



Communication Strategy of Pondok Pesantren Putri Walisongo in Building Santri Creativity Through Musabaqah Hifdzil Qur'an

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the communication strategies employed by Pondok Pesantren Putri Walisongo Cukir Jombang to foster santri creativity through Musabaqah Hifdzil Qur'an (MHQ). While previous studies have focused on tahfidz coaching and tilawah performance, the role of structured communication in developing creative capacities remains underexplored. This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach, collecting data through semi-structured interviews, participatory observation, and documentation with the kyai, MHQ coach, administrators, and five active students. Data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, validated through source, technique, and time triangulation. Findings reveal a multi-layered communication strategy including collaborative planning, intensive interpersonal mentoring, sustained training cycles, Islamic value-based motivation, flexible individualized coaching, and institutional coordination with formal schools. These practices cultivate disciplined Qur'anic creativity, reflected in memorization management, Qur'anic recitation exploration, individual talent development, mental resilience, and a supportive learning environment. This study contributes to Islamic communication scholarship by conceptualizing MHQ coaching as a value-based communicative ecosystem. Its implications extend to similar religious education contexts globally, including tahfidz programs in Southeast Asia and the Middle East.

Keywords: Communication Strategy, MHQ, Pesantren, Qur'anic Creativity, Santri Development

INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) occupy a pivotal role in Indonesia's education system, integrating religious instruction, moral development, and social resilience into a holistic pedagogy (Mujahid, 2021; Putri et al., 2023; Zainuri et al., 2025). Among their various programs, Musabaqah Hifdzil Qur'an (MHQ) a Qur'anic memorization competition, serves as a strategic platform for cultivating not only cognitive mastery of the Qur'an but also performative creativity, mental discipline, and ethical character (Huda, 2024; Mustain & Bakar, 2025; N. S. M. Sholeh & Suhendi, 2021). Unlike conventional rote-learning practices, MHQ challenges santri to harmonize tajwid, vocal intonation, memorization

strategies, and stage performance, functioning as a comprehensive vehicle for creative religious education and moral formation (Ikhwan & Arifin, 2025; Syafrinal, 2025).

Pondok Pesantren Putri Walisongo Cukir Jombang exemplifies the integration of structured communication into pedagogical practice. Established in 1951, this female pesantren has continuously produced provincial, national, and international MHQ champions, including competitions held in Iran (2019), South Kalimantan (2022), Jambi (2023), and Kendari (2025). Such achievements highlight not only the technical expertise of the coaching staff but also the effectiveness of multi-layered communication strategies encompassing planning, mentoring, motivational framing, and institutional coordination. These practices underscore the pesantren's ability to foster what can be conceptualized as disciplined Qur'anic creativity the capacity of santri to innovate and perform within normative boundaries of *tajwid*, *adab*, and spiritual intention (*niat*) (Jannah, 2016; Noorhidayati et al., 2021).

Communication strategy, defined as the deliberate and systematic use of verbal and nonverbal acts to achieve educational objectives (Sugiarto, 2020), serves as a central mechanism shaping the coaching ecosystem (Mardiyah et al., 2026). Within pesantren, communication occurs across multiple levels: formal instruction, interpersonal mentoring, organizational coordination, and value-laden messaging that conveys Islamic ethical principles. The interaction between the *kyai* (leader), *ustadzah* (coach), administrators, and santri forms a complex communicative network, directly influencing the development of creative capacities while embedding ethical and spiritual norms into everyday practice (Hastasari et al., 2022; Kurniawan et al., 2023).

Although prior research has investigated aspects of creative development in Islamic education, critical gaps remain. Fitriani and Setiawan (2023) explored da'wah strategies to enhance creativity, Sabarudin (2017) analyzed the cultivation of a tilawah achievement culture, and Al-'Irsyad (2024) examined strategies for producing proficient qari and qariah. These studies primarily focus on achievement or motivational outcomes, leaving underexplored the role of structured communication strategies, both interpersonal and organizational, in cultivating disciplined creativity within MHQ contexts.

