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Implementation of the Kaizen Method in the Qur'an Memorization (*Tahfidz*) Learning Process at Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Jepara

Ellisa Nailizzulfa^{1*}, Sukarman², Muhammad Khoiruddin³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Jepara, Indonesia

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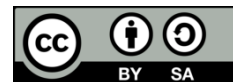
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ABSTRACT

Improving the quality of Qur'an memorization (*tahfidz*) learning poses a significant challenge in Islamic education management, particularly in Islamic boarding schools (*pondok pesantren*) oriented toward achieving and maintaining high-quality student memorization. Therefore, a learning management system capable of driving continuous improvement is essential to ensure the quality of both the learning process and its outcomes. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Kaizen method in the *tahfidz* learning process at Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Jepara. The research employs a qualitative approach with a field research design. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, involving the boarding school caretakers, the head of the *tahfidz* program, and *tahfidz* students as research informants. Data analysis followed the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that Kaizen principles are applied by grouping students by memorization level, setting measurable memorization targets, conducting lessons using a classical-individual method, conducting daily evaluations of students' memorization progress, and providing special assistance to students who fall behind in their memorization targets. Furthermore, a culture of continuous improvement is reinforced through a post-khatam (completion) program that requires students who have finished their memorization to strengthen their retention before receiving certification (*syahadah*). The findings indicate that implementing Kaizen through a cycle of planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up contributes to sustaining and continuously enhancing the quality of *tahfidz* learning at Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Jepara.

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Corresponding Author:

Ellisa Nailizzulfa

Prodi Manajemen Pendidikan Islam, Fakultas Pascasarjana, Universitas Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Jepara, Indonesia

Email: ellis.zulfa@gmail.com

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1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic education in the contemporary era faces increasingly complex demands for quality improvement, as the community seeks educational institutions that produce not only academically superior graduates but also graduates with strong religious competence. In this context, Islamic boarding schools, as one of the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, are required to continue innovating and improving their learning management to produce quality outputs. One of the flagship programs that is growing rapidly in the pesantren environment today is the tahfidz Al-Qur'an program. The tahfidz program is not only oriented toward achieving quantitative targets in the form of the number of memorizations successfully completed by students, but also emphasizes the quality of memorization, reading accuracy, consistency of muroja'ah, and the ability to maintain memorization in the long term. Therefore, the success of the tahfidz program is highly dependent on an effective, well-planned, and quality-oriented learning management system that is sustained [1].

From the perspective of education management, quality is not a static condition but a dynamic process that must be continuously refined through ongoing evaluation and improvement. This concept, known as continuous improvement, is one of the main principles of Total Quality Management (TQM). W. Edwards Deming emphasized that an organization's quality can be achieved through continuous process improvement by involving all components in the planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up cycle known as the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) [2]. The principle emphasizes that any problems arising in the organizational process must be identified and corrected immediately, so that quality can be improved gradually and continuously. In the field of education, this concept is relevant to increasing learning effectiveness, improving educators' performance, and ensuring that students receive optimal educational services [3].

One approach born of the principle of continuous improvement is the philosophy of *Kaizen*, introduced by Masaaki Imai. *Kaizen* comes from the Japanese language and means continuous improvement. This philosophy emphasizes that quality improvement does not have to be achieved through large, radical changes, but can be achieved through small, consistent improvements involving all members of the organization [4]. In the context of education, *Kaizen* can be realized through routine evaluation, continuous supervision, the development of adaptive learning strategies, and the provision of solutions to various obstacles that arise during the learning process. Thus, the culture of *Kaizen* is not only oriented toward results but also emphasizes the process as the main factor in achieving educational quality [5].

The application of the *Kaizen* method in Islamic education is highly relevant, as the values of continuous improvement align with Islamic teachings that encourage people to continually improve their quality of life. In learning tahfidz Al-Qur'an, improving quality is very important, as memorizing the Qur'an requires perseverance, discipline, supervision, evaluation, and continuous coaching. Students are not only required to increase their memorization (*Ziyadah*), but also to maintain the memorization they have through regular Muroja'ah activities. Therefore, the success of the tahfidz program cannot be separated from the existence of a management system capable of controlling the development of

student memorization while addressing various obstacles that arise during the memorization process [6].

