

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Problem Statement

Throughout history, experts have utilized diverse strategies to ensure the preservation of knowledge, with memorization serving as one of the most enduring methods.<sup>1</sup> In earlier intellectual traditions, memorization was systematically practiced maintaining doctrinal purity and to ensure that teachings were transmitted without distortion across generations.<sup>2</sup> Muslims have memorized the Holy Qur'an from ancient times to the present.<sup>3</sup> Memorizing the Qur'an has become a familiar tradition in several Muslim countries such as Saudi Arabia,<sup>4</sup> Iran,<sup>5</sup> Türkiye,<sup>6</sup> Malaysia,<sup>7</sup> including Indonesia.<sup>8</sup> This is because the presence of the Qur'an memorizers (*Huffāzh*) plays an important role in preserving the text

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<sup>1</sup> Hankyul Kang et al., "Do Your Best and Get Enough Rest for Continual Learning," *2025 IEEE/CVF Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition (CVPR)*, June 10, 2025, 10077–86, <https://doi.org/10.1109/CVPR52734.2025.00942>.

<sup>2</sup> Lucia Delaine, "Habituation and Wonder: Embodied Knowledge in Renaissance Italy's Memory," *Ágora. Estudos Clássicos Em Debate* 24, no. 1 (June 2022): 105–27, 105-127 Páginas, <https://doi.org/10.34624/AGORA.V0I24.1.29404>; Abraham Ofir Shemesh, "Retaining Information and Knowledge in Human Memory in Mishnahic and Talmudic Periods: Historical, Cultural, and Practical Aspects," *Religious Studies and Theology* 40, no. 2 (December 2021): 174–202, <https://doi.org/10.1558/rst.20103>.

<sup>3</sup> Essam Ayyad, "Re-Evaluating Early Memorization of the Qur'an in Medieval Muslim Cultures," *Religions* 13, no. 2 (February 2022): 179, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13020179>.

<sup>4</sup> Sumyah Abdullah Alnajashi et al., "The Impact of Attending Qur'an Memorization Programs on Psychological Wellbeing: A Study on Adult Females," *Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal* 8, no. 2 (May 2025): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.25217/0020258594900>.

<sup>5</sup> Lilik Umami Kaltsum et al., "Model Pembelajaran Tahfidz Al-Qur'an di Indonesia, Iran, Turki, dan Arab Saudi," *An-Nuha: Jurnal Kajian Islam, Pendidikan, Budaya dan Sosial* 8, no. 2 (2021): 347–73, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.36835/annuha.v8i2.458>.

<sup>6</sup> Muhammet Yurtseven et al., "The Qur'an Teaching Activities of Ja'farī Communities in Türkiye: An Analysis from the Perspective of Instructors," *Religions* 16, no. 4 (March 2025): 424, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16040424>.

<sup>7</sup> Abd Rahman Abd Ghani et al., "Tahfiz (Memorization Sciences) Curriculum Practice: An Empirical Study from Private School in Johor, Malaysia," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 1 (June 2025): 233–45, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v8i1.265>.

<sup>8</sup> Jajang Jahroni, "The Rise of Tahfiz Schools in Contemporary Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 31, no. 2 (August 2024): 305–35, <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v31i2.41150>.

(*nash*), maintaining its authenticity from the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to the present, and safeguarding it from potential textual alteration.<sup>9</sup>

Nevertheless, despite the widespread recognition of the strategic role of the *Huffāz*, challenges in maintaining both the quantity and quality of Qur'anic memorization over the long term remain a recurring issue across diverse contexts of Islamic education. In many Muslim communities, a considerable number of Qur'an memorizers, after completing the memorization of several or all parts (*juz*), experience difficulties in sustaining the quality and quantity of their memorization over time. This phenomenon indicates that successfully completing the memorization process does not necessarily guarantee the long-term sustainability of memorization quality in the absence of systematic and continuous maintenance strategies.

This study was also grounded in an empirical phenomenon identified through the researcher's field observations over approximately two years and preliminary interactions with Qur'anic teachers across various TQ institutions in West Java. These observations revealed recurring accounts from teachers, both those who had completed the memorization of all thirty *juz* and those still engaged in active memorization maintenance, regarding difficulties in sustaining regular *murāja'ah* and preserving memorization stability amidst increasingly demanding professional responsibilities. Teaching obligations, institutional administration, student supervision, and personal commitments were frequently described as factors that constrained the time and cognitive focus required for systematic memorization maintenance.

This phenomenon suggests that the status of being a *Hafizh al-Qur'an* does not automatically guarantee the sustained quality of memorization over time. Rather, maintaining *Mutqin* Qur'anic memorization appears to be a dynamic and ongoing process that requires adaptive strategies, self-regulation, and continuous adjustment to changing professional contexts. These recurring lived experiences

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<sup>9</sup> Norazman Alias and Nor Hafizi Bin Yusof, "Eminence and Contributions of the Companions in the Development and Teaching of the Qur'an in the First Hijri Century," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 14, no. 1 (June 2024): 191–208, <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.141.12>.

among Qur'anic teachers indicate a significant practical tension between societal expectations of memorization excellence and the realities of professional life, thereby warranting deeper phenomenological investigation.

