

Teaching *Mahfuzat* as a Medium for Internalizing Islamic Values and Ethical Conduct

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ABSTRACT

In many Islamic educational settings, the teaching of Arabic often emphasizes rote linguistic mastery rather than the internalization of moral and spiritual values. Within pesantren contexts, *mahfuzat* concise Arabic maxims have long served as a traditional medium linking language learning with ethical and spiritual formation. The research aims to identify core values embedded in selected verses from Ustaz Qoimuddin's *Jawābir al-Mahfūzāt* and to analyze how those values are internalized through classroom practice. Using a qualitative descriptive design, data were collected from 30 first-year Tsanawiyah students at Pondok Pesantren Darullughah Wadda'wah via classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and text analysis. Findings show five interrelated value themes—pursuit of knowledge, humility, righteous companionship, respect for teachers, and perseverance—becoming habituated through a three-phase cycle: memorization (*hifẓ*), understanding (*tafahhūm*), and embodiment (*tatbiq*). Rhythmic recitation and dialogic reflection enable students to connect linguistic beauty with ethical intent, while the Arabic-using school environment strengthens value absorption in daily interactions. The impact of this approach is a demonstrable integration of linguistic proficiency, ethical awareness, and spiritual sensitivity. The study concludes that teaching *mahfuzat* offers a culturally authentic, scalable model of value-based language education that revitalizes the classical harmony of *ilm*, *adab*, and *taqwā* in contemporary Islamic schooling.

Keywords: *Adab, Character Education, Mahfuzat, Pesantren, Value Internalization.*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Islamic educational institutions have renewed their focus on integrating moral and spiritual education as the cornerstone of character formation. This concern arises from the growing moral and behavioral challenges among young learners, including the erosion of ethical awareness, superficial religiosity, and the decline of respect toward teachers and peers.¹ While Islamic education theoretically promotes moral excellence

¹ Muhammad Akbar et al., "Islamic Boarding School as a Role Model for Character Education," *KnE Social Sciences*, April 8, 2022, 623–32, <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v7i8.10780>.

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(akhlāq al-karīmah), in practice, its internalization often remains superficial restricted to rote learning and cognitive understanding rather than experiential moral embodiment.² This gap has prompted educators to revisit classical pedagogical traditions that effectively combined language mastery with moral cultivation, among which the teaching of mahfuzat occupies a distinguished place.

Mahfuzat, a collection of Arabic maxims, proverbs, and poetic wisdom has long served as a tool for transmitting ethical values, rhetorical eloquence, and spiritual consciousness. At Pondok Pesantren Darullughah Wadda'wah, the text *Jawāhir al-Mahfūzāt* compiled by Ustaz Qoimuddin forms a core component of the curriculum for Tsanawiyah (junior secondary) students. Each verse not only develops linguistic competence but also embeds essential Islamic virtues such as humility, perseverance, sincerity, respect for knowledge, and awareness of the transient nature of worldly life. Despite its long-standing role in pesantren education, academic studies examining mahfuzat as a medium for moral internalization remain limited, with most previous works focusing on language structure or literary appreciation rather than value formation.

Previous studies collectively highlight the linguistic, spiritual, and environmental dimensions of Islamic education through Arabic texts. Uçar (2024) identified *balāghah* as the foundation of eloquence and ethical expression in Arabic,³ while Aminah (2024) emphasized that value internalization occurs within holistic Qur'anic educational environments.⁴ Natsir (2023) showed that *mahfuzat* strengthens students' spirituality,⁵ and Yusuf et al. (2023) confirmed that a well-structured language environment enhances both moral and linguistic competence.⁶ Mamat (2025) traced this tradition back to classical Malay-Islamic manuscripts,⁷ revealing that Arabic poetic forms were historically used to teach *adab* and moral values. Together, these works demonstrate that the fusion of language, ethics, and spirituality has long underpinned Islamic pedagogy.