The importance of this research lies in its dual contribution: first, advancing theoretical understanding in Islamic communication and educational pedagogy by linking communicative practices with measurable creativity outcomes; second, offering practical insights for pesantren and Islamic educational institutions seeking evidence-based strategies to enhance student performance and creativity. By explicating how communication facilitates cognitive, social, and ethical development, this study addresses both academic and applied concerns relevant to policymakers, educators, and practitioners in Islamic education (Rahmadi & Hamdan, 2023; Saada, 2023).

Extending this discourse to a global perspective, comparative studies indicate that tahfidz programs across Southeast Asia and the Middle East employ structured communication to foster creative Qur'anic recitation. In Malaysia, mentorship systems, peer review mechanisms, and performance assessment are integrated to develop students' interpretive and expressive abilities (Amran et al., 2025). In the Middle East, pedagogical approaches balance memorization rigor with performative and interpretive flexibility, demonstrating that communication strategies are central to nurturing both religious understanding and cognitive agility (Meri, 2021). Situating Walisongo's communication practices within this international context provides cross-cultural insights, highlighting how disciplined creativity emerges as a universal pedagogical principle in faith-based educational institutions.

The present study aims to: (1) describe the communication strategies employed by Pondok Pesantren Putri Walisongo Cukir Jombang to foster santri creativity through MHQ, and (2) identify the manifestations of disciplined Qur'anic creativity that emerge through these strategies. By examining the intersection of communication, creativity, and pedagogy, this research contributes to Islamic communication scholarship while providing practical guidance for pesantren seeking to enhance Qur'anic education locally and in comparable global contexts.

The comparative analysis highlights both local and international perspectives on Qur'anic memorization and creativity development. While prior studies in Indonesia emphasize da'wah messaging, achievement culture, or technical coaching, international research on tahfidz education, such as mentorship systems in Malaysia (Hasan et al., 2025) and integrated pedagogical-spiritual strategies in Indonesia and the Middle East (Rachman et al., 2026) illustrates the global significance of structured communication in fostering creativity and academic excellence. This positions the Walisongo case study within a broader discourse, revealing opportunities to link localized pedagogical strategies with international best practices (Lukens-Bull, 2010).

The novelty of this research lies in conceptualizing "disciplined creativity": a form of innovation exercised by santri within normative boundaries of tajwid, adab, and Qur'anic ethics. Unlike conventional creativity frameworks that often prioritize unbounded ideation (Harvey & Berry, 2023), Disciplined creativity emphasizes originality and adaptive problem-solving constrained by religious and cultural norms. This concept addresses a clear research gap: how communication strategies in pesantren contexts facilitate creative engagement without compromising normative Islamic principles, a dimension rarely explored in both national and international scholarship (Ubaidillah & Faiz, 2025).

Moreover, this study advances theoretical and practical knowledge by demonstrating how multilayered communication, encompassing interpersonal mentoring, organizational coordination, value-based motivation, and institutional cooperation, serves as a mechanism for nurturing disciplined innovation. The findings aim to guide pesantren leaders, educators, and policymakers in designing culturally and religiously congruent communication strategies that enhance Qur'anic creativity, with implications for comparative studies in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and other Muslim educational settings worldwide (Mu'alimin et al., 2026).

By situating Walisongo's communication strategies in a global context and foregrounding disciplined creativity, this research not only fills a gap in the literature but also provides a model for bridging local Islamic educational practices with internationally recognized standards of pedagogical innovation.

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative research design with a descriptive approach (Figure 1), which is appropriate for exploring the complex communicative processes and coaching dynamics within Pondok Pesantren Putri Walisongo in its natural educational context (Wardi et al., 2024). The qualitative approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of interpersonal and organizational communication patterns, as well as the mechanisms through which santri creativity emerges in the context of Musabaqah Hifdzil Qur'an (MHQ), which cannot be fully captured through quantitative methods alone.