At the global level, one of the major issues that emerges is the lack of comprehensive Islamic empirical evidence explaining why the decline in memorization quality can occur even after individuals have reached the final stage of Qur'anic memorization (*Tahfīz al-Qur'ān*, hereafter TQ). Most existing studies continue to focus primarily on memorization methods and early stages of learning, while the dynamics of long-term maintenance, particularly outside formal educational settings, have received relatively limited scholarly attention. As a result, the global role of the *Huffāz* in sustaining Qur'anic memorization has not yet been fully supported by empirical evidence demonstrating successful long-term maintenance of memorization quality.

Within the tradition of TQ, the concept of *Mutqin* refers to a level of memorization mastery that is precise, stable, and fluent, as clearly reflected in the accuracy of pronunciation (*tajwīd*), reading fluency, and consistency of memory retention. *Mutqin* emphasizes that Qur'anic memorization is not assessed solely based on the ability to recall verses verbally but also on the stability of that memorization across diverse situations and conditions. In this sense, *Mutqin* represents a level of memorization quality that goes beyond mere technical competence and reaches a high degree of maturity.<sup>10</sup>

In addition, *Mutqin* is not merely concerned with the number of verses memorized but rather emphasizes the quality and consistency of memorization delivery that is free from hesitation, errors, or excessive reliance on short-term repetition. Memorization that is *Mutqin* demonstrates strong cognitive engagement, mastery of verse structure, and the ability to maintain recitational accuracy over the long term. Therefore, the successful memorization of all thirty *juz* of the Qur'an

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<sup>10</sup> Ibrahim bin Ubdu Al-Hasani Asy-Syinqithi, *Mutqin Hafal Al-Quran Metode Asy-Syinqithi* (Zamzam, 2022).

does not automatically signify the attainment of *Mutqin* if the quality of memorization cannot be consistently maintained.<sup>11</sup>

The importance of *Mutqin* has long been emphasized by classical Islamic scholars. Al-Suyūṭī, in *al-Itqān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān* textbook, articulates the concept of *ḥifẓ ma‘a itqān*, namely memorization accompanied by meticulousness, precision, and perfection in articulation.<sup>12</sup> This concept affirms that ideal Qur’anic memorization must encompass both recitational accuracy and the steadfastness of memory, rather than merely quantitative achievement. This perspective illustrates that memorization quality has been a fundamental principle in Islamic scholarly tradition since the classical period.

In line with this view, Al-Hakimi—a prominent Iranian scholar—argues that *Mutqin* constitutes the fifth and final stage in the process of Qur’anic memorization. This stage is achieved after progressing through several preceding phases, namely *qirā’ah juz ‘amma* (basic recitation), *al-istimā’* (listening), *al-naẓrah maḥthim al-āyāt* (understanding the meanings of the verses), and *al-tikrār* (repetition). This sequential framework demonstrates that *Mutqin* does not emerge instantaneously but is the result of a gradual process that consistently integrates technical and cognitive dimensions.<sup>13</sup>

Despite its central position in TQ education, the term of *Mutqin* remains relatively under-explored within contemporary academic discourse. Most studies on Qur’anic memorization continue to prioritize acceleration methods and the achievement of *juz’* targets. This limitation becomes particularly significant when linked to the role of TQ teachers, who are not only expected to possess *Mutqin* memorization but are also responsible for sustaining memorization quality amid professional demands and daily life responsibilities.

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<sup>11</sup> Kukun Ariyadi, *Metode Mutqin: Kuat Hafalnya, Faham Makna Ayatnya* (Media Cendekia Muslim., 2017).

<sup>12</sup> I. J. al-Suyuthi, *Al-Itqan Fi Ulumul Qur’an: Samudra Ilmu-Ilmu al-Qur’an*, Al-Itqan (Resalah Publisher, 1997).

<sup>13</sup> Kaltsum et al., “Model Pembelajaran Tahfidz Al-Qur’an di Indonesia, Iran, Turki, dan Arab Saudi.”

Previous studies indicate that although numerous Qur'anic memorization methods exist, their effectiveness in ensuring long-term memory retention varies considerably. Many memorization approaches are deemed successful in helping learners achieve memorization targets within a specific timeframe but do not necessarily guarantee stability and durability once formal learning concludes. Continuously, other studies have addressed Qur'anic memorization techniques, their focus generally remains limited to procedural and technical aspects, such as repetition methods, verse segmentation, or memorization acceleration strategies.<sup>14</sup> This condition suggests that the success of Qur'anic memorization cannot be measured solely by speed or quantity but must be understood within a framework of sustainable memorization maintenance.

The institutional environment in which Qur'anic memorization takes place constitutes another critical factor contributing to this issue. Most Qur'an memorizers undergo the memorization process in *Pondok Pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools), where TQ activities are typically structured within formal curricular systems featuring clear targets and evaluations. In this context, memorization is often positioned as an academic achievement to be completed within a specific timeframe rather than as a spiritual and intellectual practice cultivated throughout one's lifetime.<sup>15</sup> This pattern indirectly shapes learning orientations that prioritize task completion over long-term memorization sustainability. As a result, the majority of learners tend to focus on fulfilling memorization requirements without fully internalizing long-term maintenance strategies.<sup>16</sup>

Additionally, another commonly observed phenomenon in Qur'anic memorization institutions is a stronger emphasis on quantity rather than quality. In

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<sup>14</sup> Ahmad Falah, "The Determination of Factors Affecting Learning Outcomes of the Qur'an Memorization at MTs Yanbu' Kudus Students," *Edukasia : Jurnal Researcheran Pendidikan Islam* 17, no. 2 (2022): 267, <https://doi.org/10.21043/edukasia.v17i2.16102>.