Despite these contributions, few studies have explored how *mahfuzat* functions as a practical medium for the internalization of Islamic ethical values within the pesantren context. Previous research often emphasized either linguistic outcomes or spiritual reflection but rarely examined the pedagogical mechanisms linking both. Furthermore, the aesthetic and sufistic dimensions of *mahfuzat* remain underexplored, particularly in relation to their role in shaping moral consciousness through expressive Arabic learning. This study addresses

² Glory Islamic et al., "Character Education through Philosophical Values in Traditional Islamic Boarding Schools," Research Articles, *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences* 45, no. 1 (2023): 1.

³ Hasan Uçar, "Arap Dili Belâgatî'nin Temel İlkeleri," *Mütefekkir* 11, no. 22 (2024): 329–50, <https://doi.org/10.30523/mutefekkir.1600487>.

⁴ Lilik Aminah, "Educational Environment in the Quran," *Al-Jadwa: Jurnal Studi Islam* 4, no. 1 (2024): 34–53, <https://doi.org/10.38073/aljadwa.v4i1.1840>.

⁵ Muhammad Natsir, "Pendidikan Spiritual Melalui Pembelajaran al Mahfuzat (Kata–Kata Mutiara Arab)," *Tarbawi: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 15, no. 2 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.34001/tarbawi.v15i2.848>.

⁶ Muhammad Yusuf et al., "The Language Environment in Supporting Arabic Language Learning in Pesantren South Sulawesi," *Bulletin of Science Education* 3, no. 2 (2023): 84, <https://doi.org/10.51278/bse.v3i2.561>.

⁷ Mohd Anuar Mamat, "Penerapan Nilai Dan Adab Dalam Manuskrip Melayu-Islam: Suatu Analisis Terhadap MSS 4291(A) Tahdhir Al-Walad: The Implementation of Values and Manners in Malay-Islamic Manuscript: An Analysis of MSS 4291(A) Tahdhir al-Walad," *Afkar: Jurnal Akidah Dan Pemikiran Islam* 27, no. 1 (2025): 515–50, <https://doi.org/10.22452/afkar.vol27no1.13>.

these gaps by investigating how *mahfuzat* teaching at Darullughah Wadda'wah simultaneously cultivates linguistic skill,⁸ ethical awareness, and spiritual sensitivity among students.⁹

This study therefore seeks to explore how mahfuzat instruction functions as a pedagogical medium for internalizing Islamic values and ethical conduct among first-year Tsanawiyah students at Darullughah Wadda'wah. The research focuses on identifying the core moral and spiritual values contained in selected mahfuzat texts, and analyzing how these values are internalized through the teaching-learning process. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the study investigates both textual meanings and classroom practices, highlighting how students interpret, respond to, and embody these values in daily interactions.

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to the development of a holistic model of Islamic character education rooted in linguistic tradition. It bridges classical adab pedagogy and contemporary educational discourse, offering insights into how moral education can be revitalized through culturally authentic and linguistically rich materials. By positioning mahfuzat not merely as literary ornaments but as vehicles for ethical cultivation, this study advances the discourse on Islamic education reform, particularly in the integration of moral consciousness, linguistic expression, and behavioral transformation.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach that aims to interpret and describe how *mahfuzat* teaching functions as a medium for internalizing Islamic values and ethical conduct among students.¹⁰ The qualitative design was chosen because it allows a deep exploration of meaning, value transmission, and lived experiences within the natural setting of the pesantren.¹¹ The study is grounded in the framework of Islamic character education and supported by the internalization theory, which views the process of moral development as a gradual transformation from moral knowledge (*ma'rifah*) to awareness (*shu'ur*) and consistent moral action (*'amal*). This theoretical orientation provides a lens through which the relationship between textual learning and behavioral formation can be examined in an authentic context.

The research was conducted at Pondok Pesantren Darullughah Wadda'wah, a leading Islamic educational institution in Indonesia renowned for its integration of Arabic linguistic mastery,¹² moral discipline, and spiritual development. The site was purposively selected because the *mahfuzat* subject, based on the textbook *Jawāhir al-Mahfūzāt* authored by Ustaz Qoimuddin, is an official component of the Tsanawiyah curriculum and represents a living tradition of moral instruction. Thirty first-year Tsanawiyah students and two teachers participated in this study, selected purposively to provide rich, relevant data from direct involvement in the teaching-learning process. Their daily engagement with the text and classroom interactions offered a dynamic portrayal of how values are transmitted and embodied.

