



OPTIMIZATION OF THE MANAGEMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM IN TAHSIN AND QUR'ANIC SANAD FOR STRENGTHENING STUDENTS' QUR'ANIC COMPETENCE

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ABSTRACT

This study is motivated by the importance of strengthening students' Qur'anic competence in Islamic higher education, particularly in the areas of tahsin, memorization, and Qur'anic sanad. The Faculty of Islamic Studies at Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang has implemented an international certification program in tahsin and Qur'anic sanad as part of its academic policy requiring students to memorize Juz 30 as a prerequisite for thesis defense. This study aims to analyze the management of the program in enhancing students' Qur'anic competence. The research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving faculty leaders, program administrators, and student participants. The findings indicate that the program is systematically managed through planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision, supported by international collaboration and certified sanad instructors. The program has been proven to improve students' recitation quality and learning motivation. The study concludes that the management of the international certification program in tahsin and Qur'anic sanad is effective in strengthening students' Qur'anic competence, although improvements are still needed in adaptive training strategies to address differences in students' initial abilities.

Keywords: program management, tahsin, Qur'anic sanad, Qur'anic competence, international certification

INTRODUCTION

Higher Islamic education plays a strategic role in producing graduates who are not only academically proficient but also possess strong Qur'anic competence. Such competence encompasses the ability to recite the Qur'an in accordance with the rules of tajwid, to memorize it, and to understand the chain of transmission (sanad) as an integral part of the Islamic scholarly tradition. In this regard, the Faculty of Islamic Studies (FAI) at Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang (UNSIKA) has implemented an academic policy requiring students to memorize at least Juz 30 of the Qur'an as a prerequisite for their final thesis defense. This policy reflects the broader objectives of Islamic education, which emphasize the integration of cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions (Nata, 2012: 165).

Despite its strategic importance, the implementation of this policy encounters several challenges. Students' diverse educational backgrounds result in varying levels of initial competence in Qur'anic recitation and memorization. Moreover, the quality of recitation often does not fully meet established tajwid standards, and the absence of a well-integrated coaching system further hinders the achievement of expected competencies. These



conditions suggest that the success of such an educational initiative is closely tied to the effectiveness of its program management (Mulyasa, 2013: 37).



Figure 1. Director, Dean, and students during the implementation of the international tahsin and Qur'anic sanad certification program

In response to these challenges, the Faculty of Islamic Studies at UNSIKA has established a collaborative partnership with the Global Quranic Mastery and Sanad Academy Malaysia to implement an international certification program in tahsin and Qur'anic sanad. This program aims to enhance students' recitation quality through standardized tahsin methodologies while reinforcing sanad as a form of scholarly legitimacy in Qur'anic learning. Within the Islamic intellectual tradition, sanad plays a vital role in preserving the authenticity and continuity of knowledge transmission, particularly in Qur'anic studies (Azra, 2012: 111). At the same time, tahsin serves as a fundamental approach to refining recitation accuracy in accordance with tajwid principles (Anwar, 2017: 52).

From a management perspective, certification-based programs and international collaborations require systematic and well-structured governance, encompassing planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision. Effective management is a key determinant of the successful attainment of program objectives (Terry, 2014: 45). Furthermore, certification-oriented programs have been shown to enhance students' motivation and competency achievement due to the presence of clearly defined standards and formal recognition (Hamalik, 2015: 93).

Previous studies have demonstrated that well-managed educational programs significantly contribute to the improvement of learners' competencies. Structured and strategic management fosters effective and sustainable learning processes (Sagala, 2013: 78). In addition, Qur'anic learning approaches grounded in tahsin and sanad have been found to improve recitation quality while maintaining the continuity of Islamic scholarly traditions (Rosyid, 2019: 134). Nevertheless, studies specifically addressing the management of international certification programs in tahsin and Qur'anic sanad within higher education contexts remain limited, particularly in institutions such as FAI UNSIKA.



Based on the foregoing discussion, this study seeks to examine how the management of the international certification program in *tahsin* and Qur'anic sanad is implemented and how it contributes to strengthening students' Qur'anic competence. Accordingly, the research questions addressed in this study are how the program is managed at FAI UNSIKA and to what extent it contributes to the enhancement of students' Qur'anic competence.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to gain an in-depth understanding of the management of the international certification program in *tahsin* and Qur'anic sanad in strengthening students' Qur'anic competence. This approach is selected because the study focuses on processes, meanings, and the dynamics of program implementation within a natural setting, thereby enabling the researcher to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2014: 186).

