

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENTS' TIME MANAGEMENT IN ALIGNING ACADEMIC TASKS AND AL-QUR'AN MEMORIZATION AT MA'HAD ALY AL-MUBARAK

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Abstrak

Penelitian tentang manajemen waktu dalam pendidikan tinggi telah berkembang cukup luas, tetapi kajian yang secara spesifik menelaah efektivitas pengelolaan waktu mahasiswa dalam konteks pendidikan berbasis pesantren, khususnya dalam menyelaraskan tuntutan akademik dan hafalan Al-Qur'an, masih terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis efektivitas manajemen waktu mahasiswa di Ma'had Aly Al-Mubarak dalam menyeimbangkan tugas akademik dan hafalan Al-Qur'an, sekaligus mengidentifikasi faktor pendukung dan penghambatnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan studi dokumentasi yang melibatkan mahasiswa, *musyrif*, dan pengelola Ma'had. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa efektivitas manajemen waktu tampak pada kemampuan mahasiswa dalam menetapkan prioritas, mengalokasikan waktu secara proporsional antara kegiatan akademik dan *muroja'ah*, serta menjaga kedisiplinan dalam pelaksanaan jadwal harian. Temuan ini juga menunjukkan adanya keterkaitan erat antara manajemen waktu dan pembelajaran yang diregulasi diri, terutama dalam aspek perencanaan, pengendalian diri, dan evaluasi belajar. Faktor pendukung utama meliputi lingkungan pesantren yang kondusif, pendampingan musyrif, dan motivasi intrinsik, sedangkan hambatan yang muncul mencakup kelelahan fisik, beban akademik, dan inkonsistensi dalam menjalankan jadwal. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada penguatan kajian manajemen waktu dan *self-regulated learning* dalam konteks pendidikan Islam, serta memberikan implikasi praktis bagi pengembangan pembinaan mahasiswa yang lebih efektif.

Kata Kunci: *Manajemen Waktu; Self-Regulated Learning; Hafalan Al-Qur'an; Pendidikan Berbasis Pesantren; Disiplin.*

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Abstract

Research on time management in higher education has developed considerably; however, studies specifically examining the effectiveness of time management among *mahasantri* in Islamic boarding school education, particularly in balancing academic demands and Qur'an memorization, remain limited. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of time management among *mahasantri* at Ma'had Aly Al-Mubarak in balancing academic tasks and Qur'an memorization, while also identifying its supporting and inhibiting factors. This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving *mahasantri*, *musyrif*, and Ma'had administrators. The findings reveal that effective time management is reflected in the ability of *mahasantri* to set priorities, allocate time proportionally between academic activities and *muroja'ah*, and maintain discipline in implementing daily schedules. The study also indicates a close relationship between time management and self-regulated learning, particularly in the aspects of planning, self-control, and learning evaluation. The main supporting factors include a conducive pesantren environment, guidance from *musyrif*, and intrinsic motivation, while the primary obstacles include physical fatigue, academic workload, and inconsistency in following schedules. This study contributes to the enrichment of time management and self-regulated learning literature in the context of Islamic education and offers practical implications for developing more effective *mahasantri* guidance programs.

Keywords: Time Management; Self-Regulated Learning; Qur'an Memorization; Islamic Boarding School Education; Discipline

INTRODUCTION

Time management in modern education is no longer viewed merely as a technical skill, but rather as an operational dimension of self-regulated learning (SRL), as it relates to learners' ability to set priorities, allocate study time, monitor progress, and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies they employ (Zimmerman, 2010; Li et al., 2023). A number of international studies indicate that students with strong self-regulation skills tend to demonstrate more stable academic performance, lower levels of procrastination, and a greater capacity to adapt to complex academic demands (Aeon et al., 2021). However, most of these studies still focus on



general higher education and have not extensively addressed religious educational settings that require the integration of academic achievement, spiritual discipline, and routine-based memorization practices. From the perspective of Islamic education, time management is regarded as a trust (amanah) that must be utilized optimally for both worldly and hereafter-oriented purposes, as emphasized in Surah Al-'Asr verses 1-3:

وَالْعَصْرِ ۝ ۱ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ۝ ۲ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ ۝ ۳ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ۝ ۳

Meaning: “By time, indeed, mankind is surely in loss, except for those who believe, perform righteous deeds, and encourage one another to uphold truth and patience.” (QS. Al-'Ashr: 1-3).

