



## Integration of the Tahfidz Curriculum and the Madrasah Curriculum in Grade 1 at MITQ Jamilurrahman: A Qualitative Descriptive Study

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the planning, implementation, and learning outcomes of an integrated Tahfidz and madrasah curriculum in Grade 1 at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Tahfidzul Qur'an (MITQ) Jamilurohman. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and documentation, and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model. The findings indicate that curriculum integration is implemented through systematic coordination among Tahfidz teachers, curriculum coordinators, and school leadership. Qur'an memorization is positioned as a foundational learning activity that is intentionally integrated with academic instruction in daily learning practices. This integrated approach contributes to the development of disciplined learning behavior, positive learning habits, strong attachment to the Qur'an, and stable academic achievement among students. The results suggest that curriculum integration not only supports spiritual and moral development but also maintains academic learning effectiveness at the elementary level. Overall, this study provides empirical evidence that an integrated Tahfidz-based curriculum can serve as an effective model for holistic Islamic elementary education.

## 1. Introduction

Education serves as a strategic instrument in shaping the quality of human resources who are characterized, knowledgeable, and morally upright. At the elementary level, education does not merely function as a medium for transferring knowledge but also acts as a foundational stage for instilling moral, spiritual, and social values in students. From the perspective of Islamic education, the ultimate goal is not only to produce intellectually capable learners but also to cultivate insan kamil

individuals who possess faith, piety, knowledge, and Qur'anic character. Therefore, the Islamic education system must be designed in an integrated manner to balance academic and religious aspects within the learning process. Several studies on Islamic primary education emphasize that curriculum integration is a strategic approach to ensuring that spiritual values and academic competencies develop simultaneously in elementary school students (Basri & Abdullah, 2025).

Recent educational studies emphasize that holistic and integrated learning approaches are essential in supporting students' cognitive and affective development, particularly at the elementary education level (Khusnunnisa & Andriani, 2025). The use of interactive and technology-assisted learning media has been shown to increase student engagement and motivation when aligned with instructional objectives (Septiani et al., 2025). In addition, learning designs that integrate visual and interactive elements, such as augmented reality-based materials, contribute to improved conceptual understanding among elementary students (Zahro et al., 2024). Similar findings also indicate that innovative learning media can foster students' interest and active participation in the learning process (Jannah et al., 2025). Furthermore, the integration of learning content and media has been proven effective in supporting students' numeracy and basic academic skills (Muti'ah et al., 2024). These findings reinforce the argument that integrated instructional designs are essential for supporting holistic learning processes in elementary education settings, particularly in Islamic schools that emphasize value-based learning (Nugraha et al., 2025).

One relevant approach to achieving this balance is the integration of the Tahfidz curriculum with the madrasah curriculum. Curriculum integration refers to efforts to unify various fields of knowledge so that learners gain a comprehensive and meaningful learning experience. In the context of Islamic education, integrating general subjects with Tahfidz programs aims to harmonize scientific knowledge with Qur'anic values. Previous studies on integrated learning models indicate that such approaches enable students to perceive learning as a coherent and interconnected process rather than fragmented activities (Masrukhin et al., 2024). Research on curriculum integration in madrasah contexts further confirms that integrating religious and general learning content strengthens learning coherence and supports the internalization of Islamic values from an early age (Fatkhurrokhim & Widodo, 2024). Similarly, the integration of religious and general learning content has been found to strengthen students' understanding and learning continuity at the elementary level (Munawarah, 2025).

The implementation of curriculum integration carries significant importance in shaping students' character and spirituality from an early age. Qur'an memorization, for instance, not only strengthens memory but also builds discipline, patience, and commitment to moral values. Meanwhile, academic learning offers logical and rational perspectives that foster intellectual development. Empirical evidence shows that the integration of religious instruction and academic learning positively influences students' character formation and learning motivation (Hasan & Inayati, 2025). Other studies also confirm that Qur'an-based educational programs contribute to the development of students' moral values and social

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behavior (Saputra & Hafidz, 2025). Moreover, character education integrated within the school curriculum has been proven effective in supporting holistic student development (Permadi & Achadi, 2025). Studies focusing on Tahfidz-based education at the elementary level demonstrate that curriculum integration not only supports character formation but also sustains students' academic engagement and learning motivation (Pratama & Gularso, 2025).