⁸ Segaf Baharun et al., "The Prab Method of Habib Hasan Baharun: Impact on Arabic Grammar Instruction," *Al-Muhawwaroh: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 1, no. 1 (2025): 23–35, <https://doi.org/10.38073/almuhawaroh.v1i1.2636>.

⁹ Menik Mahmudah, "Enhancing Arabic Vocabulary with Hilyah Book," *Al-Muhawwaroh: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Universitas Islam Internasional Darullughah Wadda'wah (UII Dalwa)* 1, no. 1 (2025): 1–11, <https://doi.org/10.38073/almuhawaroh.v1i1.2427>.

¹⁰ John W. Creswell and J David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (SAGE Publications, 2020).

¹¹ John W. Creswell, *A Concise Introduction to Mixed Methods Research* (SAGE Publications, Inc, 2021).

¹² Segaf Baharun and Nur Hanifansyah, "Efektivitas Pembelajaran Kitab Al-Aḥqāḥ Al-Yaumiyyah Pada Daurah Ramadhan Di Pon Pes Dalwa," *Shaut Al-Arabiyyah* 12, no. 2 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.24252/saa.v12i2.52825>.

Data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data included classroom observations,¹³ semi-structured interviews with teachers and students,¹⁴ and interpretive notes of classroom interactions during *mahfuzat* sessions. The secondary data consisted of textual analysis of *Jawahir al-Mahfuzāt* and previous scholarly works on Islamic moral education and pedagogical ethics. The researcher served as the primary instrument (*human instrument*) responsible for designing observation checklists, interview protocols, and reflective field notes, ensuring sensitivity to the linguistic and moral nuances of the setting.

Data collection was carried out through three main stages. The first stage was direct observation over a six-week period, focusing on teaching methods, patterns of memorization, and how teachers guided students to understand and apply moral messages. The second stage involved semi-structured interviews with teachers and selected students to capture their perceptions of the ethical messages contained in *mahfuzat* and the ways those messages influenced their daily conduct. The third stage was documentation and textual analysis of selected chapters, such as *Faḍl 'Ilm al-Fiqh* (The Merit of Jurisprudence), *Ḍarar al-Jahl wa al-'Ilm ghayr al-Nāfi'* (The Harm of Ignorance and Useless Knowledge), and *Matā' al-Dunyā Qalīl* (The World's Pleasure is Small), which were examined for their pedagogical and moral implications.

Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's interactive model,¹⁵ consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During data reduction, the researcher selected and organized relevant information from the observations,¹⁶ interviews,¹⁷ and text interpretations. The data were then displayed in thematic patterns reflecting key Islamic values such as humility, sincerity, love for knowledge, simplicity, and respect for teachers. In the final stage, the findings were synthesized and verified through triangulation of sources and member checking to ensure credibility. The trustworthiness of the study was further supported by detailed descriptions of the learning environment, dependability through consistent documentation, and confirmability through reflexive analysis.

The analytical focus of this study centers on identifying the core Islamic values embedded in *mahfuzat* texts and analyzing the process through which these values are internalized by students in the classroom. By combining textual and behavioral analysis, the study presents a holistic understanding of *mahfuzat* teaching as a living pedagogical practice that integrates linguistic expression with ethical formation. Ultimately, the method aims to reveal how this traditional yet timeless approach can serve as a transformative model for moral education in contemporary Islamic schooling.

¹³ Matt O'Leary, *Classroom Observation: A Guide to the Effective Observation of Teaching and Learning*, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315630243>.

¹⁴ Aleksandra Belina, *Semi-Structured Interviewing as a Tool for Understanding Informal Civil Society*, Voluntary Sector Review, July 1, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1332/204080522X16454629995872>; Intan Nur Aini et al., "Al-Muhafadzah Bil Qadim al-Shalih Wa Al-Akhdzu Bil Jadid Al-Ashlah in Education Perspective of Hadrotus Syaikh KH Hasyim Asy'ari," *Al-Munawwarah: Journal of Islamic Education* 1, no. 1 (2025): 91–100, <https://doi.org/10.38073/almunawwarah.v1i1.2685>.

