



Islamic Religious Education Teachers' Role in Developing Spiritual Intelligence among Female Qur'an Memorization Students

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Abstract

Qur'an memorization programs are often evaluated through measurable achievement, while the development of spiritual intelligence requires deeper processes of meaning-making, value internalization, and reflective religious practice. This study examines how Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers facilitate the development of spiritual intelligence among female Qur'an memorization students at Baiaturridhwan Islamic Boarding School, Bogor. Employing a qualitative single-case study with a phenomenological orientation, this research explored students' spiritual experiences and the pedagogical practices of IRE teachers through semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis. Data were analyzed thematically using an iterative process of coding, interpretation, and verification. The findings reveal that Qur'an memorization achievement does not automatically lead to spiritual intelligence. Spiritual formation occurs when memorization is accompanied by meaningful worship, value internalization, personal reflection, and continuous spiritual guidance. IRE teachers play a transformative role as spiritual mentors (*murabbi ruhiy*) who connect Qur'anic memorization with intention, character formation, and everyday religious practice through exemplary conduct and individualized guidance. However, target-oriented memorization systems, uneven mentoring intensity, and limited structured reflection opportunities remain challenges in achieving deeper spiritual internalization. This study contributes to Islamic education research by demonstrating that the relationship between Qur'an memorization and spiritual intelligence is mediated by pedagogical processes rather than memorization achievement alone. The findings highlight the importance of repositioning IRE teachers as spiritual mentors who facilitate the transformation of Qur'anic knowledge into lived religious awareness.

Keywords: *Spiritual Intelligence, Female Students, Boarding School, IRE Teachers, Spiritual Development*



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Immortalis Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies

ISSN: 3123-3600 <https://immortalispub.com/ijis>

Vol. 2 Issue 3, September 2026, pp. 242-256

1. Introduction

Contemporary Islamic education faces the challenge of ensuring that religious learning contributes not only to students' cognitive mastery but also to the formation of internalized values, ethical awareness, and spiritual maturity. The rapid development of globalization and digitalization has influenced young people's patterns of thought, behavior, and value orientation, requiring Islamic education to adapt while maintaining its fundamental role in nurturing religious and spiritual development (Pratiwi et al., 2022; Wardana et al., 2025). Although technological advancement provides opportunities to enhance educational effectiveness, it also raises concerns regarding the preservation of Islamic values as a moral and spiritual framework for students' personal development (Wardana et al., 2025). Therefore, Islamic education requires an orientation that extends beyond the transmission of religious knowledge by emphasizing habituation, exemplary conduct, and the meaningful internalization of values (Sumiyati & Warsiyah, 2024; Zubaidillah et al., 2024).

Within this broader context, Islamic boarding schools occupy a significant position as educational institutions that integrate intellectual learning, religious practice, and spiritual formation. Historically, pesantren have functioned not only as centers for religious instruction but also as environments where Islamic values are cultivated through daily practices, traditions, and teacher-student relationships (Nuruliana et al., 2025; Safradji, 2020). This role becomes particularly important in Qur'an memorization boarding schools, where students are expected not only to achieve memorization targets but also to embody Qur'anic values through attitudes, worship practices, and moral conduct. However, the increasing emphasis on measurable memorization achievement may create a potential gap between the cognitive-reproductive dimension of Qur'an memorization and the affective-reflective dimension of spiritual development when memorization is not accompanied by systematic processes of interpretation, reflection, and value internalization (Juliani et al., 2025; Khatin & Fauzi, 2025; Sumiyati & Warsiyah, 2024).