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data are obtained from informants directly involved in the implementation of the program, including faculty leaders, program managers, *tahsin* and sanad instructors, as well as student participants in the certification program. A total of 358 students participated in the program, representing three study programs: Islamic Education (PAI), Islamic Education Management (MPI), and Early Childhood Islamic Education (PIAUD). Meanwhile, secondary data are derived from official documents, such as program guidelines, activity reports, and partnership documents between FAI UNSIKA and the Global Quranic Mastery and Sanad Academy Malaysia. Informants are selected using purposive sampling, in which participants are chosen based on their relevance and involvement in the research focus (Sugiyono, 2018: 218). The primary research instrument is the researcher (human instrument), supported by interview guidelines, observation sheets, and documentation. Data collection techniques include in-depth interviews to explore information related to program planning, implementation, and management; participatory observation to understand the program execution directly; and document analysis to complement and verify the collected data (Moleong, 2017: 137).

Data analysis is conducted using an interactive model, which involves data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing carried out continuously (Miles & Huberman, 2014: 12). Data reduction involves selecting and focusing on data relevant to the research objectives, while data display is presented in a systematic descriptive narrative. Conclusion drawing is conducted by identifying patterns, relationships, and meanings from the analyzed data. To ensure data validity, this study employs source and method triangulation, as well as member checking with informants to confirm the credibility of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 301).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of the international certification program in *tahsin* and Qur'anic *sanad* at the Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang, has been carried out systematically through the core functions of educational management, namely planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision. This program is the result of a strategic collaboration between FAI UNSIKA and



the *Global Quranic Mastery and Sanad Academy Malaysia*, an international partner institution with recognized authority in *tahsin* and Qur'anic *sanad*. The program is directly supervised by the director of the institution, Al-fadhil Al-Syeikh Radwan Zamout, M.Sc., whose involvement ensures both the quality of instruction and the academic legitimacy of the *sanad* granted to students.

At the planning stage, the faculty established a strategic academic policy requiring students to memorize Juz 30 of the Qur'an as a prerequisite for their thesis defense, which is then integrated with the international certification program. This policy reflects the institution's commitment to developing measurable and sustainable Qur'anic competencies. The planning process also includes the development of a structured *tahsin* curriculum, assessment mechanisms, and clearly defined competency standards. In the organizing phase, the faculty formed a program management team consisting of faculty leaders, lecturers, *tahsin* instructors, and representatives from the international partner institution. This organizational structure ensures a clear distribution of roles and responsibilities while reflecting a collaborative model between local institutions and global partners in enhancing Qur'anic learning.

The program implementation involves intensive training using classical methods such as *talaqqi*, *musyafahah*, and continuous performance evaluation. A total of 358 students participated in the program, comprising 220 students (61.5%) from the Islamic Education program (PAI), 115 students (32.1%) from Islamic Education Management (MPI), and 23 students (6.4%) from Early Childhood Islamic Education (PIAUD). The dominance of PAI students indicates a stronger alignment between disciplinary orientation and the need for Qur'anic competency development.



Figure 2. Awarding of Tahsin and Qur'anic Sanad Certificates to Students of the Faculty of Islamic Studies

Observational data reveal a significant improvement in students' recitation quality, particularly in terms of correct articulation (*makharij al-huruf*), phonetic characteristics, and fluency. Interviews with students from all three programs further support these findings. PAI students reported that the program deepened their understanding of both recitation accuracy and the importance of *sanad* in Qur'anic learning. MPI students



highlighted the program's contribution to their understanding of structured and standardized Qur'anic learning management. Meanwhile, PIAUD students emphasized its practical relevance in teaching the Qur'an to young learners accurately.

Interviews with the Dean of the Faculty of Islamic Studies, Dr. H. Akil, M.Pd., indicate that the program is part of an institutional strategy to enhance graduate quality through Qur'anic competency. He emphasized that integrating Juz 30 memorization with international certification ensures that graduates meet standardized recitation competencies. Furthermore, students who successfully complete the program receive an international certificate in *tahsin* and Qur'anic *sanad*, which serves not only as proof of competence but also as a mandatory requirement for thesis defense. However, several challenges were identified, including limited training time, varying initial competency levels among students, and the high standards required for international certification. These challenges contribute to variations in competency achievement across participants.