In the perspective of Qur'anic exegesis, Ibn Kathir explains that in Surah Al-'Asr, Allah SWT swears by “time” (al-'asr) as an affirmation of the significance of time in human life, both in the context of good and evil (Ibnu Katsir, 2019). This perspective is highly relevant in the context of Ma'had Aly Al-Mubarak education, where students are not only required to fulfill formal academic responsibilities but also to maintain their commitment to Qur'an memorization as an integral part of the pesantren curriculum (Nufus, 2025). This condition places students within two domains of demands with distinct characteristics, namely academic responsibilities and tahfiz (Qur'an memorization) obligations. As a result, ineffective time management has the potential to hinder academic achievement while simultaneously diminishing the quality of Qur'an memorization (Suci Awaliyah, 2024). On the other hand, the implementation of effective time management also faces various challenges, such as physical fatigue due to demanding schedules, overlap between academic and tahfiz activities, as well as internal factors such as motivation, self-discipline, and consistency in learning (Jaya et al., 2025). Therefore, time management among students cannot be understood merely as an administrative skill, but also as a form of self-regulation practice within a high-intensity educational environment.

Although studies on time management have developed in higher education, there remain at least three research gaps. First, most studies focus on students in general higher education institutions, and thus have not sufficiently explained the dynamics of time management within religious-based educational environments (Wolters, 2017). Second, studies that examine students facing dual learning demands—namely formal academic responsibilities and memorization grounded in spiritual



discipline—remain relatively limited (Imron, 2025; Mizaniyyah, 2025). Third, previous studies have generally focused more on the relationship between time management and academic outcomes, but have not extensively examined daily strategies, adaptation mechanisms, and the factors that shape the effectiveness of these practices (Hsu et al., 2023). Recent international studies have indeed confirmed that time management plays a significant role in enhancing learning effectiveness, task consistency, and students' self-regulation capacity. However, this relationship has not been widely examined within intensive religious education contexts, particularly among learners who must maintain academic rhythms while simultaneously meeting memorization targets based on repetition and *muroja'ah* (revision) (Bargmann & Kauffeld, 2023). Therefore, there is a need for research that specifically identifies and maps the time management strategies of students at Ma'had Aly Al-Mubarak, along with the factors that influence them.

More broadly, this study is relevant to the global discourse on higher education and self-regulated learning, particularly among students who live in high-demand learning environments with overlapping academic and non-academic responsibilities. In various international contexts, students are not only required to achieve academic performance but also to manage personal, social, moral, and spiritual commitments. Therefore, this study is not only significant within the context of Ma'had Aly Al-Mubarak, but also contributes to a broader understanding of how time management and self-regulation practices operate in value-based educational settings.

This research is expected not only to provide an empirical description of students' time management practices, but also to expand the application of the self-regulated learning framework within Islamic boarding school-based education, as well as to generate practical recommendations for Ma'had Aly administrators in designing more effective, adaptive, and student-centered time management support systems. Based on this background, the study is focused on addressing three main research questions: (1) what time management strategies are employed by students in balancing academic responsibilities and Qur'an memorization; (2) how effective are these strategies in supporting academic achievement and the quality of memorization; and (3) what factors support or hinder the effectiveness of students' time management at Ma'had Aly Al-Mubarak.



LITERATURE REVIEW

In contemporary higher education literature, time management is no longer understood merely as a technical skill in scheduling, but rather as part of the capacity for self-regulated learning (SRL), namely students' ability to plan, direct, monitor, and evaluate their own learning processes independently. Within Barry J. Zimmerman's theoretical framework, self-regulation operates through three main phases forethought, performance, and self-reflection indicating that learning success is determined not only by cognitive ability, but also by the management of behavior, motivation, and learning strategies (Zimmerman, 2010; Panadero, 2017). Within this framework, time management operates in the forethought phase as a form of planning and prioritization, while study discipline functions in the performance control phase through behavioral regulation and consistency of effort. Meanwhile, the evaluation of learning outcomes reflects the self-reflection phase. Thus, students' learning effectiveness is the result of a dynamic interaction between planning, implementation, and self-reflection.

A number of international studies indicate that time management has a positive relationship with academic productivity, reduced procrastination, and an increased capacity for students to adapt to learning demands (Aeon et al., 2021; Hsu et al., 2023). However, this relationship is not always direct. Recent studies indicate that the effectiveness of time management is strongly influenced by mediating factors such as study discipline and self-regulation skills, particularly in high-demand learning contexts (Liu et al., 2026). This indicates that the ability to create schedules does not automatically lead to optimal academic performance without consistency in their implementation. Therefore, time management should be understood as part of a broader self-regulation system rather than as a standalone skill. Nevertheless, some previous studies have tended to measure time management separately from the context of everyday learning behaviors, and thus have not fully captured the complexity of self-regulation practices in real learning situations.