Data were collected from eight purposively selected informants who were directly involved in MHQ planning, coaching, and participation. These included the pesantren leader

(*kyai*) KH. Amir Jamiluddin, the MHQ coach, Ustadzah Ummu Habibah, the head of the pesantren, selected forward May Salisa Aida, a senior administrator, Shifamadu, and four active MHQ students (Amaniya Salsabila, Fehima Najahah Asy Syarifah, Salwa Nafisah, and Qonita Al Aliyah). Informants were selected for their level of engagement and ability to provide detailed insights into the communicative and pedagogical processes underpinning MHQ activities. All participants provided informed consent before data collection, and the study received ethical clearance from the university's research ethics committee, ensuring confidentiality and voluntary participation.

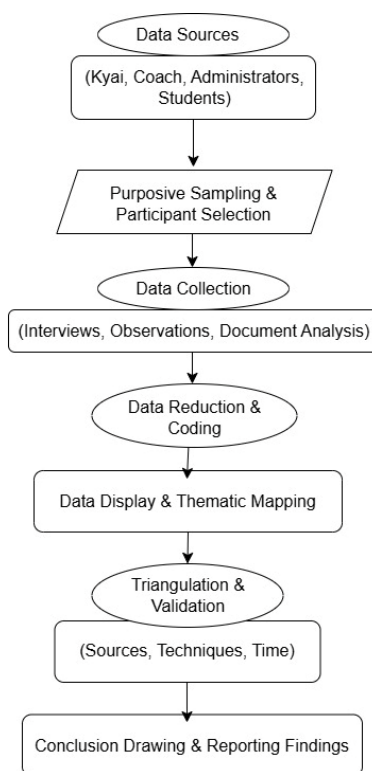


Figure 1. Research Flow Diagram

Three complementary techniques were employed to maximize data richness and credibility. First, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with all informants, focusing on communication strategies, coaching methods, and mechanisms fostering santri creativity. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Second, participatory observation took place during weekly MHQ coaching sessions and the annual internal MHQ competition, capturing real-time communicative interactions and nonverbal cues. Third, document analysis of institutional records, coaching schedules, and activity photographs provided historical and contextual information. These methods collectively ensured triangulation, enhancing validity and reliability by comparing data across multiple sources and techniques (Hendren et al., 2023).

Data were analyzed following Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model, consisting of three concurrent stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Syabuddin et al., 2026). In data reduction, raw interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were systematically coded to identify recurring themes related to communication practices and creativity development. Codes were organized into categories reflecting interpersonal, organizational, and motivational communication

strategies. Data display involved constructing thematic matrices and visual maps to illustrate the relationships between communication practices and manifestations of disciplined Qur'anic creativity, defined as innovative problem-solving within normative religious boundaries. Cross-referencing patterns across informants, sessions, and documents involved drawing conclusions and verification. To support transparency and replicability, all coding and thematic analysis were performed using NVivo 12, which facilitated systematic categorization and thematic mapping.

This study adhered to strict ethical standards. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, with assurance of anonymity and the right to withdraw at any time. Institutional approval was secured from the university ethics committee, and sensitive information was securely stored and accessible only to the research team. Observational procedures were conducted discreetly to minimize disruption and maintain the natural environment of the pesantren.