Edward Sallis explained that educational institutions that have successfully implemented *Total Quality Management* are characterized by a quality culture integrated into all organizational activities. This quality culture is realized through the involvement of all elements of the institution, from leaders and educators to students, to improve quality sustainably [7]. In the tahfidz pesantren environment, the culture of quality can be seen from the memorization evaluation system that is carried out periodically, the grouping of students based on their ability level, the provision of special guidance for students who experience difficulties, and the existence of a follow-up program that aims to maintain the quality of memorization after students complete their memorization targets. These practices show that the quality of tahfidz education is not measured solely by the number of students who succeed in memorizing the Qur'an, but also by the institution's ability to sustain and improve the quality of student memorization.

The Zhilalul Qur'an Jepara Islamic Boarding School is one of the Islamic educational institutions that has developed a tahfidz learning system with various quality control mechanisms that are worth studying. Based on initial observations and interviews with caregivers, heads of tahfidz programs, and students, it is evident that the tahfidz learning process is conducted through a classical, individual system, with students grouped by juz memorization achievement. In addition, the pesantren conducts daily evaluations of students' memorization progress and provides special assistance to students who experience delays in achieving the memorization target. Not only that, students who have memorized 30 juz are required to participate in a service program and in memorization strengthening for at least 2 years as a condition for obtaining the certification (*syahadah*). These practices show that continuous efforts to improve and control quality are carried out in the management of the tahfidz program.

Although much research has been conducted on the quality management of Islamic education and Tahfidz programs, studies that specifically analyze the implementation of the Kaizen method in Tahfidz learning within the Islamic boarding school environment remain relatively limited. Most previous research has focused more on Total Quality Management. In general, strategies for improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions, or the management of tahfidz programs, have been studied without an in-depth examination of the continuous improvement practices that take place in the daily learning process [8], [9]. Therefore, this study has novelty value by focusing on the implementation of Kaizen principles in tahfidz learning through a daily evaluation system, individual coaching, class grouping based on memorization ability, and a post-khatam memorization strengthening program at the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School Jepara.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze how Kaizen is implemented in the tahfidz learning process at the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Jepara and to explain its relevance to the theory of continuous improvement by W. Edwards Deming and the concept of *Total Quality Management* in education presented by Edward Sallis. This research is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of Islamic education management studies and to serve as a practical reference for tahfidz institutions

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in building a culture of quality and continuous improvement in the management of the Qur'an tahfidz program.

2. METHOD

2.1 Participants

This study uses a qualitative approach with a field research design to understand in depth the implementation of the Kaizen method in tahfidz learning at the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School, Jepara. In qualitative research, the selection of research participants is not based on large sample sizes, but on the ability of informants to provide relevant, in-depth information and to align with the research focus [10]. Therefore, the research participants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique that selects informants based on specific considerations related to the research purpose [11].

The study participants were divided into three main groups. First, the caretaker of the Islamic boarding school serves as the policy determinant and director of the tahfidz program as a whole. Second, the head of the tahfidz program, who is responsible for the management, implementation, and evaluation of tahfidz learning activities. Third, students in the tahfidz program were selected as informants to provide data on their experiences during the tahfidz learning process and the implementation of evaluations in Islamic boarding schools. The three groups of informants were chosen because they were considered to have adequate knowledge and experience in implementing the Kaizen method in tahfidz learning, thereby providing comprehensive data to meet research needs [12].

2.2 Data Collection

2.2.1 Instrument for Collecting Data

In qualitative research, the main research instrument is the researcher himself (a human instrument), who directly collects, processes, and interprets data in the field [13]. The researcher interacted directly with the informant to gain a deep understanding of the implementation of the Kaizen method in the tahfidz learning process. To support the data collection process, this study uses several auxiliary instruments in the form of:

1. Semi-structured interview guidelines, which are used to explore information about the tahfidz learning system, evaluation process, student development mechanisms, and forms of continuous improvement applied in Islamic boarding schools.
2. Observation sheets, which are used to record tahfidz learning activities, the implementation of memorization deposits, muroja'ah, and the evaluation process carried out by tahfidz administrators.
3. Documentation, in the form of tahfidz activity schedules, class grouping data, memorization monitoring books, and other documents relevant to the focus of the research [14].

The use of these various instruments aims to obtain more complete data and increase the validity of research findings through triangulation of sources and techniques [15].

