

Human Resource Management Challenges and Strategies in Private Tahfiz Centers in Malaysia: An Overview

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the difficulties in managing the human resources of private tahfiz institutions in Malaysia and recommend practical ways to make improvements. In Malaysia, tahfiz education proliferated as more private tahfiz institutions are opening up to provide locals with an alternative religious education. However, these centers encounter numerous challenges in human resource management, such as redundant tasks, unclear management guidelines, unequal qualifications for the teaching staff, insufficient funding for salaries, a lack of leadership skills, and an unstandardized curriculum. This study proposes improvement methods and identifies the main difficulties through a content analysis of primary and secondary sources using a qualitative methodology. Suggested options include effective leadership, ongoing staff skill and training improvements, a consistent management policy, standards for hiring teaching personnel, and revenue diversification. It also suggests standardizing an integrated curriculum and forming a professional management board. By implementing these tactics, tahfiz centers may guarantee the viability of private tahfiz centers in Malaysia while also increasing operational efficiency and educational quality. It is anticipated that the study's conclusions will serve as a manual for enhancing Tahfiz education institutions' HRM procedures following market trends and emerging requirements.

Keywords - Challenge, Strategies, Tahfiz Center, Management, Human Resources

INTRODUCTION

Lately, tahfiz education has been gaining ground among the Muslim community in Malaysia. The existence of a tahfiz al-Quran centers is the best step to safeguard the glory of the Quran and produce a generation of Quran memorizers. Parents choose tahfiz education when they see its potential to prevent their children from social problems (Muhammad Zulazizi, Muhammad Rashidi, and Muhammad Amirul, 2021) and to produce teenagers who are skilled and easily liked by the community. Memorizing the Quran can improve and stabilize mental and physical health (Santibuan Abd Rahman et al., 2019). As a result, many parties offered private tahfiz education centers as an alternative for parents to send their children, intending to produce heirs who memorize the Quran (Muhammad Zulazizi, Muhammad Rashidi, and Muhammad Amirul, 2021).

The government established this tahfiz center at the National Mosque. In contrast, Maahad Tahfiz wal Qiraat in Jeram Selangor was the first private tahfiz center in 1981, followed by Madrasatul Quran Kubang Bujuk Terengganu in 1982 (Solahuddin Ismail, 2018), and then continued to grow. Referring to the development

scenario of tahfiz education in most states in Malaysia, it is very encouraging to see the increase in the number and percentage of private tahfiz schools over time. The community's encouraging response has spurred the growth of these institutions in Malaysia. This development has also encouraged parents and the community to choose these private tahfiz institutions to take advantage of the limited opportunities available in government-managed tahfiz schools.

To fulfill the aspirations of tahfiz education, the management of tahfiz centers plays a crucial role in determining the quality of education and achieving the primary objective of producing exceptional tahfiz students. A well-managed tahfiz center can initiate the teaching and learning process, leading to the production of targeted educational services of high quality (Zety Nurzuliana Rasheed et al., 2021). Management is a social process that seeks the participation, cooperation, and involvement of every member of an organization to achieve goals and direction (Drucker, 2007). This view is supported by the statement that efficiency and speed in administration can contribute to achieving organizational goals (Morphet, Johns, & Reller, 1982).

The effort to create a conducive tahfiz center environment, which facilitates students' comfortable memorization of the Quran, closely correlates with the efficiency of tahfiz center administration. To achieve this goal, the Tahfiz Center requires efficient and organized management that encompasses human resource management, facilities management, and finance, thereby enhancing the quality of student excellence within the center (Zety Nurzuliana Rasheed et al., 2021). An orderly and systematic tahfiz education management system is critical to ensuring the smooth operation of the education system and its administration, as well as preventing future problems. Additionally, this country needs to empower the management of tahfiz centers to align with the standards of various other educational fields. Therefore, the country's tahfiz centers must integrate various aspects, including the human resource management system.

Therefore, this article will first identify the primary challenges faced by tahfiz centers in Malaysia, followed by a description of the approach and potential improvement strategies for tahfiz center management. Hence, expect this study to guide effective human resource management practices in Tahfiz education centers. It also opens up space for proposals to improve the Tahfiz Center's human resource management to keep up with changing times and achieve expected student success.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses qualitative methodology to achieve the set objectives. The qualitative approach in this study utilizes the bibliographic research method, which involves collecting data from various primary and secondary sources such as journals, books, articles, conference papers, and daily newspapers. Data is also obtained from official journal websites that discuss issues related to the study title. After all, content analysis methods have been used to analyze the data from primary and secondary sources to address the research questions.