To ensure research credibility, triangulation was applied across sources, techniques, and time points (Figure 1). Peer debriefing sessions were conducted with experienced supervisors to review coding decisions and thematic interpretations. Reflective memos were maintained throughout the research process to document analytical decisions and ensure transparency. These measures collectively strengthened the validity and reliability of the study, making the methodology robust and replicable for future research in similar educational contexts. The overall research process is illustrated in Figure 1. Research Flow Diagram, which provides a clear and structured overview of the study from data source identification through analysis and conclusion. The flowchart enhances transparency and allows readers to quickly understand the logical sequence of methodological procedures.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings of this study reveal that Pondok Pesantren Putri Walisongo Cukir Jombang employs a multi-dimensional and adaptive communication strategy that effectively nurtures santri creativity within the Musabaqah Hifdzil Qur'an (MHQ) framework. Six core communicative practices were identified, each contributing to the development of what this study terms "disciplined creativity," a form of innovation exercised within the boundaries of Qur'anic recitation norms (tajwid, maqra', and adab).

1. Collaborative Program Planning

MHQ activities are meticulously organized through both formal and informal meetings involving the kyai (leader), MHQ coach, and administrators. Planning covers schedules, coaching objectives, assessment criteria, and preparation for competitions. Informants emphasized that these meetings allow for both structured planning and situational adjustments, enabling rapid responses to unforeseen challenges:

"First, create a program with me. Second, it's temporary. If there's a problem, consult. If you want to compete, at least pray.." (KH. Amir Jamiluddin)

This dynamic communication allows the pesantren to create a coherent coaching ecosystem where roles and responsibilities are transparent, fostering an environment conducive to creative experimentation while maintaining adherence to Qur'anic norms (Nuryana & Sirojuddin, 2025).

2. Intensive Interpersonal Communication

Weekly face-to-face sessions between the MHQ coach and students provide continuous feedback and guidance, supporting personalized learning paths. This immediate feedback mechanism encourages students to explore their vocal range, intonation, and rhythm without deviating from tajwid principles:

“Ustadzah Ummu is a very strict person. If someone is wrong, she's immediately corrected. But it's precisely from that that we learn and don't repeat the same mistake.” (Salwa Nafisah)

Such intensive interpersonal interaction embodies a blend of instructional rigor and motivational support, which is critical in fostering disciplined creativity, as students learn to innovate within defined parameters rather than pursue unrestricted experimentation.

3. Consistent Coaching Cycles

Weekly coaching sessions, combined with internal annual competitions categorized by memorization levels (10, 20, and 30 juz), provide a structured yet flexible framework. The rhythmic and repetitive nature of these sessions promotes incremental skill development, mental resilience, and stage confidence, which are essential for high-level MHQ performance:

“So that there is preparation for the competition, we hold regular MHQ, maybe once a week or once a month.” (Ustadzah Ummu Habibah)

This sustained engagement aligns with the principles of deliberate practice observed in educational psychology, where repeated exposure and feedback loops enhance both technical mastery and creative expression.

4. Islamic Value-Based Motivation

A distinct feature of Walisongo's communication strategy is the integration of ethical framing and intrinsic motivation. The pesantren consistently emphasizes that participation is a spiritual act rather than a pursuit of prizes:

“You're not competing, but rather studying the Koran. Don't aim to compete. you intend to impart knowledge like a preacher.” (KH. Amir Jamiluddin)

This spiritual anchoring aligns with global findings from Malaysia and the Middle East, where mentorship programs similarly highlight internalized moral incentives alongside technical skill acquisition (Ikhwan et al., 2025). By prioritizing intrinsic motivation, students develop an ethical framework that guides their creative experimentation in Qur'anic recitation.

5. Flexible and Individualized Coaching

Students are encouraged to develop personalized memorization and recitation strategies. The coach adapts guidance according to each student's capacity, allowing for diverse learning pathways that respect individual cognitive and vocal profiles:

“There are no standard methods here like qiroati, ummi, tilawati, and so on. We give freedom, but we polish it to be creative.” (KH. Amir Jamiluddin)

This approach promotes creative problem-solving within the structured limits of Qur'anic norms, exemplifying disciplined creativity. Variations include slow murojaah for deeper retention and rapid review (tadwir) for performance fluency. Each student negotiates their personal method while maintaining conformity with tajwid, demonstrating autonomy within an ethical and educational framework.