2.2.2 Techniques for Collecting Data

Data collection was carried out using three main techniques: interviews, observations, and documentation. 1) Interviews were conducted in depth (*in-depth interviews*) with the caregivers of the boarding school, the head of the tahfidz program, and the tahfidz students. The interview aimed to explore information about the implementation of tahfidz learning, evaluation systems, strategies for handling students who experience memorization delays, and post-khatam memorization strengthening programs. The in-depth interview technique was chosen because it allowed researchers to obtain more detailed data on the experiences, views, and practices of the informants [16]. 2) Observation was carried out directly on tahfidz learning activities at the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School Jepara. The researcher observed the process of memorizing deposits, muroja'ah, class grouping based on juz achievements, the implementation of daily evaluations, and the form of assistance provided to students who had difficulty achieving the memorization target. Observation allows researchers to obtain factual data on behaviors and activities in the field, thereby strengthening data from interviews [17]. 3) Documentation techniques are used to obtain supporting data in the form of written documents and archives related to the tahfidz program. The documentation collected includes tahfidz student achievement books, tahfidz program structure, class division data, student memorization targets, and evaluation systems. Documentation data is used to complement and verify information obtained through interviews and observations [18].

2.3 Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study uses an interactive analysis model developed by [19]. This model was chosen because it provides a systematic overview of the qualitative data processing process from data collection to the conclusion drawn. Analysis is carried out continuously throughout the research through three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

1) Data Reduction

Data reduction is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and organizing data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. At this stage, the researcher identifies information on the implementation of the Kaizen method in tahfidz learning, including the daily evaluation system, class grouping, assistance for students who are left behind, and post-khatam memorization strengthening programs [20].

2) Data Display

The reduced data is then presented in the form of narrative descriptions, tables, and categorization of research themes. The presentation of data aims to make it easier for researchers to understand the relationship between findings, so that the implementation pattern of Kaizen in tahfidz learning can be seen more clearly and systematically [21].

3) Conclusion Drawing and Verification

The final stage is drawing conclusions based on the patterns, themes, and relationships identified during the analysis [22]. The conclusions are then continuously

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verified by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation to ensure data consistency and validity. This verification process is important for producing credible, scientifically accountable findings [23]. To ensure data validity, this study employed source triangulation and triangulation techniques. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information from the boarding school caregivers, the head of the tahfidz program, and students. Meanwhile, technical triangulation was achieved by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documentation to enhance the credibility of the research findings [24].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Result

Based on the results of interviews with the caretaker of the Islamic boarding school, the head of the tahfidz program, and tahfidz students, it was found that the tahfidz learning process at the Zhilalul Qur'an Jepara Islamic Boarding School showed characteristics that were in line with the principles of *Kaizen* through the implementation of the cycle *Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA)* developed by W. Edwards Deming. This cycle can be seen in the processes of planning memorization targets, implementing learning, conducting daily evaluations, and providing follow-up for students who experience obstacles in achieving memorization targets [25], [26].

The results of the study show that the culture of *continuous improvement* is applied not only to the process of adding memorization (*ziyadah*), but also to maintaining the quality of memorization through *muroja'ah*, routine evaluation, and post-khatam memorization-strengthening programs. The research findings are further presented by the PDCA stage as follows.

Table 1 presents the *Plan* stage (Planning/setting targets and grouping of tahfidz classes). Planning is carried out by setting clear memorization targets and grouping students based on their memorization achievement levels. Based on the interview with the head of the tahfidz program, students were divided into six classes based on their level of memorization development. This system aims to make the learning process more effective by placing students in relatively homogeneous groups. In addition, each student has a predetermined memorization target: deposit 1 page of memorization per meeting, with 2 deposit sessions per day. The determination of the target is an achievement standard used as a basis for evaluating students' memorization development.

Table 2 presents the *Do* stage (Implementation/Implementation of Tahfidz Learning). The implementation stage is carried out through memorization and *muroja'ah* deposit activities, which are conducted individually for each ustadzah. The learning system applied is classical-individual: students are in a class group, but memorization is carried out individually.