Human Resource Management Challenges At Tahfiz Center In Malaysia

To produce excellent management, the school administration must know, be prepared, and strive to develop themselves with high skills and competitiveness while maintaining a positive attitude (Azlin & Roselan 2015). According to Juhari and Ishak (2004), management is a systematic process that includes planning, organizing, controlling, and encouraging. To produce systematic education center management, every necessary resource must be used effectively.

According to the National Education Philosophy, education management plays a crucial role in fostering a generation that is well-rounded in physical, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual aspects, and possesses strong resilience (Ab Aziz 2018). Education reform needs to be implemented immediately to build and further improve the ability of the education system to meet current needs as well as face future challenges, especially in the development of the latest education world that is stepping into the latest technological innovation era (Wan Ezielia 2014).

Furthermore, to ensure the organization's smooth operation, the teaching staff and other staff members must collaborate in managing the education center. Not only that but to achieve its establishment objective, every

tahfiz management needs an organized management system to achieve effective educational quality (Ainul Hayat et al., 2021).

To ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of their operations, tahfiz centers in Malaysia must overcome several challenges in human resource management. While the development of private tahfiz centers is exciting, there are still several aspects that require refinement and strengthening to maintain the stability of these centers in Malaysia. Most private tahfiz centers are moving in their direction, leading to uneven management of the tahfiz itself (Sharini, 2017). One of the most recent problems in private tahfiz centers is difficulty finding and maintaining quality teaching staff, resulting in a lack of competent and experienced teaching staff (Muhammad Muhaimin Ariff, 2024). Not only that, teaching staff at private tahfiz centers often do not receive salaries commensurate with their qualifications and experience, and this can affect their motivation and teaching quality (Muhammad Amir Hafizzuddin, 2024). In addition, private tahfiz centers often lack a systematic and effective training and development program for teaching staff, resulting in a lack of improvement in the skills and competence of teaching staff at the tahfiz center (Syed Danial Faliq, 2024). As a result, private tahfiz centers face challenges related to human resource management.

Overlapping Duties

Human resource management in educational centers includes administrative management, teachers, and staff who determine the direction for achieving the educational center's objectives (Nadya Nanda Sukawatitamban et al., 2020). Ahmad Muaz and Norazmi (2020) have identified a weakness in human resource management within private tahfiz centers, specifically in administrative department management. For instance, the Tahfiz Center's principal or manager, who is responsible for managing the center, also engages in intense teaching and learning, leading to disruptions in the center's management (Siti Rashidah, 2018).

Consequently, if the principal becomes involved in a significant issue that disrupts the learning session at the private tahfiz center, teaching will cease. Therefore, administrators need to play a role in improving the excellence of a tahfiz educational institution through the unity of management to achieve the excellence of their tahfiz center (Mohd Jamalil Ismail et al., 2017).

Inconsistent Management Policy

Furthermore, the management policy's uncertainty and changeability lead to operational difficulties for private tahfiz centers, making it challenging for these centers to determine their future direction (Ahmad Muaz & Norazmi Anas, 2020). This will have a significant impact on students' prospects, as it can be challenging for them to determine their future path after graduating from a private tahfiz center (Azman Ab Rahman et al., 2020). Additionally, it may lead to dropouts and negatively impact their academic achievement (Muhammad Hafizan & Mohamad Marzuqi, 2023). Therefore, each institution's unique Tahfiz management and administration systems need coordination, as this will facilitate government monitoring of the Tahfiz Center's management (Azman Ab Rahman et al., 2020).

Teaching staff qualifications

Weaknesses in the management of teaching staff in private tahfiz centers also need to be looked at and examined, such as the issue of teaching staff qualifications. For example, according to Abd Rahman Abd Ghani and Azmil Hashim (2018), most teaching staff at tahfiz centers in the state of Selangor have a tahfiz certificate education level of 47%, followed by 25% who do not have an education certificate, while the rest consist of diploma holders, bachelors, and scholars. This study also reveals a weakness in managing tahfiz teaching staff without proper training in teaching and learning techniques in a private tahfiz center.

This is because most private tahfiz centers lack a unified set of guidelines or mechanisms for recruiting teaching staff. Furthermore, the recruited teaching staff did not participate in any teacher training that could aid them in the teaching and learning process. According to Siti Rashidah Abd Razak (2021), the teaching staff solely relies on their skills and experience, lacking exposure to any external resources that could enhance their teaching and learning abilities. Muhammad Hafizan and Mohamad Marzuqi (2023) also support this, asserting

that the diversity of teaching methods in private tahfiz centers stems from the unique experiences of the teaching staff at each center.