Spiritual intelligence within Islamic educational contexts should therefore not be understood merely as participation in religious activities or compliance with institutional routines. Rather, it involves the ability to understand religious meanings, internalize Islamic values, and translate spiritual awareness into consistent attitudes and everyday practices. Previous studies indicate that spiritual development requires educational processes that combine religious habituation, meaningful learning experiences, and supportive environments that encourage reflection and personal transformation (Maskuro et al., 2025; Sumiyati & Warsiyah, 2024). Similarly, studies of Islamic boarding schools emphasize that the development of students' spiritual and intellectual dimensions depends on curriculum integration, institutional culture, and educational approaches that nurture students' broader potential (Anwar & Anam, 2024; Khatin &



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Immortalis Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies

ISSN: 3123-3600 <https://immortalispub.com/ijis>

Vol. 2 Issue 3, September 2026, pp. 242-256

Fauzi, 2025). In Qur'an memorization education, the internalization of Qur'anic meanings and the availability of spiritual guidance are considered essential elements in transforming memorization activities into meaningful religious experiences (Juliani et al., 2025; Safradji, 2020).

In this process, the role of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers becomes increasingly significant. Within Islamic educational traditions, teachers are not positioned merely as transmitters of religious knowledge but also as moral exemplars, mentors, and facilitators of students' spiritual formation. Their influence is reflected through instructional practices, personal guidance, exemplary behavior, and continuous interaction with students (Abdullah et al., 2023; Shofia et al., 2023). Thus, the effectiveness of spiritual development in Qur'an memorization education cannot be separated from the quality of teacher-student relationships and the extent to which teachers facilitate meaning-making processes behind religious practices. The teacher's role as a spiritual mentor (*murabbi ruhiy*) becomes particularly relevant because memorization achievement alone does not explain how students develop self-awareness, reflective worship, and consistent religious character.

Although previous studies on Islamic boarding schools and Islamic Religious Education have extensively examined religious character formation, institutional culture, discipline, and value internalization, studies specifically exploring how IRE teachers contribute to the development of spiritual intelligence among female Qur'an memorization students remain relatively limited (Alqudsi et al., 2024; Ramdhani & Waluyo, 2020). Existing research has largely focused on the outcomes of religious education or the general role of pesantren environments, while the pedagogical mechanisms through which teachers mediate the transformation from Qur'an memorization achievement to spiritual internalization require further exploration. This issue is particularly relevant in female tahfiz education because students' spiritual development involves distinctive personal, emotional, and educational dynamics that require contextual approaches.

Baiaturridhwan Bogor Qur'an Memorization Islamic Boarding School (PPTQ) provides a relevant empirical setting for examining this issue. The institution represents a Qur'an memorization environment in which students engage with intensive memorization programs, Islamic Religious Education learning, worship habituation, and daily guidance aimed at cultivating religious character. However, within such a target-oriented memorization culture, an important educational question emerges: how do teachers ensure that memorization achievement develops into deeper spiritual awareness rather than remaining limited to quantitative accomplishment? Therefore, PPTQ Baiaturridhwan Bogor was selected as the research site because its educational context provides an opportunity to explore the interaction between memorization practices, teacher guidance, and students' spiritual development.



Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in developing spiritual intelligence among female Qur'an memorization students at Baiaturridhwan Bogor Qur'an Memorization Islamic Boarding School. Specifically, this study examines (1) how IRE teachers contribute to students' spiritual development within a Qur'an memorization environment, (2) how female students experience spiritual formation within a structured and target-oriented memorization culture, and (3) how the gap between memorization achievement and spiritual intelligence emerges along with the factors influencing this process. Through this analysis, the study seeks to contribute to Islamic education research by highlighting that spiritual intelligence is not produced solely through memorization achievement, but through pedagogical processes involving value internalization, reflective practice, and sustained spiritual mentoring.

2. Research Method

2.1. Research Approach and Design

This study employed a qualitative approach using a single-case study design to explore how Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers contribute to the development of spiritual intelligence among female Qur'an memorization students within a specific educational context. A qualitative case study was selected because it enables an in-depth investigation of educational processes, experiences, and institutional practices within their natural setting (Marwan N A, 2025; Eka Sastra Wijaya et al., 2026). Rather than examining spiritual intelligence as an isolated outcome, this study sought to understand the meanings, interactions, and pedagogical practices that shape students' spiritual development within a Qur'an memorization boarding school.