In relation to self-regulated learning (SRL), study discipline is an essential component that cannot be separated from time management. In modern educational perspectives, discipline is no longer understood merely as compliance with external rules, but rather as a form of self-control



and effort regulation that enables students to maintain consistency in learning despite facing fatigue, distractions, or academic pressure (Xu et al., 2020; Lobos et al., 2024; Holid, 2020). In other words, students who are able to create study schedules do not necessarily demonstrate high learning effectiveness if these are not accompanied by consistent discipline in their implementation. Conversely, discipline without clear planning may result in intensive learning activities that are inefficient. This indicates that time management, study discipline, and self-regulation are interrelated constructs that operate simultaneously in shaping students' academic productivity (Li et al., 2023). In various studies, the level of discipline and self-regulation ability can be identified through indicators such as adherence to schedules, consistency in learning, punctuality, and responsibility in completing tasks. In high-intensity learning contexts, discipline also functions as a behavioral stabilization mechanism that helps maintain consistency despite academic pressure. This indicates that study discipline is not only related to administrative orderliness, but also to the ability to sustain long-term learning commitment.

From the perspective of self-regulated learning (SRL), Qur'an memorization (*tahfiz*) activities can be categorized as a form of long-term learning task that requires strong goal commitment, self-monitoring, and behavioral persistence. These characteristics indicate that *tahfiz* provides a unique empirical context for testing the external validity of SRL theory within value-based learning environments. Pedagogically, *tahfiz* involves structured repetition, sustained focus, continuous evaluation, and the ability to maintain memorization stability through *muraja'ah* (revision) (Luthfiah & Syarif, 2025). Therefore, success in *tahfiz* is not determined solely by memory capacity, but also by the ability to manage time and maintain consistent study discipline. The process of memorizing the Qur'an also involves perseverance, accuracy in recitation, attention to the rules of *tajwid*, as well as balanced physical and mental readiness. Consequently, its success is highly influenced by students' ability to regulate their learning rhythm consistently (Sakdiah & Pasaribu, 2025).

These characteristics indicate that *tahfiz* shares similarities with other forms of long-term learning that require a high level of self-regulation. Students who have structured memorization schedules, realistic targets,



and consistent evaluation tend to demonstrate better quality of memorization compared to those who lack clear learning patterns (Hey et al., 2024; Ismail et al., 2025; Wachida et al., 2021). However, when *tahfiz* activities are carried out simultaneously with formal academic demands, students are placed in a layered learning situation that requires more complex self-regulation strategies compared to typical university students. This condition highlights the importance of examining pesantren-based educational contexts more deeply from the perspectives of self-regulated learning (SRL) and time management.

Although numerous studies have emphasized the importance of time management, study discipline, and self-regulation in enhancing students' academic productivity, most of these studies still focus on general higher education contexts. On the other hand, research that specifically examines how self-regulation strategies operate within layered learning environments—combining formal academic demands with value-based learning practices such as *tahfiz*—remains relatively limited in the international literature. In addition, previous studies have tended to emphasize relationships between variables without deeply exploring students' daily practices and adaptive strategies in managing time and maintaining study discipline. Therefore, this study not only provides an empirical contribution, but also offers a conceptual extension of Self-Regulated Learning theory by incorporating the dimension of spiritual learning, which has thus far been underrepresented in the international higher education literature.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to explore in depth the time management strategies implemented by students in balancing academic responsibilities and Qur'an memorization at Ma'had Aly Al-Mubarak. This approach is chosen because the research focuses on understanding students' experiences, daily practices, and self-regulation processes within the natural context of pesantren life, rather than on testing relationships between variables quantitatively (Aspers & Corte, 2021; Busetto et al., 2020). The focus of the study is directed toward three main aspects: planning, implementation, and evaluation of time management in carrying out formal academic activities and the Qur'an *tahfiz* program. The

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research participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, involving 10 participants consisting of 8 students, 1 *musyrif* (supervisor), and 1 Ma'had administrator who also serves as the head of the curriculum division. The selection of participants was based on the following criteria: (1) actively engaged in both academic activities and the *tahfiz* program, (2) undergoing intensive guidance within the Ma'had environment, and (3) willing to provide information openly.