¹⁵ Lili Sururi Asipi et al., "The Analysis of Reading Habits Using Miles and Huberman Interactive Model to Empower Students' Literacy at IPB Cirebon," *International Journal of Education and Humanities* 2, no. 3 (2022): 117–25, <https://doi.org/10.58557/ijeh.v2i3.98>.

¹⁶ John Lofland et al., *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis, Fourth Edition* (Waveland Press, 2022).

¹⁷ Tania Buys et al., "A Reflexive Lens on Preparing and Conducting Semi-Structured Interviews with Academic Colleagues," *Qualitative Health Research* 32, no. 13 (2022): 2030–39, <https://doi.org/10.1177/10497323221130832>.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The teaching of *mahfuzat* in Islamic education embodies not only the transmission of language and literary art but also the subtle absorption of Islamic values throughout the learning process.¹⁸ Through repetitive recitation, reflection, and contextual explanation, students internalize moral lessons such as sincerity, humility, respect for knowledge, gratitude, and spiritual awareness without overt moral preaching.¹⁹ These values are absorbed naturally as the learners engage with rhythmic Arabic expressions that blend linguistic precision with ethical depth. In addition to introducing students to Arabic vocabulary and the aesthetics of classical literature from an early age, *mahfuzat* functions as an implicit framework of value education that refines both intellect and character. Arabic, as the language of revelation, serves as the gateway to religious knowledge²⁰ and as a bridge that connects reason with the heart. Within the pesantren tradition, *mahfuzat* thus becomes a medium of spiritual cultivation where the eloquence of words meets the subtlety of *tasawwuf*, guiding students not only to understand meaning but also to feel the beauty of faith and the harmony between intellect, emotion, and divine awareness.²¹

Core Islamic Values Embedded in Mahfuzat

The analysis of *Jawābir al-Mahfuzāt* by Ustaz Qoimuddin revealed five interrelated core values that shape the students' moral and spiritual formation at Darullughah Wadda'wah: the pursuit of knowledge, humility, the ethics of companionship, respect for teachers, and perseverance in striving for excellence. Each of these values is embodied in the poetic verses memorized and reflected upon during *mahfuzat* lessons, blending linguistic beauty with moral introspection.

The first theme, *the virtue of knowledge*, is vividly expressed in the verse “تَنْقَهِ فَإِنَّ الْفَقْهَ... أَفْضَلُ قَائِدٍ” (Seek understanding, for jurisprudence is the best guide). This poem encourages learners to view *fiqh* as both guidance and protection, reinforcing the belief that true knowledge leads to righteousness and shields one from hardship. Students interpreted this poem as a call to approach their studies with sincerity and discipline, perceiving knowledge as a form of worship that strengthens the heart and mind.

The second theme, *humility*, appears in “إِنَّ التَّوَّاضَعَ مِنْ خِصَالِ الْمُتَّقِي” (Humility is one of the noble traits of the God-fearing). Through classroom discussion, students reflected that humility is the key to moral elevation and divine favor. Teachers emphasized that arrogance is a veil to wisdom, and only through *tawādu'* can one attain the light of knowledge. These verses nurtured a sense of introspection and encouraged students to balance intellectual achievement with spiritual modesty.

The third theme, *the ethics of companionship*, is conveyed in “عَنِ الْمَرْءِ لَا تَسْأَلْ وَأَبْصِرْ عَنْ قَرِينِهِ” (Ask not about a man look at his companion). This verse reminds students that identity is reflected through one's friends, fostering awareness that moral behavior is socially

¹⁸ Lutfia Alfiani Arisma and Bahrum Subagiya, “Efektivitas Pembelajaran Mahfudzot Dalam Membentuk Motivasi Belajar Santri,” Articles, *Islamic Learning Horizons: Journal of Islamic Education* 1, no. 4 (2025): 166–76.

¹⁹ Ainur Rofiq Sofa et al., “Integrasi Pendidikan Agama Islam: Kecerdasan Spiritual Dan Emosional Melalui Kitab Mahfudzot Untuk Menumbuhkan Akhlak,” *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 13, no. 02 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v13i02.5713>.