<sup>15</sup> Muhammad Thontawi et al., "Tahfidz Al-Qur'an: A Study of Learning Management Systems in Higher Education," *AL-TANZIM: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 1 (April 2022): 574–85, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33650/al-tanzim.v6i2.3535>.

<sup>16</sup> Elisabeth Hovdhaugen, Nicoline Frølich, and Per Olaf Aamodt, "Informing Institutional Management: Institutional Strategies and Student Retention," *European Journal of Education* 48, no. 1 (March 2013): 165–77, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12002>.

many contexts, increases in the number of memorized verses are frequently used as the primary indicator of success, while aspects such as memorization resilience, depth, and stability receive comparatively less attention.<sup>17</sup> Though inspiring, this competitive culture occasionally leads to shallow recall where students lack thorough cognitive engagement with the text,<sup>18</sup> thereby hindering the realization of *Mutqin* quality as the primary goal of TQ education.

Shallow memorization is characterized by minimal cognitive and reflective engagement with the *naşş* (Qur'anic text). This phenomenon aligns with the findings of Gent and Muhammad (2019), who critique the practice of memorizing and reciting the Qur'an without accompanying comprehension of meaning. They highlight the potential weaknesses of mechanical memorization, such as superficial memory retention and limited spiritual engagement, which may ultimately weaken comprehensive mastery and internalization of the Qur'an.<sup>19</sup>

Another critical challenge in maintaining *Mutqin* Qur'anic memorization emerges when memorizers enter the phase of professional life after completing formal education in TQ institutions. This aligns with previous research by Robinson, that the most critical challenge emerges when recent graduates commence professional life.<sup>20</sup> This professional transition marks a significant shift from the structured, disciplined, and memorization-oriented environment of *pesantren* to a more complex and dynamic social and professional life. At this stage, memorizers are no longer embedded within intensively supervised memorization systems but are instead required to independently manage Qur'anic memorization amid diverse life demands. In this regard, Robinson also identifies post-graduation

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<sup>17</sup> Muhammad Amirul Asyraf Mohd Kadri, "Hafazan Al-Quran Antara Kuantiti Dan Kualiti," *Malaysia Gazette*, September 13, 2024, <https://malaysiagazette.com/2024/09/13/hafazan-al-quran-antara-kuantiti-dan-kualiti/>.

<sup>18</sup> Shan Li, "Measuring Cognitive Engagement: An Overview of Measurement Instruments and Techniques," *International Journal of Psychology and Educational Studies* 8, no. 3 (October 2022): 63–76, <https://doi.org/10.52380/ijpes.2021.8.3.239>.

<sup>19</sup> Bill Gent and Abdullah Muhammad, "Memorising and Reciting a Text without Understanding Its Meaning: A Multi-Faceted Consideration of This Practice with Particular Reference to the Qur'an," *Religions* 10, no. 7 (July 2019): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10070425>.

<sup>20</sup> Colton L. Robinson, "The Graduate's Dilemma: Transitioning from Academic Life into the Professional World," *Boise State University*, 2022, 1–15, [https://scholarworks.boisestate.edu/mds495\\_proj/120/](https://scholarworks.boisestate.edu/mds495_proj/120/).

knowledge decline among teachers as resulting from three main factors: (a) inadequate reinforcement systems, (b) increasing personal responsibilities, and (c) continuously expanding professional demands. These conditions contribute to high levels of post-graduation forgetting, particularly in the absence of mentorship systems or sustained knowledge reinforcement mechanisms.<sup>21</sup> Accordingly, this contextual shift often leads to reduced *murāja'ah* intensity—not due to declining religious commitment, but rather as a consequence of increased and simultaneous responsibility burdens. The absence of a robust *murāja'ah* (revision) culture exacerbates this issue even further since studies demonstrate that continuous reinforcement is a key feature to preserving memorization.<sup>22</sup>

Professional responsibilities in this context must be understood more broadly and not reduced solely to activities related to teaching Qur'anic memorization. Many Qur'an memorizers undertake diverse and multidimensional personal and professional roles that demand their attention after leaving the structured surroundings of *pesantren*.<sup>23</sup> Career obligations, family commitments, study in university, and other aspects of daily life help to explain the diminishing retention of their memorization as they prioritize new responsibilities over *murāja'ah*. This diversity of roles demands substantial allocations of time, cognitive energy, and emotional focus. Under such conditions, ideal *murāja'ah* practices—which require consistency, tranquility, and high concentration—are often displaced by other urgent and pragmatic priorities. Consequently, the maintenance of Qur'anic memorization is not always optimally integrated into daily professional routines.

This condition indicates that the decline or stagnation in memorization quality is not solely attributable to weaknesses in initial memorization methods but also to the absence of post-graduation support systems capable of accommodating the

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<sup>21</sup> Robinson.

<sup>22</sup> Roza Muspita Sari, Guijiao Zou, and Lie Jie, “The Use of Murajaah Method in Improving Qur'an Memorization: Tahfiz A-Qur'an,” *International Journal of Educational Narratives* 1, no. 2 (July 2023): 63–74, <https://doi.org/10.55849/ijen.v1i2.304>; Feni Mercellina, Muhammad Adil, and Karoma Karoma, “Muraja'ah Learning Method on Home Tahfizh Qur'an An-Nuur,” *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 02 (August 2020): 342, <https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v9i02.770>.