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Tahfidzul Qur'an (MITQ) Jamilurohman is one Islamic educational institution that seeks to apply this integration concept. The institution combines the Tahfidz program with the regular madrasah curriculum within a unified learning system. Starting from Grade 1, students are guided to develop love for the Qur'an through scheduled memorization sessions while also studying general subjects such as Indonesian Language, Mathematics, and Science. Similar models implemented in Tahfidz-based Islamic institutions indicate that early curriculum integration strengthens students' attachment to the Qur'an while maintaining academic balance (Basri & Abdullah, 2025). This integrated implementation is supported by an organized management system involving coordination between the Tahfidz division and the general curriculum division, ensuring an effective and well-directed teaching and learning process.

However, implementing curriculum integration is a complex process that requires careful planning, appropriate implementation strategies, and strong coordination among various stakeholders, including Tahfidz teachers, general subject teachers, and the madrasah management team. Previous studies indicate that challenges in curriculum integration are often related to time management, curriculum alignment, and teacher preparedness (Karlina & Iryani, 2025). In addition, teachers' strategies and professional readiness play a crucial role in maintaining a balance between academic achievement and character development, particularly in the context of contemporary educational demands (Permadi & Achadi, 2025). These challenges highlight the importance of examining curriculum integration practices within specific institutional contexts.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the planning, implementation, and learning outcomes of an integrated Tahfidz and madrasah curriculum in Grade 1 at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Tahfidzul Qur'an (MITQ) Jamilurohman using a qualitative descriptive approach. Specifically, the study examines how curriculum integration is organized, how it is implemented in daily learning activities, and how it contributes to students' academic development, character formation, and spiritual growth. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the field of Islamic education by strengthening conceptual understanding of integrated curriculum implementation in Islamic elementary schools, particularly Tahfidz-based institutions, and by providing empirical insights for educators, school leaders, and policymakers in designing curriculum models that balance academic learning with Qur'anic values and character development.

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## **2. Methodology**

### ***Research Design and Approach***

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. The qualitative approach was selected because the research seeks to obtain an in-depth understanding of educational phenomena that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement. In particular, this study focuses on exploring how the integrated Tahfidz and madrasah curriculum is planned and implemented in a real educational setting. Qualitative inquiry allows the researcher to understand participants' perspectives, experiences, and interpretations related to curriculum integration. Through this approach, data are generated in a natural and contextual manner, reflecting authentic practices within the madrasah environment. The descriptive design was chosen to provide a detailed and systematic portrayal of the implementation process without manipulating variables. This study does not aim to test hypotheses or establish causal relationships but rather to describe existing conditions as they occur. By using a descriptive qualitative design, the research captures the dynamics, challenges, and strategies involved in integrating religious and academic curricula at the elementary level.

### ***Research Site and Time***

The research was conducted at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Tahfidzul Qur'an (MITQ) Jamilurohman, located in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. This madrasah was selected purposively because it consistently applies an integrated curriculum model that combines Tahfidz education with the formal madrasah curriculum. The institution provides a relevant context for examining curriculum integration at the elementary education level. The research site reflects a learning environment where academic instruction and Qur'an memorization are implemented simultaneously within a structured system. The study was carried out during the odd semester of the academic year to ensure that regular teaching and learning activities could be observed. Data collection was conducted over a sufficient period to allow repeated observations and in-depth interviews. This timeframe enabled the researcher to understand curriculum implementation in its natural flow. The chosen setting and time strengthened the contextual relevance and depth of the research findings.

### ***Participants and Data Sources***

The participants in this study consisted of three key informants selected through purposive sampling. The selection was based on their strategic roles and direct involvement in curriculum planning and implementation. The first participant was the Tahfidz Coordinator, who is responsible for managing and supervising the Qur'an memorization program. The second participant was the Head of Curriculum, who oversees the design, organization, and implementation of the general madrasah curriculum. The third participant was the Principal, who plays a central role in policy formulation and coordination between academic and religious programs. These participants were chosen because they possess comprehensive knowledge of both conceptual and practical aspects of curriculum integration. In

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addition to interviews, data sources also included institutional documents related to curriculum planning and learning schedules. The use of multiple participants and data sources enhanced the depth and credibility of the data collected.

### ***Data Collection Techniques***

Data were collected using three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to allow participants to express their views and experiences freely while still addressing the research focus. The interviews explored issues related to curriculum planning, implementation strategies, and challenges encountered during integration. Observations were carried out during learning activities to examine how the integrated curriculum was applied in classroom practices. Through observation, the researcher was able to capture real-time interactions between teachers and students. Documentation was used to support interview and observation data by examining curriculum guidelines, schedules, and institutional records. These documents provided factual evidence of curriculum planning and implementation. The combination of these techniques ensured comprehensive data collection. Using multiple methods also helped reduce data bias and strengthened the validity of the findings.