Low-payroll financing

Many private tahfiz centers in Malaysia rely on donations and low-fee payments as their main source of funding. This dependency directly affects these centers' ability to offer competitive salaries to their staff. Donations are often inconsistent and insufficient, while low fees are part of efforts to ensure this education is accessible to low-income groups. This situation makes it difficult for tahfiz centers to attract and retain quality teaching staff, which in turn affects the quality of education provided. This issue requires innovative solutions and stronger financial support to ensure the sustainability and quality of education in private tahfiz centers (Zakaria et al., 2018).

Lack of management and leadership skills

The lack of management and leadership skills among private tahfiz center administrators can lead to various problems in daily management and long-term planning. Without solid management skills, administrators may face difficulties in effectively managing human resources, finances, and day-to-day operations. Lack of leadership can also lead to a lack of strategic vision and long-term planning, which are essential for the development and sustainability of the institution. This issue can affect the quality of education offered as well as the community's trust in the institution. Therefore, there is an urgent need to improve management and leadership skills through continuous training and support (Ainul Hayat et al., 2021). Without adequate management and leadership skills, the quality of education offered by this center may suffer. Poorly trained administrators may not be able to provide quality educational programs or effectively meet the needs of students. This can affect the reputation of the Tahfiz Center and the community's trust in the institution.

Non-uniformity of Tahfiz Center Curriculum

The non-uniformity of the curriculum in private tahfiz centers presents the next challenge in human resource management. People have been discussing the non-uniformity of the curriculum in tahfiz centers in Malaysia for a long time. Privately operated tahfiz centers often use different curricula, depending on the founder's background, financial capabilities, and the objectives of each institution. This issue arises due to a shortage of teaching staff and insufficient pedagogical skills among teachers to effectively teach the standard curriculum of primary and secondary schools. This can affect the reputation of the Tahfiz Center and the community's trust in the institution. Most private tahfiz centers focus solely on the tahfiz curriculum (Siti Rashidah Abd Razak, 2020). Therefore, private tahfiz centers need to use the best human resources to attract the interest of parents or the community to send their children to a well-managed tahfiz center (Mohamad Fahmi et al., 2023).

Approaches and Improvement Strategies

Tahfiz centers in Malaysia play an important role in providing in-depth religious education, especially in the field of Quranic study. However, these centers often face various challenges in human resource management that can affect the effectiveness of operations and the quality of education provided. Several approaches and improvement strategies, including the following, can be considered to address the challenges of human resource management:

Effective Leadership

Effective leadership is the key to overcoming the challenges of administrative management and leadership in these centers. Transformational leadership, crisis management, collaboration, and participation are some approaches that can enhance the effectiveness of leadership in this context. Transformational leadership is essential in shaping and innovating practices in schools because it inspires staff to improve their work, encourages innovation, develops a shared vision, and builds trust and collaboration. Transformational leaders focus on effective second-level change through building vision and goals, providing incentives and support, and developing participatory structures (Sliwka, A., Klopsch, B., Beigel, J., & Tung, L., 2024).

Furthermore, a tahfiz center's leadership must adhere to a critical aspect of crisis management. Effective leaders need to have excellent crisis management skills to adapt to new realities and manage upcoming challenges at both the instructional and organizational levels (Chatzipanagiotou, P., & Katsarou, E., 2023). Additionally, effective leadership entails providing continuous professional training to staff and teaching staff, which is critical to improving teaching effectiveness and student academic performance (Pradhan & Saxena, 2023). Furthermore, encouraging collaboration among teaching staff and involving them in the decision-making process can also improve management effectiveness at Tahfiz Center, help to build a positive work environment, and increase staff commitment and motivation (Zhang, 2023).

Skill improvement and training

Improving skills and training is critical to ensuring that this center's staff can carry out their duties more effectively and efficiently. Continuous training helps staff adapt to the latest technology and teaching methodologies. Digital teaching aids, effective classroom management strategies, and a deep understanding of the curriculum are all part of this.

Furthermore, incorporating technology into training can accelerate skill improvement. This provides wider and more flexible access for teaching staff to learn at a time and place that suits them. In the ever-evolving field of education, Tahfiz Center staff must stay updated with changes and new knowledge. This includes adaptation to curriculum changes, innovative teaching techniques, and psychological approaches to educating students. By implementing a comprehensive skills development and training program, these centers can ensure their staff have the latest knowledge and skills needed to provide high-quality education to their students (Pradhan, I.P., & Saxena, P., 2023).