<sup>23</sup> Ermis Suryana et al., “Exploring Memorization Patterns in the Tahfidz and Tarjamah Qur'an Programs,” *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 2 (December 2024): 375–86, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v10i2.29969>.

realities of professional life.<sup>24</sup> Without structured guidance and sustained support, many individuals struggle to balance professional obligations with the need to maintain *Mutqin* Qur'anic memorization. The findings of Hasbi and Mardhiah (2024), citing data from Luaidah (2022), reinforce this condition by demonstrating that more than 60% of former Qur'an memorizers experienced significant declines in memorization ability within three months after completing the memorization process.<sup>25</sup> These data indicate a serious gap between the completion phase of memorization and the long-term maintenance phase.

For TQ teachers, these challenges become increasingly complex due to their dual role as *Huffāz* and professionals facing layered demands. On the one hand, they are expected to possess *Mutqin* memorization quality, maintain *tajwīd* accuracy, and represent ideal standards of Qur'anic mastery as role models for students and society. On the other hand, they are also required to perform professional roles encompassing pedagogical responsibilities, institutional leadership, educational administration, and broader social obligations. Although Qur'an teaching is normatively perceived as reinforcing memorization, in practice pedagogical activities do not always equate to deep and systematic *murāja'ah*. Classroom management, curriculum target achievement, and administrative demands often divert attention from personal and reflective memorization maintenance.

More importantly, the lack of formal repetition systems and weak post-graduation institutional support cause memorization maintenance practices to rely heavily on individual initiative. Personal practices such as independent *murāja'ah* routines, self-regulated learning strategies, and adaptive memorization strategies tailored to individual professional contexts remain under-documented and under-examined in academic literature. Yet, these practices hold significant potential as

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<sup>24</sup> Nik Md Saiful Azizi Nik Abdullah, Fathiyah Solehah Mohd Sabbri, and Rabi'atul Athirah Muhammad Isa, "Tahfiz Students' Experiences in Memorizing the Qur'an: Unveiling Their Motivating Factors and Challenges," *IJUM Journal of Educational Studies* 9, no. 2 (June 2021): 42–63, <https://doi.org/10.31436/ijes.v9i2.248>.

<sup>25</sup> Hasbi Hasbi and Ainal Mardhiah, "Analisis Efektivitas Pembelajaran Tahfidz dalam Meningkatkan Hafalan Al-Qur'an Siswa di Sekolah Dasar Islam Qur'ani Banda Aceh," *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai* 8, no. 3 (2024): 45882–93.

key mechanisms for sustaining Qur'anic memorization quality amid professional complexity. This condition renders the maintenance of TQ teachers' memorization not merely an individual concern but an urgent and structural educational issue.

Weak Qur'anic recall among memorizers especially those who go on to be TQ teachers has a significant social impact. Among TQ teachers, inaccurate recitation and poor memorization can lead to lower the Qur'anic literacy levels in society.<sup>26</sup> When teachers' memorization quality and recitational accuracy decline, the impact extends beyond the personal domain to affect Qur'anic literacy quality among students and the broader community. Repeated recitational errors, even if minor, risk being internalized by students and forming inaccurate reading patterns over time, thereby weakening overall Qur'anic learning standards.

Moreover, within the tradition of Islamic education, teachers occupy a symbolic position as moral, spiritual, and intellectual exemplars. Students tend to regard teachers as primary references in evaluating seriousness and commitment to Qur'anic memorization. Therefore, TQ teachers who exhibit weak memorization retention or recitational instability may undermine students' motivation to develop long-term commitments to maintaining their memorization.<sup>27</sup> This condition may generate a negative cycle in which declining teacher memorization quality affects student memorization quality, ultimately threatening the sustainability of the TQ tradition itself. Accordingly, the issue of weak memorization cannot be viewed solely as an individual problem but rather as a pedagogical and social issue with intergenerational implications.

Beyond personal shortcomings, this concern influences the integrity of Qur'anic transmission and the larger framework of Islamic knowledge.<sup>28</sup> Islamic

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<sup>26</sup> Sitti Isni Azzaah, Ali Imran Sinaga, and Sapri Sapri, "Implementation of Al-Qur'an Literacy in Community Character Development In Medan Senembah Village, Tanjung Morawa Sub-District," *International Journal Of Humanities Education and Social Sciences (IJHESS)* 2, no. 6 (June 2023): 2169–78, <https://doi.org/10.55227/ijhess.v2i6.502>.

<sup>27</sup> Muhammad Yasin and Nur Atim Zaini, "Peran Guru PAI Dalam Meningkatkan Hafalan Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an Siswa Di SMA Negeri 1 Sangatta Utara," *An-Nahdlah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 1 (July 2023): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.51806/an-nahdlah.v3i1.70>.