The study was informed by a phenomenological perspective to capture students' experiences, perceptions, and meaning-making processes related to memorization activities, worship practices, and spiritual guidance. This perspective was relevant because spiritual development involves personal interpretation and internal experiences that cannot be fully understood through observable behavior alone (Abidin & Sirojuddin, 2024; Taufikin et al., 2025). Therefore, the combination of case-study inquiry and phenomenological sensitivity enabled the researchers to examine both the institutional context and the subjective experiences of participants.

The focus on spiritual practices, including dhikr and istighosah, was based on previous studies indicating that religious habituation within Islamic boarding schools can function as an important medium for developing students' spiritual intelligence when accompanied by meaningful reflection and guidance (Abidin & Sirojuddin, 2024; Sunardi et al., 2024).



2.2. Research Site

The research was conducted at Baiaturridhwan Bogor Qur'an Memorization Islamic Boarding School (PPTQ), selected as a single case because it represents an educational environment where Qur'an memorization, Islamic Religious Education learning, worship habituation, and character formation are integrated within daily boarding-school life.

The selection of this site was based on its relevance to the research problem. Qur'an memorization boarding schools provide a unique context for examining the relationship between measurable memorization achievement and deeper spiritual formation because students experience intensive memorization programs alongside structured religious practices and teacher guidance. Previous studies indicate that Qur'an learning processes, including curriculum implementation, learning methods, evaluation systems, and institutional culture, can be examined through contextual qualitative approaches (Ismail et al., 2022; Fauzi Nurjaman & M. Jadid Khadavi 2026). Furthermore, the halaqah method implemented in female Qur'an memorization programs has been associated with improvements in discipline and memorization achievement, making such environments relevant for exploring educational guidance processes (Addaraini & Inayati, 2023).

2.3. Research Participants

Participants were selected through purposive sampling, in which informants were chosen based on their direct involvement, experience, and knowledge regarding the spiritual guidance process within the boarding school environment (Natalia, 2025; Taufikin et al., 2025).

The participants consisted of three groups:

- (1) IRE teachers/ustadzahs who were directly involved in religious instruction, spiritual guidance, and students' character formation;
- (2) female junior- and senior-high-school students enrolled in the Qur'an memorization program who experienced the educational and spiritual formation process;
- (3) boarding-school administrators who provided information regarding institutional policies, educational programs, and the culture of spiritual guidance.

The involvement of these participant groups enabled the study to examine spiritual development from multiple perspectives, including teacher practices, student experiences, and institutional support systems (Abidin & Sirojuddin, 2024; Natalia, 2025; Taufikin et al., 2025).

2.4. Data Sources and Data Collection Techniques

The study utilized primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were obtained through semi-structured in-depth interviews and observations involving teachers, students, and boarding-school administrators. Secondary data included institutional



documents such as curriculum materials, regulations, spiritual guidance programs, memorization targets, and evaluation records (Ismail et al., 2022; Natalia, 2025).

Data collection was conducted through three complementary techniques: interviews, observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations regarding Qur'an memorization, spiritual development, and teacher guidance. Observations were conducted to examine daily learning activities, worship routines, and interactions between teachers and students. Document analysis was used to understand institutional structures and programs supporting spiritual development.

In addition, a spiritual-intelligence questionnaire was used as supplementary supporting data to identify general tendencies related to students' spiritual awareness and to provide contextual comparison with qualitative findings. The questionnaire was not intended as the primary measurement instrument but as complementary evidence supporting the interpretation of interview and observation data. The use of spiritual-intelligence constructs through supporting instruments has also been applied in previous studies examining students' psychological and spiritual conditions (Fikriyyah et al., 2024).

2.5. Data Analysis and Trustworthiness

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis through an iterative process involving data organization, coding, theme development, interpretation, and conclusion verification. The analytical process followed the principles of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing commonly used in qualitative educational research (Ismail et al., 2022). The analysis began with organizing interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents. Relevant statements related to spiritual intelligence, teacher roles, memorization experiences, worship practices, and mentoring processes were identified and coded. These codes were subsequently grouped into broader themes representing patterns of spiritual development and pedagogical practices within the boarding-school context.