²⁰ Nur Hanifansyah et al., “RELIGIOUS DRAMA CONTROVERSY: The Impact of Bidaah on Islamic Pedagogy and Media Literacy,” *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 49, no. 2 (2025): 314, <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v49i2.1407>.

²¹ Hanifansyah et al., “RELIGIOUS DRAMA CONTROVERSY.”

shaped. In interviews, several students stated that this *mahfuzat* reminded them to choose peers who support their religious and academic growth, reinforcing the pesantren culture of *ṣuḥbah ṣāliḥah* righteous companionship.

The fourth theme centers on *respect for teachers and mentors*, illustrated in “إِنَّ الْمُعَلِّمَ... وَالطَّيِّبَ كِلَاهُمَا” (Indeed, the teacher and the doctor are alike neither advises sincerely if they are not honored). Students learned that reverence toward teachers is a condition for receiving knowledge with blessing (*barakah*). Teachers reported that after memorizing this *mahfuzat*, students demonstrated more attentiveness and politeness, understanding that adab toward their teachers is integral to their intellectual and moral development.

Finally, the fifth theme, *perseverance and hard work*, resonates strongly in “بَعْدَ الْكَدِّ تَكْتَسِبُ... الْمَعَالِي” (In proportion to effort are lofty ranks attained). The metaphor of the diver seeking pearls inspired students to perceive effort as worship and patience as the price of success. This verse was often used by teachers to motivate students during examination periods, fostering a culture of diligence and endurance grounded in spiritual meaning.

Collectively, these themes reveal that *mahfuzat* functions not merely as literary ornamentation but as a living ethical curriculum. Its rhythmic structure and rhetorical precision help students internalize values naturally through recitation and reflection, transforming poetic language into a vehicle of *ta’dib*—the cultivation of adab, intellect, and piety.

The Process of Internalizing Islamic Values through Mahfuzat Teaching

The process of internalizing Islamic values through *mahfuzat* follows three interconnected pedagogical stages: memorization (*ḥifẓ*), comprehension (*tafahhum*), and embodiment (*tatbīq*). In the first stage, teachers emphasize correct pronunciation, rhythm, and beauty of tone, allowing linguistic aesthetics to stimulate emotional connection. In the second stage, teachers guide students in interpreting the verses, linking each moral theme with real-life experiences in the pesantren. For instance, when discussing humility, students were asked to identify peers who exhibited *tawāduʿ*; when discussing effort, they reflected on their study habits and endurance during examinations.²²

In the final stage, the embodiment phase, values become behavior through consistent practice and teacher modeling. Teachers often recite *mahfuzat* during advisory moments, creating associative memory between the verse and moral action. One teacher stated:

“When a student forgets his manners, I remind him with the verse ‘Respect your teacher as you would respect your doctor.’ It helps them correct themselves without anger.”

This reflective and dialogic approach transforms memorization into moral habituation, aligning with the principles of *social learning theory* while maintaining the spiritual intent of Islamic pedagogy. In this model, repetition is not mechanical but contemplative, serving as a rhythm of remembrance (*dhikr lughawī*). Through this process, *mahfuzat* becomes a means of forming *akhlāq*—where linguistic eloquence awakens ethical consciousness, and learning Arabic becomes inseparable from learning how to live.

within spiritual intentionality (*niyyah*) and divine accountability (*muhāsabah*).

إِنَّ التَّوَّاصِعَ مِنْ خِصَالِ الْمُتَّقِي
وَبِهِ التَّقِيُّ إِلَى الْمَعَالِي يَرْتَقِي

²² Arisma and Subagiya, “Efektivitas Pembelajaran Mahfudzot Dalam Membentuk Motivasi Belajar Santri.”