<sup>28</sup> Abd Aziz Rekan, Mohd Istajib Mokhtar, and Yusmini Yusoff, "Instructional Approach of Islamic Education Teachers to Gearing Up Future Muslim Generations with Environmental Education," *Asia Pacific Journal of Educators and Education* 39, no. 2 (December 2024): 249–72, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21315/apjee2024.39.2.13>.

history demonstrates that Qur'anic transmission relies heavily on memorization accuracy and the continuity of well-preserved recitational chains (*sanad*). When the memorization quality of educators weakens, there is a risk of recitational distortion that may gradually erode scholarly standards and pedagogical authority in Qur'anic education. Reinforcing this concern, Muafiah et al. (2022) emphasize that teachers with weak memorization are at risk of transmitting inaccurate Qur'anic recitations, which may subsequently disrupt students' learning processes and undermine teaching credibility.<sup>29</sup> These implications indicate that maintaining TQ teachers' memorization quality constitutes an integral component of preserving collective Qur'anic transmission quality.

In summary, if this trend continues, there is a risk of producing generations of Qur'an memorizers with unstable memorization, thereby affecting their readiness to serve as effective Qur'anic educators in the future.<sup>30</sup> Weak memorization quality among teachers, as highlighted by scholars, may lead to recitational errors being inherited by students and expanding chains of inaccuracies across subsequent generations.<sup>31</sup> This condition demonstrates that memorization quality issues not only affect individuals but also have broader implications for the sustainability of Qur'anic transmission within educational and societal contexts.

Based on these challenges and implications, this study is both important and relevant in providing a deeper understanding of efforts to sustain *Mutqin* Qur'anic memorization within the real-life contexts of expert memorizers who simultaneously carry personal and professional responsibilities. This research is not solely directed at addressing technical memorization issues but also aims to investigate memorization maintenance dynamics amid the complexity of personal

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<sup>29</sup> Evi Muafiah, Neng Eri Sofiana, and Uswatul Khasanah, "Pesantren Education in Indonesia: Efforts to Create Child-Friendly Pesantren," *Ulumuna* 26, no. 2 (December 2022): 447–71, <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v26i2.558>.

<sup>30</sup> Yurtseven et al., "The Qur'ān Teaching Activities of Ja'farī Communities in Türkiye."

<sup>31</sup> Tehmina Sattar, "Determinants and Implications of Weak Teachers Performance in Education Sector: A Case of Affiliated Schools from Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Multan Division (Pakistan)," *International Journal of Accounting and Financial Reporting* 2, no. 1 (January 2012): 116, <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijaf.v2i1.1459>; Deepa S. and Manisha Seth, "An Exploratory Study of Student Perception of Instructor Traits in Effective Learning," *Universal Journal of Management* 2, no. 1 (January 2014): 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujm.2014.020101>.

and professional roles, particularly among TQ teachers. Accordingly, this study is expected to offer contextualized guidance and strategies for individuals at various stages of the Qur'anic memorization journey, including those currently memorizing, those who have completed all thirty *juz* ', and those directly involved in TQ education.

Furthermore, this study also seeks to formulate practical recommendations enabling memorizers to sustain *Mutqin* memorization throughout their lives. This effort is undertaken by identifying substantive strategies that support long-term memorization retention, including *murāja'ah* practices, self-regulation strategies, and memorization adaptations within diverse professional contexts. In addition to offering practical contributions, this study is expected to enrich academic discourse by bridging the gap between Qur'anic memorization theories developed in existing literature and their application within dynamic and authentic TQ educational contexts. Accordingly, this research not only expands conceptual understanding of *Mutqin* but also contributes to strengthening the sustainability of TQ education.

## **B. Research Questions**

The researcher formulates three questions of this study based on the problem statement above, which consist of:

1. How do *Tahfiz* Qur'an teachers experience the process of achieving *Mutqin* Qur'anic memorization?
2. What strategies do *Tahfiz* Qur'an teachers use to sustain *Mutqin* memorization amidst professional responsibilities?
3. What challenges do *Tahfiz* Qur'an teachers face in sustaining *Mutqin* amidst professional responsibilities?

## **C. Research Objectives**

The researcher formulates three objectives of this study based on the problem statement above as follows:

1. To describe the initial process of *Tahfiz* Qur'an teachers in achieving *Mutqin* Qur'anic memorization.

2. To identify the strategies employed by *Tahfiz* Qur'an teachers to sustain *Mutqin* memorization amidst professional responsibilities.
3. To explore the challenges faced by *Tahfiz* Qur'an teachers in sustaining *Mutqin* memorization amidst professional responsibilities.

#### **D. Significance of Study**

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute meaningfully to the academic discourse surrounding Qur'anic memorization and retention strategies, particularly in the context of TQ teachers as *Huffāz*. By addressing the challenges associated with long-term memorization quality, this research enriches the field of Islamic Education.

Beyond its academic contributions, this study also offers practical implications for individuals at various stages of the Qur'anic memorization process. For those who are in the early stages of memorization, the findings will serve as an adequate guidance framework, emphasizing the importance of developing robust foundational habits before attaining the status of a *hafiz*. Given that a strong memorization quality must be nurtured from the outset, this research highlights essential strategies that can aid memorizers in fostering sustainable retention.

In addition, this study provides a best practice framework specifically tailored for individuals who have completed the memorization of thirty *juz* of Qur'an. By identifying effective way for achieving and sustaining *Mutqin* memorization, the research aims to equip memorizers—especially those with professional responsibilities such as teaching or other occupations—with practical methods to balance their work commitments while ensuring their Qur'anic retention remains strong and accurate. This is particularly significant for TQ teachers as *Huffāz* whose memorization quality directly impacts their students' learning experience and the overall transmission of Qur'anic knowledge.