6. Institutional Cooperation with Formal Schools

The pesantren maintains active communication with formal schools to accommodate extended MHQ coaching sessions. Students are granted school leave for preparation, ensuring that institutional support aligns with educational objectives:

“The key is for the boarding school and the school to support each other. For example, Ananda Femi was permitted to stay at school for up to 16 days for guidance, and the school allowed him to.” (Ustadzah Ummu Habibah)

Such inter-institutional communication fosters a systemic approach to creative learning, ensuring that structural constraints do not impede student innovation.

Table 2. Communication Strategies and Corresponding Manifestations of Santri Creativity

Communication Strategy	Manifestation of Santri Creativity
Collaborative program planning	Personalized murojaah strategies; strategic review timing
Intensive interpersonal communication	Exploration of Qur’anic recitation styles; individualized vocal expression
Consistent coaching cycles	Mental discipline; confidence in stage performance
Islamic value-based motivation	Time management and prioritization of learning over competition
Flexible, individualized coaching	Placement of talents according to individual strengths
Institutional cooperation	Supportive learning environment fostering collective motivation

Through these strategies, five dimensions of santri creativity were observed: (1) memorization management, (2) Qur’anic recitation style, (3) individual talent development, (4) mental self-management, and (5) supportive learning environment.

7. Santri Creativity and the Concept of Disciplined Creativity

The analysis identifies five dimensions of santri creativity, shaped by the communication strategies above:

1. **Creativity in Memorization Management:** Students design personalized murojaah schedules, integrating techniques such as slow repetition, tadwir, and integration with prayer. This practice reflects adaptive problem-solving within structured learning constraints.
2. **Creativity in Qur’anic Recitation Style:** Students experiment with intonation, rhythm, and vocal expression while adhering strictly to tajwid, maqra’, and adab. Individual voice characteristics are taken into account, enabling each student to develop a unique style within the disciplinary framework.
3. **Creativity in Individual Talent Development:** Placement in MHQ categories is tailored to student strengths, reflecting recognition of diverse abilities. Such talent-based differentiation encourages optimal skill development.

4. **Creativity in Mental Self-Management:** Structured try-outs and performance evaluations equip students to manage anxiety, maintain focus, and balance competing demands, reflecting both technical and affective growth.
5. **Creativity Through Supportive Learning Environment:** Peer support, mentor feedback, and administrative facilitation create a psychologically safe space, promoting risk-taking and innovation within ethical boundaries.

These findings demonstrate that disciplined creativity emerges at the intersection of structured guidance, value-based motivation, and participatory engagement. Unlike Western models of divergent thinking, which emphasize unconstrained ideation, disciplined creativity in the Islamic pedagogical context emphasizes innovation within normative and ethical constraints, aligning creative output with moral and spiritual objectives (Syahril, 2025).

8. International Relevance and Comparative Perspective

Globally, tahfidz education in Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and Iran similarly emphasizes structured memorization, mentorship, and feedback, though the specific emphasis on communication strategies varies. Malaysian programs, for example, integrate peer feedback and instructor-led guidance to enhance performance quality and creative interpretation of recitation (Wulandari & Hayati, 2025). In Saudi Arabia, pedagogical approaches balance memorization rigor with interpretive creativity (Ramadani & Rohman, 2025). By situating Walisongo's communication strategies within this global context, this study highlights how disciplined creativity can be nurtured through coordinated communication practices, extending insights beyond local practice and contributing to the literature on Islamic educational communication.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that communication strategies at Pondok Pesantren Putri Walisongo not only facilitate effective coaching but also cultivate what this research conceptualizes as “disciplined Qur’anic creativity.” This concept refers to creative expression and problem-solving that operate within normative boundaries of *tajwid*, *adab*, and Islamic ethical values, distinguishing it from Western models of creativity that emphasize unbounded divergent thinking.