Data were collected through observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Observation was conducted to understand daily activity patterns and students' time management practices; interviews were used to explore their experiences, strategies, and the challenges they faced; while documentation was utilized to examine supporting materials such as activity schedules, institutional regulations, and records of learning activities. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis through several stages, including transcription, repeated reading, coding, category development, and the identification of key themes representing time management strategies, their effectiveness, as well as the supporting and inhibiting factors (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The validity of the data was ensured through source triangulation and technique triangulation by comparing findings from interviews, observations, and documentation. The study was also conducted in accordance with research ethics principles, including informed consent from participants, confidentiality of identities, and the use of data solely for academic purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Daily Planning and Scheduling of Mahasantri

The findings indicate that the primary strategy employed by *mahasantri* in managing their time is the development of a structured daily schedule. Based on interviews and observations, Ustadz H. Sugianto Amir, Lc., M.A., as the Head of the Curriculum Division at Ma'had Aly Al-Mubarak, establishes a clear allocation of time. The daily activities of *mahasantri* are organized into several relatively fixed time blocks, including academic lectures, completion of coursework, Qur'an memorization submission (*setoran hafalan*), review (*muroja'ah*), and additional memorization. In addition, *mahasantri* are guided to set daily targets and conduct periodic evaluations of their progress. Weekly evaluations,



conducted every Friday, form an integral part of the mentoring system to monitor the achievement of both academic and *tahfiz* targets.

Table 1. Daily Schedule of Mahasantri Ma'had Aly Al-Mubarak

Day/Time	Morning	Midday	Afternoon	Evening
Monday	studying on campus	studying on campus	Muroja'ah	Seeking Quran Memorization
Tuesday	studying on campus	studying on campus	Muroja'ah	Seeking Quran Memorization
Wednesday	increase memorization of the Quran	Rest	Muroja'ah	Seeking Quran Memorization
Thursday	increase memorization of the Quran	Rest	Muroja'ah	Seeking Quran Memorization
Friday	Evaluation	College assignment work	College assignment work	Seeking Quran Memorization
Saturday	increase memorization of the Quran	Rest	Muroja'ah	Seeking Quran Memorization
Sunday	sport	Rest	Rest	Seeking Quran Memorization

New memorization activities are generally carried out in the morning or at night, while academic activities such as lectures and completing assignments take place from midday to the afternoon. *Muroja'ah* (revision) is typically scheduled in the afternoon or evening as part of a routine to reinforce memorization. One of the *mahasantri*, Afdal Aziz, explained: "Usually in the morning it is easier to focus on adding new memorization because the mind is still fresh. In the afternoon, it is more for *muroja'ah* so that previous memorization is not lost."

This finding is further supported by a statement from Ustadz Baihaqy, a supervisor (*musyrif*): "The students are guided to have a consistent



pattern. New memorization is generally more effective in the morning, while the afternoon or evening is used for revision." In addition to activity-based time allocation, *mahasantri* also adjust their schedules based on priority levels. When facing exams or increased academic workload, they are encouraged to allocate more time for studying and completing coursework, while still maintaining their memorization routines, albeit at a lighter intensity.

Consistency and Discipline in Implementing Daily Activity Schedules

In terms of consistency and discipline, the findings reveal that *mahasantri* with more structured daily routines tend to be more stable in fulfilling both academic and *tahfiz* obligations. However, not all *mahasantri* demonstrate the same level of discipline. Based on interview results, some still require specific guidance and supervision to remain consistent in following the established schedules. The *musyrif* noted that while some students are capable of managing their activities independently, others still need more intensive monitoring. Field data also indicate that the consistency of *mahasantri* is influenced by internal factors such as learning motivation, awareness of responsibilities, and self-regulation abilities. In addition, external factors—including a well-organized Ma'had environment, supervision systems, and guidance from *musyrif*—play a significant role in fostering adherence to daily schedules.

On the other hand, the study also identified several challenges, such as procrastination, conflicts between academic schedules and memorization targets, physical fatigue, and psychological pressure. One student, Huda Rabbani, stated: "*When I feel physically exhausted or when academic assignments pile up, my memorization usually gets disrupted.*" These challenges negatively affect focus, activity regularity, and the consistency of *mahasantri* in carrying out their planned schedules. Under such conditions, maintaining a balance between academic achievement and the quality of memorization becomes increasingly difficult. This finding suggests that successful time management depends not only on having a schedule, but also on the ability to implement it realistically and sustainably.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the time management practices of *mahasantri* cannot be understood merely as administrative skills, but are more appropriately viewed as part of self-regulated learning (SRL). The scheduling of daily activities, the establishment of daily targets, and the weekly evaluations identified in this study reflect the *forethought* phase, while consistency in implementing the schedule represents the *performance control* phase. Furthermore, the evaluation of achievements corresponds to the *self-reflection* phase, as conceptualized within



Zimmerman's framework (Zimmerman, 2010); Panadero, 2017). Thus, time management among *mahasantri* represents a concrete form of self-regulation within the context of intensive learning.