وَمِنَ الْعَجَائِبِ عَجَبٌ مَنْ هُوَ جَاهِلٌ
 فِي حَالِهِ أَهْوَى السَّعِيدُ أَمْ الشَّقِيُّ
 أَمْ كَيْفَ يُخْتَمُ عُمْرُهُ أَوْ رُوحُهُ
 يَوْمَ النَّوَى مُتَسَقِّلٌ أَوْ مُتَرَقِّى
 وَالْكِبْرِيَاءُ لِرَبِّنَا صِفَةٌ بِهَا
 مَخْصُوصَةٌ فَتَجَنَّبَهَا وَاتَّقِ

*Humility is one of the noble traits of the God-fearing,
 and through it, the pious ascend to the highest ranks.
 Strange indeed is the one who is ignorant of his own state—
 is he among the happy or the wretched?
 And how shall his life or soul end on the day of departure—
 descending low or rising high?
 Majesty and pride belong only to our Lord;
 therefore, avoid them and be God-conscious.*

This *mahfuẓat* centers on humility (*tawāduʿ*) as the hallmark of true piety (*taqwā*). Students' reflections and classroom interpretations showed a deep appreciation of humility not merely as a moral trait but as a spiritual state that elevates the believer toward divine nearness. The line "through it, the pious ascend to the highest ranks" was interpreted by students as a reminder that moral greatness in Islam is measured not by superiority or power, but by sincerity and self-restraint.

The verses that question human ignorance of his ultimate destiny "is he among the happy or the wretched?" invite learners to reflect on the uncertainty of human fate and the need for constant self-purification. This reflective tone resonates with *taẓkiyatun nafs* pedagogy, encouraging moral vigilance and awareness of divine accountability. Moreover, the closing line "Majesty and pride belong only to our Lord" functions as a linguistic and theological safeguard against arrogance (*kibr*). Students reported in interviews that this verse made them more mindful of their behavior toward teachers and peers, realizing that arrogance negates knowledge while humility attracts divine blessing (*barakah al-ʿilm*).

Through this *mahfuẓat*, the process of value internalization becomes evident: repetition, recitation, and reflection transform poetic beauty into ethical awareness. The linguistic rhythm strengthens memorization, while the moral imagery shapes emotion and conduct. Hence, the text serves as both a moral mirror and a linguistic tool cultivating inner refinement alongside Arabic eloquence.

عَنِ الْمَرْءِ لَا تَسْأَلْ وَأَنْصِرْ عَنْ قَرِينِهِ
 فَإِنَّ الْقَرِينَ بِالْمَقَارِنِ يَتَقْتَدِي
 فَإِنْ كَانَ ذَا شَرٍّ فَجَذَبَهُ سُرْعَةً
 وَإِنْ كَانَ ذَا خَيْرٍ فَقَارَنَهُ تَعْتَدِي

*Ask not about a man rather, look at his companion,
 for indeed, a person follows the way of his friend.*

*If he is one of evil, then avoid him swiftly,
but if he is one of goodness, accompany him and you shall gain virtue.*

This *mahfuzat* conveys a timeless moral lesson about the formative power of companionship and social influence. It teaches that one's moral identity is not isolated but mirrored through the company one keeps. Students who memorized and discussed this verse interpreted it as guidance to choose righteous friends and avoid harmful associations, reflecting the Islamic educational principle that *akhlak* is shaped through social proximity (*al-ṣubḥah wa al-mu'āsharah*). The line “a person follows the way of his friend” resonated deeply during class discussions, often cited by teachers to warn against negative peer influence within the dormitory environment.

From a pedagogical standpoint, this text aligns with the Qur'anic notion that companions either elevate or corrupt one's soul, as in “Close friends, that Day, will be enemies to each other, except for the righteous” (Qur'an 43:67). The poetic structure—rhythmic, concise, and memorable facilitates both linguistic mastery and moral retention. Students reported that this *mahfuzat* shaped their awareness of how everyday interactions contribute to their spiritual and moral growth. The connection between linguistic elegance and ethical persuasion reinforces the function of *mahfuzat* as a form of moral rhetoric (*balāghah akhlāqīyah*) that educates the heart through language.