1. Interpersonal Communication and Cultural Adaptation of Western Theories

This study's results align with aspects of DeVito's interpersonal communication theory such as empathy, openness, supportiveness, and responsiveness but also show how these elements are culturally adapted in Islamic educational contexts. Whereas DeVito (Mariyono, 2024) emphasizes equality and mutual self-disclosure in communication, the coach–santri interactions at Walisongo are both hierarchical and nurturing: authority is exercised through corrective feedback, but it is always embedded within moral encouragement and spiritual guidance (A. Sholeh & Yaqien, 2022). This reflects findings from other pesantren-focused research that communicate empathetic instruction accelerates memorization and character formation among santri (Yusuf, 2025).

Importantly, disciplined creativity here is not antithetical to structure; rather, it emerges from structured interpersonal exchanges where students are encouraged to explore recitation style and memorization strategies but within *tajwid* and *adab* norms. This nuance suggests a modification of Western interpersonal theories when applied to pesantren: the

pesantren adapts empathic communication to enforce norms while supporting individual creative pathways.

2. Organizational Communication and Supportive Climate

The organizational dimension of communication at Walisongo resonates with Redding's organizational climate theory, especially in its emphasis on supportiveness, trust, and participative decision-making (Silla et al., 2020). However, the pesantren's climate extends beyond purely organizational performance; it integrates value-laden spiritual goals that shape how communication is interpreted and enacted. Trust is not only managerial but religious: santri trust their coach and leadership because communication is grounded in shared Islamic values, not only in organizational goals. This relational trust creates a psychological environment conducive to creative risk-taking within established boundaries.

Comparative research from Malaysia supports the global relevance of this finding. For example, mentoring methods at Maahad Tahfiz Vokasional Aman Bistari integrate Qur'anic memorization with vocational education and emphasize structured mentoring to enhance motivation and time management, illustrating that supportive communication climates are not unique to Indonesia but observed in Southeast Asian tahfidz institutions as well (Rachmadi & Faridah, 2026).

3. Spiritual and Moral Framing as Communication Strategy

A distinctive feature of Walisongo's communication strategy is its framing of MHQ participation as an act of Qur'anic devotion rather than competition. This moral framing aligns with Islamic conceptions of creativity (*ibda'*) as a God-given capacity oriented toward service and spiritual excellence, not individual glory (Cawley & Snyder, 2015). By foregrounding intention (*niat*) and ethical motivation, Walisongo's communication embeds creativity within a moral ecosystem that prioritizes collective benefit and spiritual growth.

Global research on Qur'anic memorization similarly underscores the integration of moral and pedagogical strategies. Studies on tahfidz programs in the Middle East and Southeast Asia show that integrating intrinsic motivation and structured feedback enhances memorization quality, retention, and student engagement beyond rote recitation alone (Wijesekera & Hameed, 2025). These parallels affirm that value-based motivation is a cross-cultural strategy in high-performing tahfidz contexts.

4. Disciplined Creativity: Merging Normative Structure and Innovation

The concept of disciplined creativity advanced by this study contributes a significant theoretical refinement to the literature on creativity in religious education. Traditional Western frameworks such as Guilford's divergent thinking emphasize unconstrained ideation, which often assumes creativity flourishes without normative constraint (Guilford, 1950). In contrast, disciplined creativity as observed at Walisongo encompasses novelty and appropriateness within prescribed normative limits, reconciling structure with innovation.

This idea is supported by broader pedagogical research in Islamic contexts. For example, research on Qur'anic memorization techniques identifies effective practices that go beyond rote repetition to incorporate structured *muuraja'ah*, performance feedback, and individualized memorization methods that enhance retention and fluency (Hawa et al., 2025). In these studies, creativity is not chaotic but emerges through disciplined application of varied memorization techniques mirroring the disciplined creativity found at Walisongo.