Table 3 presents the *Check* stage (Daily evaluation as quality control). The examination or evaluation stage is one of the main components of *Kaizen* implementation. Based on interviews with the head of the tahfidz program, evaluations are conducted daily to monitor students' memorization progress and the effectiveness of each ustadzah's learning. The tahfidz management conducts a direct check of all classes to assess students'

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achievement of their memorization targets and identify obstacles that arise during the learning process. Through this evaluation, every problem can be identified early, preventing it from becoming a larger obstacle.

Table 4 presents the *Act* stage (Follow-up in the form of special coaching for students who experience obstacles). The results of the study show that after the evaluation, the pesantren immediately took corrective actions for students who experienced delays in memorization. Based on the interview results, students who are unable to attend the target class will be contacted by the tahfidz management to identify the cause of the problem. Furthermore, the students are placed in a special mentoring group and given learning methods tailored to their individual needs. This program receives direct supervision from Shohibul Ma'had until students can resume following the learning targets.

Table 5 presents the *PDCA* cycle in the program for obtaining certification (*syahadah*) after *khatam*, as a means of strengthening memorization quality. The study's findings show that the principle of continuous improvement does not end when students successfully memorize 30 juz. The pesantren has a program of taking certification (*syahadah*) after *khatam*, which is an obligation for students who have *khatam* to stay in the pesantren for at least two years to serve before obtaining the certification (*syahadah*). This program aims to strengthen memorization, improve the quality of *muroja'ah*, and ensure long-term retention. Thus, the success of the tahfidz program is not only measured by the achievement of the *khatam* target, but also by the ability to maintain the quality of memorization.

Table 1. Planning Components and Implementation in Islamic Boarding Schools

Planning Components	Implementation in Islamic Boarding Schools
Class grouping	6 classes based on Juz achievement
Grouping policy	Memorization level
Memorization target	1 page each meeting
Frequency of learning	Twice a day
Learning system	Classical-individual
Person in charge	Ustadzah of each class

Table 2. Learning Aspects and Implementation

Learning Aspects	Implementation
Learning model	Classical-individual
Memorization deposits	Individual to ustadzah
Muroja'ah	Individual to ustadzah
Number of daily sessions	Twice a day
Learning focus	Memorization deposits and muroja'ah
Supervision	Ustadzah and tahfidz management

Table 3. Evaluation Components and Form of Activity

Evaluation Components	Form of Activity
Memorization evaluation	Deposit access check
Evaluation of muroja'ah	Keeping an eye on the quality of old
Classroom evaluation	Monitoring of class progress
Ustadzah evaluation	Monitoring the learning process
Frequency of evaluation	Every day
Evaluation implementer	Manager and head of Tahfidz

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Table 4. Evaluation Findings and Corrective Actions

Evaluation Findings	Corrective actions
Students are lagging in memorization targets.	Special summons
Difficulty memorizing	Identify the cause
Falling behind in class	Formation of special classes
Monitoring the Progress	Head of the Islamic boarding school

Table 5. Stages of PDCA and Program Implementation

Stages of PDCA	Program Implementation
Plan	Planning to strengthen memorization after <i>khatam</i>
Do	Implementation of intensive devotion and <i>muroja'ah</i>
Check	Regular monitoring of the quality of memorization
Act	Improvement and strengthening of weak memorization

3.2. Discussion

The study found that Kaizen has been integrated into the learning management efforts of the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School Jepara. The implementation can be seen through the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle, which includes planning memorization targets, implementing learning, conducting daily evaluations, and following up on students who experience obstacles in achieving memorization targets. These findings show that the tahfidz learning process in Islamic boarding schools is not only oriented toward achieving the number of memorized verses, but also toward improving the quality of the process and learning outcomes in a sustainable manner.

3.2.1. Implementation of *Plan* Principles in Tahfidz Learning

The planning stage (Plan) in this study is carried out by grouping students based on achievement in memorizing juz and by determining measurable memorization targets. The grouping system into six classes based on memorization ability shows an effort to differentiate learning that takes into account students' characteristics and abilities. From a quality management perspective, setting standards is an important first step to achieving the expected quality [3].

The target of memorizing one page per deposit, with two meetings per day, shows that the pesantren has set clear achievement standards as a reference for the learning process. According to Crosby [15], a quality organization must have measurable goals and standards to ensure the evaluation process is carried out objectively. These findings also align with the view [19], which states that the quality of education can be achieved only if the institution has a clear, measurable goal.