إِنَّ الْمُعَلِّمَ وَالطَّيِّبَ كِلَاهُمَا
لَا يَنْصَحَانِ إِذَا هُمَا لَمْ يُكْرَمَا
فَاصْبِرْ لِدَائِكَ إِنْ جَفَوْتَ طَبِيبَهَا
وَاقْنَعْ بِجَهْلِكَ إِنْ جَفَوْتَ مُعَلِّمَهَا

*Indeed, the teacher and the doctor are alike—
neither will advise sincerely if they are not honored.
So be patient with your illness if you offend the physician,
and be content with your ignorance if you offend the teacher.*

This *mahfuzat* illustrates one of the most profound moral foundations in Islamic pedagogy: the necessity of honoring those who guide and heal. In the pesantren context, students interpreted the parallel between the teacher (*mu'allim*) and the doctor (*ṭabīb*) as symbolic both are caretakers of life, one of the body and the other of the soul. The message conveys that knowledge and cure require humility and respect from the receiver; without *ikrām* (honor), the benefit (*naʿf*) is lost.

During observations, students who recited this *mahfuzat* linked it to their daily conduct showing increased attentiveness and politeness toward teachers. Interviews revealed statements such as: “If I speak harshly to my teacher, I feel that my learning no longer carries blessing (*barakah*).” This aligns with the Islamic concept of *adab al-ta'allum*, in which respect for the teacher is both a moral and epistemological condition for the acceptance of knowledge. The verse “be content with your ignorance if you offend the teacher” serves as a moral deterrent, reinforcing that arrogance severs the spiritual connection between teacher and student.

Linguistically, the symmetry between *ṭabīb* and *mu'allim*, supported by parallel rhyme and rhythm, enhances the memorability of the moral message. This stylistic balance embodies what Uçar (2024) described as *balāghah akhlāqīyah* eloquence that conveys virtue through aesthetic precision. In this sense, the *mahfuzat* functions as a dual instrument of

linguistic and ethical refinement: teaching the art of Arabic expression while shaping moral consciousness.

بِقَدْرِ الْكَدِّ تَكْتَسِبُ الْمَعَالِي
فَمَنْ طَلَبَ الْعُلَا سَهَرَ اللَّيَالِي
وَمَنْ رَامَ الْعُلَا مِنْ غَيْرِ كَدٍّ
أَصَاعَ الْعُمُرِ فِي طَلَبِ الْمَحَالِ
تَرَوْهُ الْعِرْثُ ثُمَّ تَنَامُوا لَيْلًا
يَغُوصُ الْبَحْرُ مَنْ طَلَبَ الْآلِي
عُلُوُّ الْكَعْبِ بِالْهَمِّ الْعَوَالِي
وَعِزُّ الْمَرْءِ فِي سَهْرِ اللَّيَالِي

*In proportion to one's effort are lofty ranks attained;
for whoever seeks glory must stay awake through nights.*

*He who aspires to honor without toil
wastes his life in chasing impossibilities.*

*You wish for dignity, yet you sleep at night,
while pearls are found only by those who dive deep into the sea.*

*The height of a man's stature lies in his noble determination,
and his true honor is in his sleepless pursuit.*

This *mahfuḏat* reflects the core ethic of *mujābah* (striving) in Islamic education—the belief that excellence, both worldly and spiritual, can only be attained through continuous effort and perseverance. The opening line, “*In proportion to one's effort are lofty ranks attained*,” instills in students a sense of moral causality: that reward is directly tied to dedication. During observations, teachers at Darullughah Wadda'wah often used this poem as a motivational recitation during morning assemblies, reinforcing discipline and endurance in study.

Students interviewed expressed that these verses reminded them of their purpose as seekers of knowledge (*ṭālib al-ilm*). The metaphor “*He who wishes for pearls must dive into the sea*” became a recurring phrase among them, symbolizing that intellectual and spiritual treasures require courage and sacrifice. The rhythmic repetition of *layali* (nights) throughout the poem poetically mirrors the recurring nights of study and remembrance—transforming diligence into a form of worship.

Linguistically, the text exhibits the eloquent simplicity characteristic of classical Arabic moral poetry, employing parallelism and assonance to reinforce meaning. This stylistic clarity makes it accessible for young learners, serving both mnemonic and moral functions. The integration of poetic beauty and ethical exhortation exemplifies what Uçar (2024) terms *balāghah al-tarbiyyah* rhetoric that educates through eloquence.