Furthermore, the study seeks to address a critical gap by compiling and presenting structured memorization strategies that align with contemporary demands. As many memorizers face difficulties in sustaining their recitation accuracy and fluency due to external commitments, this research provides solutions

that enable them to integrate daily review sessions and structured reinforcement techniques into their routines. By doing so, it contributes to sustaining the high standards of Qur'anic stuff and ensuring that the integrity of memorization is preserved across generations.

Ultimately, this study serves as both an academic and practical resource for scholars, teachers, and practitioners within the field of Islamic Education. Bridging theoretical memorization models with their real-world applications, it ensures that the insights gained will not only advance scholarly discussions but also offer tangible benefits for individuals committed to sustaining the precision and longevity of their Qur'anic memorization.

### **E. Conceptual Framework**

This study is built upon two main theoretical foundations, namely the Theory of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) and the Theory of Spaced Repetition (SR). Both theories originate from the traditions of cognitive psychology and learning sciences and are widely used to explain how individuals manage learning processes, retain knowledge, and maintain the stability of mastery over learning materials in the long term. In educational contexts, these two theories are viewed as complementary, as they explain two essential dimensions of learning: the dimension of individuals' internal regulation and the dimension of external time management and repetition.

Conceptually, SRL and SR are not employed in this study as theories to be tested through hypothesis-driven approaches or quantitative measurement. Rather, both theories function as interpretive lenses for understanding individuals' lived experiences, challenges, and adaptive strategies in sustaining the quality of long-term learning. Accordingly, this conceptual framework enables the study to examine learning processes as dynamic, contextual, and continuous practices.

The theory of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) developed from the tradition of social cognitive theory pioneered by Albert Bandura in the late twentieth century. One of the central figures who further developed and formalized the concept of SRL is Barry J. Zimmerman, an American educational psychologist and professor

emeritus at the City University of New York (CUNY). Zimmerman is widely recognized for his contributions to the study of self-regulation, learning motivation, and metacognition.<sup>32</sup>

During the 1980s and 1990s, Zimmerman critiqued traditional learning approaches that placed excessive emphasis on the roles of teachers, curricula, and institutional structures while neglecting the active role of learners. According to Zimmerman, effective learning is not solely determined by external factors but is highly dependent on individuals' capacity to regulate themselves throughout the learning process. From this perspective, SRL was developed as a framework to explain how individuals consciously plan, control, and evaluate their learning activities.

In his works, particularly those published between 2000 and 2002, Zimmerman conceptualized SRL as a cyclical process consisting of three main phases: forethought, performance, and self-reflection. These phases are not linear; rather, they are interrelated and continuously recur throughout the learning process.

First, the forethought phase represents the initial stage before learning activities take place. In this phase, individuals prepare themselves cognitively and motivationally through two main components: task analysis and self-motivation beliefs.

Task analysis refers to individuals' ability to consciously analyze the demands of a learning task. This process includes goal setting and the selection of appropriate learning strategies. Research on SRL indicates that individuals who conduct effective task analysis tend to set goals that are more specific, measurable, and realistic. They are also better able to adjust learning strategies according to the level of task difficulty and the limitations of available resources. Moreover, task analysis plays a crucial role in reducing cognitive load. Through careful planning, individuals can break down complex tasks into smaller, manageable units, thereby making the learning process more efficient and sustainable.

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<sup>32</sup> Barry J. Zimmerman, "Becoming a Self-Regulated Learner: An Overview," *Theory Into Practice* 41, no. 2 (May 2002): 64–70, [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4102\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4102_2).

The second component of this phase is self-motivation beliefs, which encompass individuals' beliefs in their own capabilities (self-efficacy), goal orientations, and personal values attached to learning activities. Zimmerman emphasized that motivation is not merely an emotional drive but a cognitive construct that shapes learning-related decisions. Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to set challenging goals, demonstrate greater persistence, and remain resilient in demanding learning situations.

Numerous SRL studies have shown that the forethought phase exerts a significant influence on the success of subsequent phases. Weak planning and fragile motivation often lead to inconsistency in learning implementation.

Second, the performance phase refers to the stage in which learning plans are implemented in practice. In this phase, SRL emphasizes two primary components: self-control and self-observation.

Self-control refers to individuals' ability to manage their learning behaviors consistently. This includes time management, attention control, regulation of the learning environment, and the application of planned cognitive strategies. Research indicates that self-control is a key determinant of success in self-directed learning, particularly in contexts where individuals are not under the direct supervision of formal institutions. Furthermore, self-control is closely related to individuals' capacity to cope with distractions and external pressures. Individuals with strong self-regulatory skills tend to maintain learning focus even under non-ideal conditions.

Self-observation, meanwhile, refers to the process of self-monitoring during learning activities. Individuals actively observe their learning progress, record errors, and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies employed. Self-observation enables individuals to make immediate adjustments to their strategies, thereby ensuring that the learning process remains adaptive and responsive to emerging challenges.

Third, the self-reflection phase constitutes the evaluative stage following learning activities. In this phase, individuals engage in self-judgment and self-reaction regarding their learning outcomes.