From a Kaizen perspective, the standards set are not the end goal but rather the starting point for continuous improvement [5]. Therefore, the memorization target implemented at the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School can be understood as a quality-control instrument that enables the pesantren to assess students' development systematically.

3.2.2. Implementation of the *Do* Principle in Tahfidz Learning

The implementation stage (*Do*) is carried out through the application of the classical-individual learning method, which combines a group system and personal mentoring. This system allows students to learn in a structured environment while receiving individual attention from the ustadzah. In the context of tahfidz learning, an individual approach is very important because each student's memorization ability is different, so it requires assistance tailored to each student's needs.

The study's findings show that memorizing and muroja'ah deposits are carried out individually by each ustadzah. This system not only enhances memorization (*Ziyadah*) but also serves as a quality-control mechanism for student memorization. According to ISO [19], one of the main principles of *Total Quality Management (TQM)* is customer-focused. In the context of education, the main customer is the learner. Therefore, providing learning services that align with students' individual needs is a way to implement quality principles in education.

In addition, *muroja'ah* activities carried out regularly show that pesantren are not only oriented toward the quantity of memorization but also toward its quality. This aligns with research [16], who found that the success of the tahfidz program was greatly influenced by a quality control system that not only emphasized memorization, but also its maintenance.

3.2.3. Implementation of the *Check* Principle Through Daily Evaluation

The study's findings show that daily evaluation is one of the main characteristics of Kaizen implementation at the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School Jepara. The tahfidz management routinely monitors the progress of student memorization, the achievement of class targets, and the implementation of learning by ustadzah. This daily evaluation system demonstrates a continuous monitoring mechanism throughout the learning process.

In the theory of Feigenbaum [17], stage *Check* serves to identify the gap between the planned target and the results obtained. Through regular evaluations, organizations can detect problems early and take corrective actions immediately. The results of the study show that the evaluation does not focus solely on student memorization but also includes aspects of the learning process carried out by the ustadzah.

The practice aligns with the principles of Kaizen, which emphasize evaluation as an integral part of the organization's culture. According to Goetsch and Davis [18], the organization implementing *Kaizen* must have a monitoring system that quickly identifies every problem, enabling continuous improvement. Thus, the daily evaluation implemented by the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School is a tangible form of culture and continuous improvement in tahfidz learning. These findings also reinforce the study's results [14], which concluded that the consistency of evaluation and monitoring of learning activities greatly influences the successful implementation of continuous improvement in the pesantren environment.

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3.2.4. Implementation of the *Act* Principle Through Supporting Students Who Are Facing Challenges

One important finding in this study is the systematic follow-up of the evaluation results. When it is found that students are late in achieving the memorization target, the tahfidz management not only records the problem but also intervenes through special coaching, the formation of mentoring groups, and adjustments to learning methods.

From the perspective of Crosby [16], the stage *Act* is the phase that determines the success of a quality system, as it is at this stage that the organization takes corrective actions based on the evaluation results. Evaluations that are not followed by corrective actions will not lead to significant quality improvement. Therefore, establishing a special class for students who are left behind demonstrates that the pesantren has applied the principles of the *Act* in its learning system.

Interestingly, pesantren do not use a punitive approach for students who experience memorization delays, but rather a coaching and mentoring approach. This practice aligns with the philosophy of Kaizen, which emphasizes problem-solving through process improvement rather than blaming individuals [5]. By finding the root cause of students' difficulties and providing appropriate methods, pesantren seeks to create a learning environment that supports the continuous improvement of memorization skills.

From the perspective of Islamic education, this approach also reflects the principle of *tarbiyah*, which emphasizes coaching, mentoring, and the optimal development of students' potential. Therefore, the implementation of Kaizen at the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School not only has a managerial dimension, but also a pedagogical and spiritual dimension.

3.2.5. *Post-Khatam* Program as a Form of Long-Term Continuous Improvement

The most interesting research finding is the existence of a post-khatam program for students who have completed 30 juz memorization. This program requires students to remain in the pesantren for at least two years to strengthen their memorization before obtaining the certification (*syahadah*). When analyzed using the perspective of Kaizen and TQM, the *post-khatam* program shows that the process of improving the quality at the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School does not stop at the achievement of memorization targets. On the other hand, pesantren views quality as a process that must be maintained and improved even after students have memorized 30 juz.