The trustworthiness of the findings was maintained through source and methodological triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing perspectives from IRE teachers, students, and administrators, while methodological triangulation involved comparing interview data, observation results, document analysis, and supplementary questionnaire findings. This strategy strengthened the credibility and interpretive depth of the findings by ensuring that conclusions were supported through multiple sources of evidence (Ismail et al., 2022; Natalia, 2025; Taufikin et al., 2025). Furthermore, the systematic documentation of research procedures followed qualitative case-study protocols to enhance transparency and methodological traceability (Marwan N A, 2025).



3. Result & Discussion

3.1. Qur'an Memorization Achievement and the Process of Spiritual Internalization among Female Students

The findings of this study indicate that Qur'an memorization achievement does not automatically lead to the development of spiritual intelligence among female students. Although memorization activities provide an important religious foundation, the transformation of memorized verses into spiritual awareness requires processes of understanding, reflection, and value internalization. Several students demonstrated strong commitment to achieving memorization targets, yet some still experienced difficulties in maintaining consistent worship awareness, personal reflection, and spiritual motivation outside structured supervision. This finding shows that memorization achievement represents only one dimension of Qur'anic education, while spiritual intelligence develops through deeper educational processes involving meaning and lived religious experiences.

The relationship between Qur'an memorization and spiritual intelligence is therefore not linear because memorization functions as a potential foundation rather than a direct indicator of spiritual maturity. Previous studies have shown that Qur'an memorization can contribute to students' spiritual development, but the outcomes are influenced by various internal and external factors, including motivation, discipline, learning environment, and guidance systems (Asyiah & Husnaini, 2025). Research on Qur'anic character education also emphasizes that memorization needs to be integrated with emotional and spiritual dimensions so that students do not perceive the Qur'an merely as memorized text but as a source of values that guide their attitudes and behavior (Syaputra et al., 2024). Therefore, this study strengthens the argument that the educational value of tahfiz programs depends not only on the quantity of memorized verses but also on the extent to which Qur'anic meanings are internalized in students' daily lives.

The findings further reveal that spiritual intelligence cannot be measured only through observable religious routines. Activities such as prayer, Qur'an recitation, dhikr, and other forms of worship may become habitual practices, but their contribution to spiritual growth depends on students' ability to understand their meaning and connect them with personal transformation (Safradji, 2020). This perspective explains why some students who actively participate in religious programs may still require deeper guidance in developing self-awareness and consistent religious commitment. Consequently, Qur'an memorization education needs to integrate memorization, interpretation, reflection, and character formation as interconnected processes rather than separate educational components.



3.2. Islamic Religious Education Teachers as Spiritual Mentors in Transforming Memorization into Spiritual Awareness

This study found that Islamic Religious Education teachers play a central role in transforming Qur'an memorization activities into meaningful spiritual experiences. The teachers' contribution extends beyond instructional responsibilities because they provide personal guidance, motivation, emotional support, and exemplary behavior that influence students' spiritual development. The findings demonstrate that students require teachers who are not only capable of teaching religious knowledge but also able to accompany them in understanding the relationship between memorization, worship, and everyday moral conduct. Therefore, the role of IRE teachers in this context can be understood as a spiritual mentoring process rather than merely a teaching function.

The role of teachers identified in this study is consistent with previous research emphasizing that IRE teachers contribute to students' intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development through learning strategies, evaluation processes, and affective guidance (Abdullah et al., 2023; Shofia et al., 2023). Teacher influence is not limited to classroom interaction because students also learn spiritual values through observation of teachers' attitudes, communication styles, and daily practices. This finding highlights the importance of teacher-student relationships in Islamic education because spiritual values are often internalized through continuous interaction and personal connection. Thus, the effectiveness of spiritual development programs depends significantly on the quality of guidance provided by educators.