Self-judgment involves individuals' evaluations of their learning achievements as well as their attributions for success or failure. How individuals interpret learning outcomes strongly influences subsequent SRL cycles. Constructive attributions encourage strategic improvement, whereas negative attributions may undermine motivation.

Self-reaction refers to individuals' affective and cognitive responses to these evaluative judgments. Such responses may include satisfaction, disappointment, or renewed motivation to improve learning quality. SRL research consistently emphasizes that adaptive reflective responses are critical for sustaining self-regulated learning processes over the long term.

Overall, these three SRL phases form a dynamic and recurring learning cycle. Individuals who are able to maintain high-quality learning over extended periods typically engage actively and simultaneously in all phases of SRL.

The Theory of Spaced Repetition (SR) originates from the experimental research of Hermann Ebbinghaus, a German psychologist widely regarded as a pioneer of scientific memory studies. In 1885, Ebbinghaus published his seminal work *Über das Gedächtnis (On Memory)*, in which he introduced the concept of the forgetting curve.<sup>33</sup>

Through systematic self-experimentation, Ebbinghaus demonstrated that human memory declines sharply shortly after initial learning. However, he also found that repetitions conducted at specific time intervals could significantly slow down the forgetting process. These findings laid the foundation for the development of SR theory.

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<sup>33</sup> Hermann Ebbinghaus, *Memory: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology*, trans. Henry A. Ruger and Clara E. Bussenius (Teachers College, Columbia University, 1913), <https://doi.org/10.1037/10011-001>.

Over time, SR has emphasized that effective learning depends not on the intensity of repetition within a single session but on the distribution of repetitions over extended periods. Modern research in cognitive psychology, including studies by Cepeda et al. (2006), has reinforced Ebbinghaus' findings by demonstrating that distributed practice produces more stable long-term retention than massed practice.<sup>34</sup>

SR consists of several key stages. The first stage involves planning the spacing intervals of study sessions. At this stage, individuals determine the time intervals between learning sessions based on material complexity and initial mastery levels. The second stage is the initial learning of the material (reviewing), during which individuals construct basic cognitive representations of the information. The third stage involves recalling the information at the first spacing interval. This recall process serves as memory reinforcement and facilitates consolidation into long-term memory. The fourth stage involves repeated recall at predetermined intervals. Such scheduled repetition enables memory stability to be maintained over the long term.

The integration of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) and Spaced Repetition (SR) forms a comprehensive conceptual framework for understanding long-term learning maintenance, particularly in the context of individuals facing complex professional demands. These two theories explain distinct yet complementary dimensions. SRL focuses on how individuals internally manage learning processes through planning, self-control, and continuous reflection, while SR emphasizes how memory is optimally sustained through time management and structured repetition.

In this study, SRL is positioned as the primary conceptual framework guiding the overall research process, particularly in the development of interview protocols, data analysis, and the categorization of findings based on phases of self-regulation. The SRL framework enables the researcher to examine in depth how TQ

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<sup>34</sup> Nicholas J. Cepeda et al., "Distributed Practice in Verbal Recall Tasks: A Review and Quantitative Synthesis," *Psychological Bulletin* 132, no. 3 (2006): 354–80, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.132.3.354>.

teachers consciously plan, implement, and evaluate their memorization maintenance practices amid diverse professional responsibilities. Accordingly, SRL serves as the primary lens for understanding internal dynamics, learning-related decision-making, and individual adaptive mechanisms in sustaining *Mutqin* memorization.

Operationally, the phases of SRL are used to guide the focus of the research questions (RQs). RQ1 is directed at exploring the forethought phase, namely how TQ teachers develop initial awareness, set goals, and design memorization maintenance strategies after completing the memorization of thirty *juz*. At this stage, interviews focus on planning processes, task analysis, and motivational beliefs that encourage individuals to maintain memorization outside formal educational systems.

Subsequently, RQ2 focuses on the performance phase, examining how planned strategies are implemented in daily practice. At this stage, the Theory of Spaced Repetition (SR) is employed more explicitly as a supporting conceptual lens. SR helps explain how individuals regulate *murāja'ah* intervals, determine repetition frequency, and adjust repetition strategies in response to time constraints arising from professional demands. Although planning repetition intervals is initially addressed in RQ1, SR becomes particularly relevant in RQ2 as it focuses on actual memorization maintenance practices and long-term repetition dynamics.

Meanwhile, RQ3 is directed at exploring the self-reflection phase, namely how TQ teachers evaluate memorization quality, assess the effectiveness of employed strategies, and respond to memorization decline or stability. At this stage, SRL again serves as the primary framework for understanding how self-reflection, personal evaluation, and emotional responses influence the sustainability of memorization maintenance practices. This reflective process also opens space for the emergence of adaptive strategies that may not align directly with SR theory but remain highly relevant within individuals' lived experiences.

