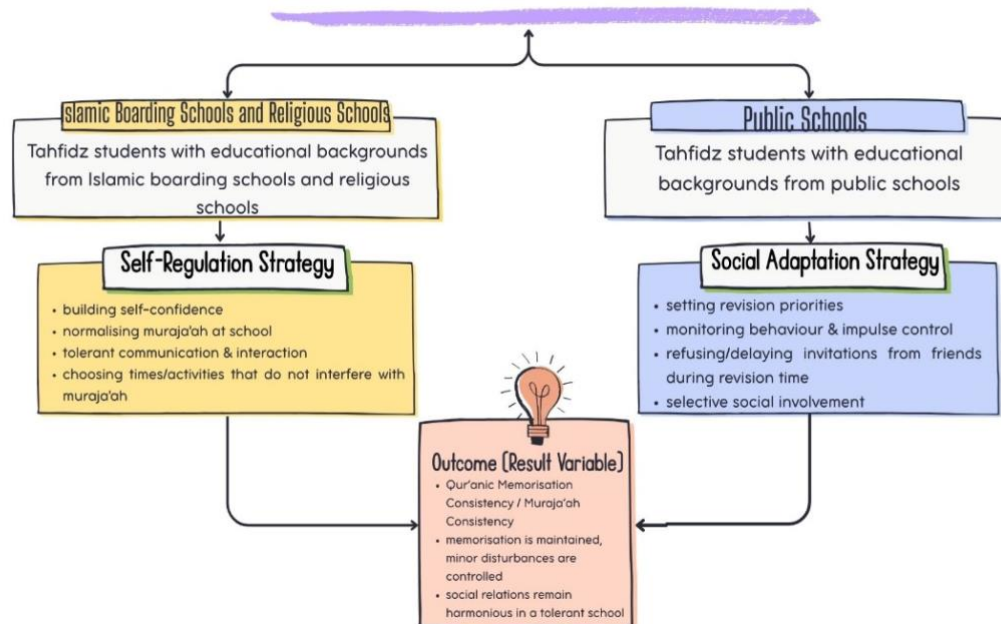


Figure 4. The Influence of Adaptive Strategies on Students Memorising the Qur'an

Figure 4 illustrates the adaptive strategies applied by *Tahfidz* students in maintaining consistency in memorising the Qur'an in a multicultural school environment. This diagram highlights that students' responses to social and religious diversity are not spontaneous but rather managed through conscious and sustainable strategies. Two main backgrounds of students are presented: those from Islamic boarding schools or religious schools, and those from public schools. *Tahfidz* students with an Islamic boarding school background tend to implement self-regulation strategies, such as building self-confidence, normalising the practice of *muraja'ah* in schools, participating in tolerant communication, and choosing activities that do not interfere with their revision routine. These strategies reflect a strong internalisation of spiritual discipline.

On the other hand, students with public school backgrounds mainly implement social adaptation strategies, including setting revision priorities, monitoring behaviour, controlling impulses, postponing friend invitations during *muraja'ah* times, and

maintaining selective social engagement. These two pathways contribute to the outcome variables, namely continuous memorisation of the Qur'an and consistent revision despite minor social disturbances. Overall, this framework shows how *Tahfidz* students negotiate spiritual commitments, religious identities, and relationships with peers to achieve harmonious social integration in an inclusive and multicultural school context.

IV. CONCLUSION

This research shows that the *Tahfidz* Program at SMA Negeri 3 Semarang (established in 2022) was born from parental concern, then strengthened by the collaboration of schools, PPPA Darul Qur'an, and alumni, thus forming a memorisation coaching ecosystem that is in line with the perspective of educational ecology. Students' commitment to maintaining memorisation is formed through the interaction of educational backgrounds, family support, and structured coaching; Graduates of Islamic boarding schools tend to have a stronger commitment due to the deep internalisation of religious values, while public school graduates are often triggered by parental direction and strengthened by programs. In a multicultural, religious and social school environment, the challenges that arise are relatively mild and mainly psychological (awkwardness) and mild social distractions from socialising. Students respond through social adaptation strategies (normalising *muraja'ah*, being open) and self-regulation (being selective about peer invitations), so that the consistency of *muraja'ah* is maintained without disturbing the harmony of school tolerance. These findings confirm that *tahfidz* can be sustainable in public schools, provided that systemic support and student strategies run consistently together.

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