According to Creswell and Poth [2], one of the characteristics of a quality educational institution is the presence of quality assurance that ensures the quality of graduates in a sustainable manner. The *post-khatam* program can be understood as a form of *quality assurance* in tahfidz education because it ensures that the memorization achieved is truly strong and sustained before students obtain official recognition through certification (*syahadah*).

Within the PDCA framework, the program shows that the repair cycle does not end after the initial goal is achieved. After students succeed in khatam, the pesantren again carries out the planning process, the implementation of muroja'ah, evaluation of memorization quality, and actions to strengthen memorization. Thus, the concept of

continuous improvement continues without rigid ends, as is the main essence of philosophy *Kaizen* [19].

3.2.6. Synthesis of Research Findings

Overall, the study's results show that the *Kaizen* method is implemented in tahfidz learning at the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Jepara through the systematic, sustainable PDCA cycle. The grouping of students and the determination of memorization targets reflect the *Plan* stage; the implementation of deposits and muroja'ah shows the *Do* stage; the daily evaluation describes the *Check* stage; while special coaching for students who experience obstacles represents the *Act* stage. The cycle is then strengthened through the *post-khatam* program, which maintains and improves students' memorization quality after completing the memorization target.

These findings reinforce the ISO theory [19]. That quality is achieved through a continuous process of improvement, not through momentary action. In addition, the study's results support the concept of Total Quality Management in education presented by Deming [5], namely that the culture of quality must be part of all activities of educational institutions. Thus, the implementation of *Kaizen* at the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Jepara can be understood as an integration of modern quality management and Islamic educational practices to produce Qur'an hafidz who are not only able to complete memorization but also maintain its quality sustainably.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that *Kaizen* has been implemented in the tahfidz learning process at the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School Jepara through a continuous improvement culture integrated into the tahfidz learning management system. The implementation can be seen through the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle, as described by Deming (1986), which includes the planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up stages of improvement.

In the *Plan* stage, the Islamic boarding school sets learning standards by grouping students into six classes based on their juz memorization achievements and by determining measurable memorization targets: one page per deposit, with two meetings a day. The *Do* stage is realized through the implementation of tahfidz learning using the classical-individual method, in which students make memorization and muroja'ah deposits directly to their respective *ustadzah*. Furthermore, the *Check* stage is conducted through daily evaluations by administrators and heads of the tahfidz program to monitor students' memorization progress, learning effectiveness, and achievement of set targets. The *Act* stage is achieved by providing special assistance to students who experience delays in memorization and achievement, identifying the cause of the problem, grouping students in special coaching classes, and providing learning methods that better align with their needs.

This study also found that the *Kaizen principle* is applied not only to the process of achieving memorization targets, but also to efforts to sustain memorization quality through the *Post-Khatam* program. This program requires students who have completed 30 juz of memorization to remain and serve in the pesantren for at least 2 years to strengthen their

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memorization before obtaining the certification (Syahadah). The program shows that the quality orientation at the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School does not focus solely on the quantity of memorization but also on the sustainability and quality of students' memorization in the long term.

The findings of this study corroborate the theory of *Continuous Improvement* proposed by Deming (1986), the philosophy of Kaizen from Imai (1986), and the concept of *Total Quality Management* in education developed by Sallis (2015). Thus, implementing the Kaizen method at the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School Jepara can be understood as an effective quality management strategy for tahfidz learning that improves the quality of the learning process, maintains the consistency of student memorization achievements, and builds a sustainable quality culture in the pesantren environment.

4.1. Research Implications

The results of this study imply that the application of the Kaizen method can be an effective alternative to a tahfidz learning management model for Islamic educational institutions, especially Islamic boarding schools that develop Qur'an tahfidz programs. Continuous evaluation, individual assistance for students who experience difficulties, and strengthening *post-khatam* memorization can be important strategies for maintaining and continuously improving the quality of the tahfidz program.

4.2. Suggestions

Based on the research findings, it is suggested that the Zhilalul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School Jepara continue to maintain the culture of continuous evaluation and improvement that has been in place. In addition, Islamic boarding schools can develop a more structured, data-based system for documenting memorization achievement as a tool to monitor student development. For future researchers, research on the implementation of Kaizen in Islamic education can be developed by examining its influence on memorization quality, student learning motivation, and the effectiveness of management in tahfidz institutions more broadly.

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