From the perspective of Islamic educational tradition, this role reflects the function of teachers as *murabbi ruhiy*, namely educators who participate in shaping students' inner awareness, character, and ethical orientation. Education in this perspective is not limited to transferring information but involves a transformative process that influences students' understanding of themselves, their relationship with God, and their behavior toward others. Previous studies based on the concept of *adab* emphasize that teacher-student relationships have an important role in forming moral character because teachers serve as examples of religious values in practice (Anto et al., 2025). Similarly, studies on spiritual guidance through *tazkiyatun nafs* indicate that mentors contribute through direction, supervision, and continuous assistance in developing students' spiritual intelligence (Nopianti, 2018).

3.3. Habituation, Reflection, and Boarding School Culture in Spiritual Formation

The findings indicate that students' spiritual development is strongly influenced by the interaction between religious habituation, boarding-school culture, and reflective learning experiences. Daily practices such as congregational prayer, Qur'an recitation, *dhikr*, and *istighosah* create a religious environment that supports the formation of



spiritual awareness. However, this study also found that habituation alone does not guarantee deep spiritual internalization when students perform religious activities without sufficient understanding of their meaning. Therefore, the effectiveness of religious routines depends on whether these practices encourage students to develop awareness, reflection, and personal commitment.

Previous studies have demonstrated that religious habituation can contribute to spiritual intelligence by creating consistent opportunities for students to practice religious values within educational environments (Pratiwi et al., 2022; Sumiyati & Warsiyah, 2024). Furthermore, dhikr and istighosah practices have been identified as important approaches in developing spiritual awareness because they strengthen students' connection with religious meanings and encourage inner reflection (Ridwan & Ghazali, 2025; Afkarina & Khadavi, 2025). These findings support the argument that Islamic boarding schools possess significant potential as environments for spiritual formation because religious practices are integrated into students' daily routines. Nevertheless, the quality of these practices depends on the extent to which students are guided to understand their spiritual significance.

This study contributes by showing that spiritual formation requires a balance between habituation and reflective processes. Religious activities may become procedural routines when students are only required to perform them without being encouraged to understand their purpose and personal relevance. Previous research also explains that spiritual education requires integration between religious practice, cognitive understanding, and reflective awareness so that students experience genuine transformation rather than simple behavioral compliance (Safradji, 2020; Sumiyati & Warsiyah, 2024). Accordingly, strengthening reflection programs such as Qur'anic contemplation, spiritual dialogue, and personal guidance becomes necessary to ensure that memorization and worship practices contribute to meaningful spiritual development.

3.4. The Gap between Memorization Performance and Spiritual Intelligence Development

One of the important findings of this study is the existence of a gap between Qur'an memorization performance and students' spiritual intelligence development. Students who achieved significant memorization progress did not always demonstrate equivalent levels of self-reflection, worship awareness, and consistent religious behavior. This finding challenges the assumption that intensive engagement in Qur'an memorization automatically produces spiritual maturity. Instead, spiritual intelligence appears to develop through complex processes involving personal meaning-making, teacher guidance, and supportive educational environments.



Previous studies have identified relationships between Qur'an memorization and spiritual intelligence, but quantitative relationships alone cannot fully explain how spiritual transformation occurs among students (Alqudsi et al., 2024; Ramdhani & Waluyo, 2020). This study provides a qualitative perspective by demonstrating that the transformation from memorization achievement to spiritual awareness depends on the internalization process behind the activity. Students may memorize large portions of the Qur'an, but without reflection and guidance, memorization may remain primarily a cognitive achievement rather than becoming an integrated spiritual experience.

The gap identified in this study can also be understood through the concept of hidden curriculum within Islamic boarding schools. Spiritual development is influenced not only by formal learning programs but also by daily interactions, institutional culture, teacher modeling, and implicit values embedded in the educational environment (Wardana et al., 2025). Therefore, improving students' spiritual intelligence requires attention to the broader educational ecosystem, including mentoring quality, opportunities for reflection, and meaningful engagement with Qur'anic values.