The time allocation strategies employed by *mahasantri* also demonstrate that effective time management does not necessarily imply an equal distribution of time, but rather a proportional, flexible, and priority-based allocation. This finding aligns with the view that effective time management is closely associated with the ability to set priorities, maintain focus, and minimize time wastage in academic activities (Istriana et al., 2023; Norman, 2024; Veretty et al., 2025). In this context, the flexibility demonstrated by *mahasantri* when facing examination periods or increased academic workload indicates that self-regulation is not static, but rather adaptive to changing learning demands (Hsu et al., 2023; Maulidiya & Putri, 2025).

This study also emphasizes that discipline and consistency are key elements that bridge the gap between planning and implementation. A well-designed schedule will not be effective without the ability to maintain commitment to it. These findings reinforce the view that learning discipline is not merely compliance with external rules, but also a form of self-control that sustains the continuity of learning behavior (Lobos et al., 2024; Sintesa, 2023; Fakhria, 2025). In the context of Ma'had Aly, discipline is shaped through the interaction between personal awareness and the institution's mentoring system. This means that the effectiveness of time management is not solely the result of individual ability, but is also influenced by a supportive institutional culture.

From a broader perspective, these findings suggest that *tahfiz* of the Qur'an can be understood as a form of long-term learning task that requires a high level of self-regulation. *Tahfiz* is not merely a spiritual activity, but also a learning process that demands goal commitment, behavioral persistence, and continuous self-monitoring. This highlights the theoretical significance of the *mahasantri* context, as it extends the application of self-regulated learning (SRL) theory into value-based educational environments, which have so far remained relatively underexplored in the international literature (Lourenço et al., 2025; Rahman, 2024). Thus, this study not only contributes empirical data on time management, but also demonstrates that self-regulated learning (SRL) remains relevant in explaining learning processes that integrate both academic and spiritual dimensions.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that the effectiveness of time management is strongly influenced by a combination of internal and



external factors. Motivation, commitment, and clarity of goals serve as personal foundations, while a structured learning environment, guidance from *musyrif*, and a well-defined mentoring system function as external supports (Lobos et al., 2024; Aula et al., 2024; Yusnadi, 2024). Conversely, procrastination, fatigue, academic pressure, and schedule conflicts emerge as the main challenges that can weaken the consistency of learning behavior (Wahidah, 2025; Rufaida, 2023; Zebua, 2023). These findings indicate that effective time management requires an approach that not only focuses on the individual, but also on the design of a mentoring system that supports the sustainability of learning practices.

Conceptually, this study contributes by showing that time management in the *mahasantri* context is not merely a tool for improving academic efficiency, but also an important mechanism for maintaining balance between academic achievement and the quality of Qur'anic memorization. From a practical perspective, these findings suggest that strengthening time management should be more systematically integrated into *Ma'had Aly* mentoring practices, for instance through learning target supervision, regular evaluations, realistic academic workload arrangements, and reinforcement of self-regulation strategies. In this way, this study enriches the theoretical debate on self-regulated learning (SRL) and time management while also offering practical implications for the development of Islamic boarding-based higher education.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that effective time management among *mahasantri* plays a crucial role in balancing academic responsibilities and Qur'anic memorization within the *Ma'had Aly* environment. The findings confirm that structured daily planning, proportional time allocation, and consistent discipline are key factors in successfully managing these dual demands. These practices are supported by *musyrif* guidance and strengthened by students' intrinsic motivation, although they still face challenges such as physical fatigue, increased academic workload, and inconsistency in maintaining schedules. Theoretically, this study extends the concept of self-regulated learning (SRL) by positioning time management not only as a technical skill, but also as a practice that encompasses spiritual commitment, behavioral discipline, and moral responsibility within a holistic educational framework that integrates cognitive, behavioral, and spiritual dimensions.

From a practical perspective, the findings highlight the importance of developing a structured mentoring model to strengthen students' self-regulation capacity through systematic guidance, continuous supervision,



and the cultivation of a disciplined learning culture. However, the limitation of this study lies in its focus on a single institution and its use of a descriptive qualitative approach, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future research is recommended to employ quantitative or mixed-method approaches, as well as comparative studies across Islamic educational institutions to enhance the validity of the findings. In addition, further studies may develop intervention models aimed at improving self-regulated learning and time management skills within religious education contexts.

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