### ***Data Validation and Trustworthiness***

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings, several validation strategies were applied. Data triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. Source triangulation was also used by examining similarities and differences in data provided by different participants. This process helped to verify the consistency of the findings. Member checking was carried out by confirming key interpretations and summaries with the participants. This step ensured that the data accurately reflected participants' intended meanings. Prolonged engagement at the research site also contributed to deeper understanding and data accuracy. These validation procedures enhanced the transparency and methodological rigor of the study. As a result, the research findings can be considered credible and trustworthy.

### ***Data Analysis***

Data analysis in this study followed a qualitative descriptive procedure. The first step involved data reduction, where irrelevant information was filtered and relevant data were organized according to the research focus. The second step was data display, in which the organized data were presented in narrative form to facilitate interpretation. During this stage, patterns and themes related to curriculum integration were identified. The analysis focused on three main aspects: planning, implementation, and outcomes of the integrated curriculum. The third step involved drawing conclusions by interpreting the patterns and relationships found in the data. This process was carried out continuously throughout data collection and analysis. The descriptive analysis allowed the researcher to explain how curriculum integration was implemented in practice. Ultimately, the analysis provided a

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comprehensive understanding of the integrated Tahfidz and madrasah curriculum at MITQ Jamilurohman.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

#### ***Results***

The results of this study indicate that the implementation of the integrated Tahfidz and madrasah curriculum at MITQ Jamilurohman is systematically organized and guided by a clear educational orientation, structured daily learning practices, and collaborative institutional management. A primary finding shows that curriculum integration has been established as a core educational philosophy since the founding of the madrasah. Rather than functioning as an operational addition, the integration of Tahfidz and academic learning reflects a long-term institutional commitment to fostering balanced spiritual, moral, and academic development among students.

The findings further reveal that the Tahfidz program is consistently positioned as the foundation of learning activities rather than as a complementary component. This orientation directly influences time allocation, learning priorities, and the distribution of institutional resources. Consequently, curriculum integration operates as a unifying framework that shapes instructional practices and the overall educational culture of the madrasah. This result aligns with previous studies emphasizing that clearly structured and well-integrated learning designs support sustainable instructional implementation and meaningful student engagement (Khusnunnisa & Andriani, 2025).

Another key finding concerns the organization of daily learning activities, particularly the placement of Tahfidz sessions at the beginning of the school day. For Grade 1 students, Tahfidz activities are conducted in the early morning before general academic subjects. This arrangement is based on the institutional belief that spiritual engagement should precede cognitive learning. Informants reported that this scheduling strategy supports the development of students' discipline, concentration, and emotional readiness for subsequent academic lessons. Teachers also observed that students who begin the school day with Qur'an memorization demonstrate greater attentiveness and self-regulation during classroom instruction. These findings are consistent with research indicating that structured learning sequences and meaningful routines positively influence students' focus and learning readiness (Zahro et al., 2024).

The results also highlight the importance of institutional coordination in sustaining curriculum integration. The implementation process is supported by regular coordination among the principal, the curriculum division, and the Tahfidz coordinator. Although a formally documented integrated curriculum guideline has not yet been developed, implementation is maintained through shared agreements, routine coordination meetings, and periodic evaluations. Informants indicated that coordination meetings are conducted on a monthly basis to monitor progress and address emerging challenges, while semester-based evaluations are used to assess

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the balance between Tahfidz activities and academic subjects. This collaborative approach enables the madrasah to respond flexibly to contextual needs and operational constraints, supporting consistent curriculum implementation (Muti'ah et al., 2024).

The outcomes of the integrated curriculum are reflected in students' academic performance, character development, and spiritual growth. Most Grade 1 students are reported to achieve the annual Tahfidz target of one juz without experiencing a decline in academic achievement. In addition, students demonstrate disciplined learning behavior, increased learning motivation, and positive attitudes toward both religious and general subjects. Teachers noted observable improvements in students' moral conduct, adherence to Islamic values, and enthusiasm for Qur'an memorization activities. These findings indicate that the integrated curriculum contributes positively to both cognitive and affective learning outcomes, consistent with previous research on integrated and engaging learning environments in elementary education (Jannah et al., 2025).