3.5. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Students' Spiritual Development

The findings reveal that students' spiritual development is supported by several important factors, including a religious boarding-school environment, structured worship programs, teacher role models, and continuous educational guidance. These elements create conditions that enable students to experience religious values not only as theoretical knowledge but also as daily practices. Previous studies have emphasized that institutional culture and teacher modeling are important factors in developing students' emotional and spiritual dimensions (Pratiwi et al., 2022; Sumiyati & Warsiyah, 2024). This confirms that spiritual development is shaped through interactions between individual experiences and the broader educational environment.

However, this study also identified several challenges that influence students' spiritual development, including pressure from memorization targets, differences in mentoring intensity, and limited opportunities for structured reflection. These challenges indicate that highly structured tahfiz programs need to consider students' psychological and spiritual conditions in addition to achievement targets. Previous studies have identified similar challenges in Qur'an memorization programs, including motivational fluctuations, learning difficulties, and the need for stronger guidance strategies to maintain students' commitment (Noviyani & Hayati, 2023).

The findings further suggest that strengthening personal mentoring systems can help address differences in students' spiritual development. Research on worship monitoring systems and foster guidance models indicates that structured supervision and personal assistance contribute to maintaining students' consistency in religious practice and character formation (Qoniah, 2019; Islam, 2018). Therefore, Islamic boarding schools



need to develop guidance systems that complement memorization programs by providing opportunities for personal reflection, spiritual dialogue, and continuous mentoring. Through this approach, Qur'an memorization can develop beyond academic achievement into a transformative process that shapes students' spiritual awareness and character.

4. Conclusion

Qur'an memorization education should not be understood solely through the achievement of memorization targets, because spiritual intelligence develops through a more complex process of internalization, reflection, and meaningful religious practice. The findings demonstrate that memorizing the Qur'an provides an essential foundation for spiritual growth, but it does not automatically produce self-awareness, reflective worship, or consistent religious behavior. Spiritual transformation occurs when memorization is accompanied by guidance that helps students understand the values contained in the Qur'an and apply them within their daily lives. Therefore, the relationship between Qur'an memorization and spiritual intelligence is shaped by the quality of educational processes surrounding memorization rather than by memorization achievement alone.

Within this process, Islamic Religious Education teachers occupy a strategic position as spiritual mentors (*murabbi ruhiy*) who facilitate students' transition from memorized knowledge toward lived spiritual awareness. Their role extends beyond delivering religious instruction by providing personal guidance, modeling religious values, strengthening motivation, and helping students develop meaningful connections between memorization, worship, and character formation. The findings reinforce the understanding that teacher-student relationships are an important mechanism in Islamic education because spiritual values are internalized through continuous interaction, example, and guidance. Consequently, the effectiveness of *tahfiz* education depends not only on instructional systems but also on the capacity of teachers to nurture students' inner development.

The implications of these findings suggest that Qur'an memorization boarding schools need to develop a more holistic educational framework that balances achievement-oriented programs with spiritual mentoring and reflective practices. Memorization evaluation should be complemented by efforts to strengthen value internalization, personal reflection, and students' ability to translate Qur'anic teachings into everyday attitudes and behavior. Such an approach enables *tahfiz* education to move beyond the preservation of Qur'anic texts toward the formation of individuals who embody Qur'anic values in their personal and social lives.

Several limitations should also be considered when interpreting these findings. The research was conducted within a single Qur'an memorization Islamic boarding school,



IJIS

Immortalis Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies

ISSN: 3123-3600 <https://immortalispub.com/ijis>

Vol. 2 Issue 3, September 2026, pp. 242-256

meaning that the findings represent a particular educational context and may differ across other tahfiz institutions with different cultural and pedagogical characteristics. Future research may explore comparative contexts, examine variations between male and female students, or investigate longitudinal changes in students' spiritual development to provide a deeper understanding of how Qur'an memorization contributes to long-term spiritual formation.

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