The findings of this study demonstrate that the management of the international certification program in *tahsin* and Qur'anic *sanad* plays a significant role in strengthening students' Qur'anic competence. The structured implementation of management functions planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision reflects a systematic approach consistent with contemporary educational management theory (Terry, 2014: 45). The program aligns with the principles of competency-based education (CBE), where learning outcomes are clearly defined, measurable, and linked to authentic assessment.

The policy requiring certification as a prerequisite for thesis defense represents a strong alignment between academic evaluation and competency development. This integration positions Qur'anic competence as a core graduate attribute rather than a supplementary skill. Such alignment resonates with studies highlighting the importance of coherence between curriculum design, assessment systems, and learning outcomes in CBE frameworks (Brauer, 2021; Bergsmann et al., 2015; Koenen et al., 2015).

The involvement of an international expert, Alfadhil Al-Syeikh Radwan Zamout, M.Sc., further enhances the program's credibility by ensuring adherence to global standards and strengthening the epistemological legitimacy of *sanad*. In Islamic scholarly tradition, *sanad* functions as a critical mechanism for validating knowledge transmission, and its integration into higher education reinforces both authenticity and authority (Berkey, 2007: 56). From a pedagogical perspective, the improvement in students' recitation quality confirms the effectiveness of *tahsin*-based learning approaches. Previous studies have demonstrated that structured recitation training significantly enhances phonetic accuracy and fluency (Nasir & Qureshi, 2019: 78). The use of traditional methods such as *talaqqi* and *musyafahah* also aligns with established practices in Qur'anic pedagogy that emphasize direct teacher-student interaction. The findings also reveal that the program has multidimensional impacts across different academic disciplines. Students from various programs experience benefits tailored to their professional contexts, indicating that competency-based learning becomes more effective when contextualized within learners' academic and career orientations (Mulder, 2017: 34). Additionally, the requirement of certification as a condition for thesis defense significantly enhances student motivation, as it creates a clear, measurable goal linked to academic progression. This aligns with research indicating that competency-based certification systems improve student engagement and learning outcomes (Gessler & Siemer, 2020: 145).



The international dimension of the program also contributes to its effectiveness. Collaboration with a global institution introduces elements of internationalization and global competence, which are increasingly emphasized in higher education. Exposure to international standards and expertise enhances both the quality of learning and the competitiveness of graduates in a global context (Guo et al., 2024). Despite its strengths, the study identifies several implementation challenges. Variations in students' initial abilities and limited training time highlight the need for more adaptive and differentiated instructional strategies. Literature on competency-based education emphasizes that successful implementation requires flexible learning pathways, continuous feedback, and well-designed assessment systems (Chen et al., 2023; Vargas et al., 2025). Overall, the novelty of this study lies in its integration of educational management, *tahsin*-based pedagogy, Qur'anic *sanad*, and international certification within a single program framework. This integrated model offers a holistic approach to strengthening Qur'anic competence in higher education, combining traditional Islamic scholarship with modern competency-based and internationally oriented educational practices. The findings contribute both theoretically, by expanding the discourse on Islamic educational management, and practically, by providing a replicable model for other Islamic higher education institutions seeking to enhance graduate quality and global competitiveness.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the management of the international certification program in *tahsin* and Qur'anic *sanad* at the Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang, plays a significant role in strengthening students' Qur'anic competence through the systematic implementation of management functions, namely planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision, supported by international collaboration with the *Global Quranic Mastery and Sanad Academy Malaysia* and the direct involvement of an internationally certified *sanad* scholar. Empirically, the program has been shown to improve students' recitation quality in terms of *makharij al-huruf*, phonetic characteristics, and fluency, while also enhancing learning motivation, reinforced by the policy that certification is a prerequisite for thesis defense, thereby integrating Qur'anic competence into the academic system. The findings also indicate that the program's impact is contextual, varying according to the characteristics of each study program; however, its effectiveness is still influenced by differences in students' initial competencies and limited training duration. Therefore, it is recommended to develop a differentiated training model based on initial competency mapping through diagnostic assessment, grouping participants according to proficiency levels, extending training duration for students with lower competencies, and standardizing *tahsin* and *sanad* assessment instruments to ensure consistency. Future research is suggested to adopt a mixed-methods approach to quantitatively measure competency improvement and to explore the integration of technology in Qur'anic recitation assessment to enhance accuracy and effectiveness.

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