5. Negotiating Institutional Flexibility and Individual Agency

A key finding is the pesantren's refusal to mandate a single memorization method. Instead, students are guided to co-construct memorization strategies that suit their capacities

while maintaining adherence to normative principles. This pedagogical openness fosters individual agency and adaptive problem-solving, enabling students to innovate within the evaluative framework of MHQ performance. This contrasts with more prescriptive tahfidz models that emphasize strict method adherence, as reported in other pesantren contexts (Akmansyah et al., 2025; Syahmira & Hasibuan, 2025), and suggests that methodological pluralism is a condition for creativity development in Islamic pedagogical settings.

6. Cross-Institutional Communication as Creativity Enabler

The collaboration between pesantren and formal schools, which allows extended absences for MHQ preparation, illustrates how inter-institutional communication can expand the creativity-supportive ecosystem beyond internal organizational boundaries. By aligning institutional policies with educational goals, systemic communication becomes a structural enabler that facilitates sustained practice and creative engagement. This insight extends organizational communication research to consider how external partnerships contribute to developmental outcomes, especially in educational ecosystems involving religious and secular institutions.

7. Global Implications and Future Research Directions

The communication strategies and disciplined creativity observed at Walisongo are relevant to Islamic educational institutions worldwide. Comparative case studies on tahfidz mentoring and pedagogical innovations in Malaysia, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia highlight similar patterns of structured feedback, mentorship, and motivational framing. Yet, few studies explicitly conceptualize creativity within normative boundaries, signaling a gap in the literature that this study begins to address (Aisyah et al., 2026).

Future research should investigate how disciplined creativity can be operationalized in digital tahfidz platforms, hybrid learning environments, and multicultural Muslim societies. Moreover, exploring how technology-assisted memorization interacts with disciplined creativity could yield valuable insights for 21st-century Islamic education (Saad, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Pondok Pesantren Putri Walisongo Cukir Jombang employs a comprehensive, value-driven, and participative communication strategy in building santri creativity through Musabaqah Hifdzil Qur'an. The strategy operates across multiple dimensions: collaborative institutional planning, intensive interpersonal mentoring, sustained coaching rhythms, Islamic motivational framing, methodological flexibility, and cross-institutional cooperation. These communicative practices collectively produce five measurable dimensions of santri creativity: innovative memorization management, expressive Qur'anic recitation, talent-specific placement, mental resilience, and collaborative learning culture.

Theoretically, this study contributes to Islamic communication studies by demonstrating how interpersonal and organizational communication theories apply in pesantren contexts, and by identifying 'disciplined creativity' creativity within normative constraints as a concept distinct from secular creativity frameworks. Practically, the findings offer an evidence-based model for pesantren seeking to design communication strategies that foster authentic Qur'anic creativity rather than narrow competition preparation.

Future research should explore whether similar communication patterns operate in male pesantren, in urban versus rural settings, or across different Qur'anic competition categories. Mixed-method designs incorporating systematic observation protocols and

student performance data could further validate and extend these findings. Researchers may also examine the long-term impact of pesantren MHQ communication strategies on graduates' spiritual practice and community engagement.

Declaration of AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used ChatGPT to refine language and improve grammatical accuracy. All AI-assisted content was subsequently reviewed and edited by the authors. The authors take full responsibility for the integrity, accuracy, and originality of the final version of the manuscript.

CRedit Authorship Contribution Statement

- a. Khoiriyatul Ummah: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft.
- b. Ahmad Fakhruddin Fajrul Islam: Supervision, Validation, Writing – Review & Editing.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this manuscript.

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Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Interested parties may contact Khoiriyatul Ummah at khoiriyatulummah15@gmail.com for further information regarding the data used in this research.

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Ethical Approval Statement

This study adhered to ethical research standards and was conducted with formal approval from the Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universitas Hasyim Asy'ari. All participants provided informed consent, and no identifying information was used to ensure the privacy and safety of the individuals involved.

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