### ***Discussion***

The findings of this study demonstrate that the curriculum integration model implemented at MITQ Jamilurohman is strongly aligned with the principles of holistic Islamic education, which emphasize the integration of spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and moral dimensions within a unified learning experience. In Islamic educational thought, education is not merely oriented toward cognitive achievement but also toward character formation and the strengthening of religious commitment. By positioning Tahfidz as the foundation of daily learning activities, the madrasah adopts an integrated curriculum approach in which religious and academic components are deliberately designed to reinforce one another rather than function in isolation. This finding supports previous studies indicating that curriculum integration serves as an effective strategy for harmonizing general knowledge with Qur'anic values in Islamic educational institutions (Muqoyyadi et al., 2019).

Within this framework, Qur'an memorization functions not only as a religious activity but also as a formative process that shapes students' learning attitudes, discipline, and moral awareness. Academic learning is thus perceived as part of a broader spiritual and ethical responsibility, reinforcing the value-based orientation of the curriculum. The prioritization of Tahfidz activities at the beginning of the school day can be interpreted through affective and character-based learning theories, which emphasize emotional readiness as a prerequisite for effective cognitive engagement. Early spiritual engagement helps cultivate concentration, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation during subsequent academic lessons, thereby supporting both the internalization of Islamic values and the development of students' moral character (Sunarso, 2020; Kulsum & Muhid, 2022).

These findings are consistent with prior research in Islamic education that highlights the role of religious habituation in strengthening students' moral awareness and self-discipline (Sunarso, 2020). Regular exposure to Qur'an memorization routines facilitates the internalization of religious values, which in

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turn fosters positive learning behaviors and sustained engagement in academic activities. Moreover, empirical studies suggest that religious-based character education enhances students' learning motivation and persistence (Kulsum & Muhid, 2022). In this respect, the present study challenges the assumption that intensive religious programs necessarily hinder academic effectiveness. Instead, the findings suggest that spiritual learning can function as a supportive foundation for cognitive development at the elementary level.

From an organizational perspective, the study reveals that collaborative management plays a crucial role in sustaining curriculum integration. Strong coordination among the principal, curriculum division, and Tahfidz teachers reflects the importance of a shared institutional vision and collective responsibility. Similar findings in pesantren and madrasah contexts emphasize that successful curriculum integration depends more on institutional commitment and teamwork than on the existence of formal curriculum documents alone (Sholehuddin et al., 2021). Although the absence of a standardized written integrated curriculum guideline represents a structural limitation, implementation consistency is maintained through regular coordination and evaluation mechanisms. Nevertheless, the development of a formalized curriculum framework would enhance sustainability and facilitate broader replication of the model in other Islamic elementary education settings.

Finally, the positive student outcomes identified in this study indicate that integrating Tahfidz into elementary education supports balanced student development rather than academic compromise. Students are able to engage meaningfully in Qur'an memorization while maintaining active participation and achievement in academic learning. This finding aligns with previous research demonstrating that integrated Islamic education positively influences character formation, learning motivation, and academic achievement (Hasan & Inayati, 2025). However, challenges related to teacher availability and workload highlight the need for institutional investment in teacher professional development and strategic curriculum planning. Overall, this study contributes empirical evidence to the discourse on integrated Islamic elementary education by emphasizing the importance of aligning educational philosophy, organizational management, and instructional practice.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Based on the findings and discussion, this study concludes that the integration of the Tahfidz curriculum and the madrasah curriculum in Grade 1 at MITQ Jamilurohman has been implemented effectively and aligns with the institution's educational goals. The results indicate that curriculum integration can function optimally when it is rooted in a clear educational vision and reinforced by strong institutional commitment. In the planning stage, the integration process involves close coordination among the Tahfidz division, the curriculum unit, and school leadership. Although a formally documented integrated curriculum framework has not yet been developed, the planning process remains consistent and directed by a

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shared commitment to nurturing students who possess strong Qur'anic character alongside solid academic abilities. This finding suggests that collective understanding and collaboration among stakeholders can mitigate structural limitations during the early stages of curriculum integration.

In practice, the integrated curriculum is evident in daily learning activities that balance Qur'an memorization with general academic instruction. Tahfidz learning is positioned as a core component of the educational process rather than an additional program, contributing to the development of discipline, positive learning habits, and moral awareness. Academic subjects are also delivered in ways that reinforce religious values, fostering a supportive environment for holistic student development. Furthermore, the outcomes of this integration demonstrate positive contributions to students' spiritual growth, character formation, and learning motivation without compromising academic achievement. Overall, the integrated curriculum at MITQ Jamilurohman represents a successful model of holistic Islamic elementary education that harmoniously develops intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions.

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