The findings of this study affirm that *mahfuḏat* functions as a powerful pedagogical bridge between linguistic instruction and moral internalization in Islamic education. Classroom observations and students' reflections reveal that memorization, recitation, and interpretation of *mahfuḏat* nurture not only Arabic linguistic proficiency but also ethical awareness and spiritual refinement. This supports the findings of Natsir (2023), who emphasized that learning *mahfuḏat* enhances students' spirituality and moral disposition. However, the present study extends his work by showing that through cycles of repetition, guided discussion, and teacher modeling, linguistic activities are transformed into moral

habituation demonstrating that value acquisition in *mahfuzat* is both cognitive and affective in nature.

In addition, the results reinforce the findings of Yusuf et al. (2023), who underscored the importance of the Arabic language environment (*bi'ah lughawiyah*) in sustaining linguistic and moral development in pesantren. Within Darullughah Wadda'wah, where Arabic is consistently used in daily communication, the values embedded in *mahfuzat* are naturally absorbed through social interaction, allowing language and ethics to merge within the lived experience of students. This is consistent with Aminah's (2024) view that Islamic education must be holistic and environment-based, integrating family, school, and community as interdependent agents of moral formation.

Furthermore, the moral and aesthetic power of *mahfuzat* resonates strongly with Uçar's (2024) notion of *balāghah* as the union of linguistic beauty and ethical purpose. The eloquent phrasing, rhythm, and metaphorical imagery of *mahfuzat* stimulate emotional engagement, making virtues such as humility, sincerity, and perseverance more deeply felt and internalized. This aesthetic dimension largely overlooked in earlier studies—illustrates that *mahfuzat* operates not merely as moral instruction, but as a form of *linguistic art* that refines the heart through beauty in expression.

Historically, this integration of language and ethics aligns with Mamat's (2025) analysis of the Malay-Islamic manuscript *Tahdhīr al-Walad*, which used poetic Arabic to cultivate *adab* and spiritual discipline. Both *Tahdhīr al-Walad* and *Jawābir al-Mahfūzāt* share a common pedagogical ethos: teaching through beauty, rhythm, and reflection. The continuity between these classical and contemporary traditions demonstrates that *mahfuzat* pedagogy at Darullughah Wadda'wah represents a modern revival of classical methods for transmitting *adab* through eloquence and moral artistry.

Taken together, these comparisons reveal that the teaching of *mahfuzat* not only validates prior studies but contributes an additional dimension to the discourse on Islamic pedagogy. It demonstrates that linguistic form, aesthetic pleasure, and spiritual consciousness coalesce in shaping ethical awareness. This synthesis of *balāghah*, environment, and spirituality marks a distinct pedagogical innovation within the pesantren tradition affirming that the mastery of Arabic is not merely a linguistic achievement, but a transformative path toward moral integrity and spiritual excellence.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that *mahfuzat* serves as an integrative pedagogical medium that bridges linguistic competence, moral cultivation, and spiritual refinement within Islamic education. Through memorization, reflection, and classroom interaction, students at Darullughah Wadda'wah not only develop Arabic proficiency but also internalize virtues such as humility, sincerity, perseverance, and respect for knowledge. The rhythmic beauty and moral imagery of *mahfuzat* transform language learning into a spiritual experience, showing that eloquence can serve as a pathway to ethical consciousness. The teaching of *mahfuzat* thus revitalizes the classical harmony between *'ilm* (knowledge), *adab* (ethics), and *taqwā* (piety), positioning it as a timeless method for nurturing faith, intellect, and character simultaneously.

In practical terms, the findings emphasize that *mahfuzat* should be integrated more systematically into the pesantren curriculum as a sustainable tool for moral and linguistic formation. Teachers are encouraged to conduct regular sessions of *mahfuzat* recitation and reflective discussion to cultivate both understanding and emotional engagement with its values. When accompanied by contextual interpretation, dramatization, or digital presentation, these activities can strengthen memorization while deepening ethical

awareness. Administrators and curriculum developers may also utilize *mahfuḥẓat* as a medium for embedding Islamic values across subjects, reinforcing a culture of reflection and virtue through poetic expression. By merging linguistic artistry with spiritual education, *mahfuḥẓat* pedagogy nurtures learners who think eloquently, act ethically, and live spiritually embodying the essence of *ta'dīb* as the ultimate goal of holistic Islamic education.

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