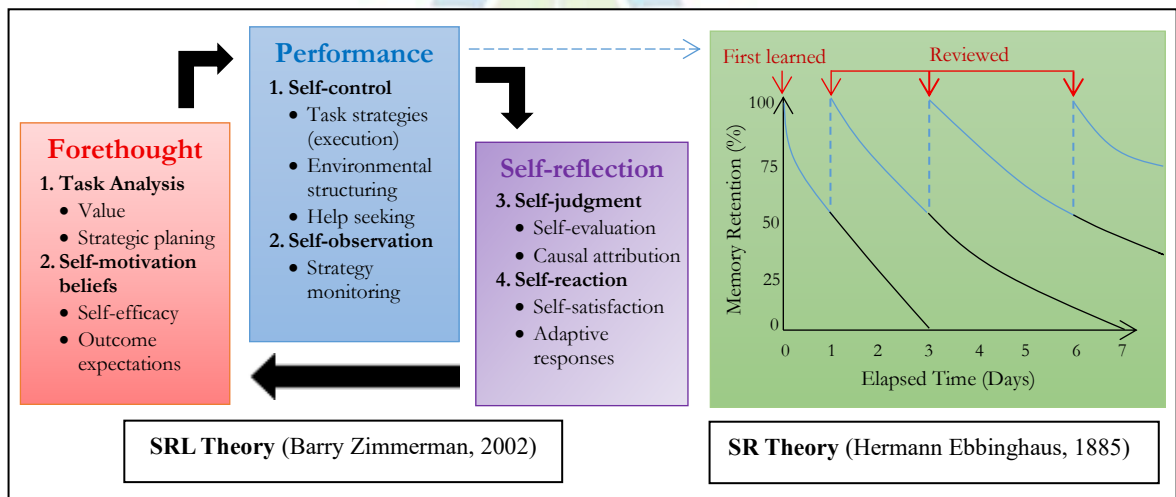
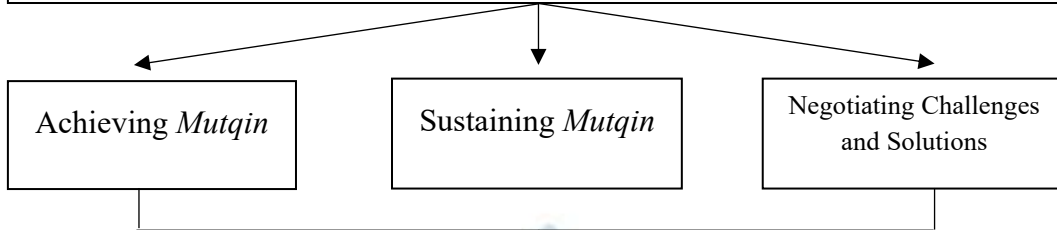
Through this approach, SRL functions as the primary conceptual map structuring the understanding of individuals' learning journeys from planning through reflection, while SR serves as a specific thematic framework that deepens

the understanding of repetition practices and memory management, particularly during the performance phase. This integration enables the study to capture the complexity of memorization maintenance practices more holistically, without restricting findings to a single theoretical perspective.

Furthermore, this study does not aim to impose normative alignment between empirical findings and SRL or SR. Instead, both theories are employed as starting points for interpreting empirical data. Consequently, the study remains open to the possibility that field findings may align with, extend, or even transcend SRL and SR frameworks, revealing additional patterns, strategies, or principles that contribute to individuals' success in achieving and sustaining *Mutqin* memorization amid professional responsibilities.

As visualized in Figure 1, the lived experiences of TQ teachers are positioned at the center of the study's conceptual framework. SRL and SR surround these experiences as theoretical foundations that help explain processes of achievement, maintenance, challenges, and adaptation encountered by individuals. Ultimately, the integration of these two theories supports the primary aim of the study, which is to develop an in-depth understanding of how *Mutqin* memorization of the Qur'an can be sustainably maintained within dynamic professional contexts.

1. Maintaining *Mutqin* Qur'anic memorization becomes a serious challenge for *Huffâzh* who have graduated from Islamic boarding schools and entered the workforce.
2. There is a conflict between professional demands (work-related responsibilities) and the need to maintain the quality of Qur'anic memorization.
3. Not all *Huffâzh* possess systematic strategies to sustain their memorization after leaving the pesantren environment.



TQ Teachers as agents of SRL in achieving and sustaining *Mutqin* Qur'anic memorization Amid Professional Responsibilities or Occupational Demands.

**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework**

## F. Operational Definitions

### 1. Navigation

In this study, navigation is defined as the process of directing, exploring, and adaptively managing the various experiences, strategies, and adjustments undertaken by Tahfiz Qur'an teachers in sustaining *Mutqin* Qur'anic memorization amidst their professional responsibilities. This term reflects the dynamic process through which participants confront challenges, make decisions, and identify effective strategies to preserve the quality of memorization continuously.

### 2. *Mutqin*

*Mutqin* refers to a state of Qur'anic memorization that is strong, accurate, fluent, consistent, and sustainably maintained, as reflected in the ability to recite Qur'anic verses precisely in accordance with the rules of tajwid, with minimal errors, and to preserve memorization stability over time. This condition is generally demonstrated through rigorous memorization evaluation processes, such as comprehensive memorization examinations, structured *muraja'ah*, and, in certain contexts, *sanad*-based examinations as a form of verification conducted by qualified authorized teachers.

### 3. *Hafizh al-Qur'an*

*Hafizh al-Qur'an* refers to an individual who has completed the memorization of the entire 30 *juz* of the Qur'an and consistently maintains it through regular *muraja'ah*. The plural form of *Hafizh* is *Huffazh*, which refers to multiple Qur'an memorizers. In the context of this study, the term specifically refers to Tahfiz Qur'an (TQ) teachers who have completed Qur'anic memorization and carry professional responsibilities in Qur'anic education and memorization guidance.