Creating a Consistent Management Policy

The problem of poor administrative management in private tahfiz centers often stems from uncertain and changing management policies. This makes it difficult for the Tahfiz Center to determine a clear direction. First, establishing consistent and clear management policies will ensure that all staff understand and follow uniform procedures, helping to maintain uniformity and clarity in day-to-day operations. Research shows that sound management policies are critical in improving management quality and ensuring operational effectiveness in educational institutions (Girmanová, L., Šolc, M., Blaško, P., & Petrik, J., 2022).

Second, increasing management capacity through training and professional development for principals and managers will empower their management and leadership skills, including modern management techniques, strategic leadership, and conflict management (Alonderiene, R., and Majauskaite, M., 2016). Third, the use of modern management tools, such as school management systems (SMS) or learning management systems (LMS), can improve operational efficiency and facilitate the systematic implementation of policies.

For example, a study by Pradhan and Saxena (2023) shows that technology such as LMS not only improves operational efficiency but also reduces stress and improves academic performance through automation and more systematic management. Furthermore, a study by Ghashim and Arshad (2023) shows that the use of Internet of Things (IoT) technology in education can provide a better learning experience, improve operational effectiveness, and provide future insight related to student performance.

Determination of Teaching Staff Recruitment Guidelines

Several approaches can address weaknesses in the management of teaching staff in private tahfiz centers, particularly in terms of qualification and training. We can take several steps to overcome the weaknesses in the management of teaching staff in private tahfiz centers. First, create guidelines for the recruitment of teaching staff by developing minimum qualification standards such as having an education certificate in the field of tahfiz or Islamic education as well as relevant teaching experience.

Second, provide ongoing professional training programs for teaching staff to improve their teaching and pedagogic skills, including courses in modern teaching techniques, classroom management, and the use of

technology in teaching. Third, forge collaborations with higher education institutions to provide specialized courses and certificates in tahfiz education, which can help teachers obtain recognized qualifications and improve the quality of teaching. A study by Jensen et al. (2018) and Blomeke et al. (2016) emphasized that improvements in teacher education programs and ongoing training are critical to improving teaching effectiveness and student academic performance.

Diversification of Income Sources

Diversification of income sources is important to ensure that the Tahfiz Center does not rely solely on one financial source. It not only helps with the financial challenges, but it also ensures the long-term sustainability of Tahfiz centers. Some strategies for diversifying income sources include efforts to find funds through donations, waqf, and zakat, as well as running small businesses. This approach can improve financial stability and reduce the risk of an ongoing lack of funds. In addition, these centers can improve their financial sustainability by managing waqf and zakat more effectively and engaging in social entrepreneurship activities to generate additional income. According to Rohayu Yusop et al. (2023), careful financial planning and budgeting assist in the preparation of detailed budgets, cash flow monitoring, and periodic audits.

Accounting software, such as QuickBooks or MYOB, aids in tracking income and expenses, preparing financial reports, and monitoring cash flow, thereby enhancing transparency and accountability (Ahmad Sanusi, S. W. S., Mohd Danuri, M. S. N., Aman, Z., Awaludin, N. S., & Awang, M. H., 2024). Training in the use of accounting technology and financial management in collaboration with higher education institutions is important to ensure that this center staff has the necessary skills (Rohayu Yusop et al., 2023). Efficient and planned financial management can help ensure more effective use of funds. This includes careful budgeting, periodic audits, and monitoring of cash flow to avoid waste. Implementing a robust internal control system, including segregation of duties in the payment process and accurate record keeping, helps reduce the risk of irregularities and ensure proper use of funds (Mahadeen, B., Al-Dmour, R. H., Obeidat, B. Y., & Tarhini, A., 2016). With these measures, tahfiz centers can ensure more effective and sustainable financial management and improve the quality of education provided. Efficient financial management is the main key to the sustainability of this institution in Malaysia (Norazmi et al., 2020).

Establishment of a Professional Management Board

By establishing a professional management board, the Tahfiz Center can address the problem of insufficient management and leadership skills among its administrators. The Tahfiz Center can form a management board consisting of experienced individuals in the fields of education, management, and finance who can help provide strategic guidance and oversight to the Tahfiz Center. This board has the authority to develop consistent management policies and procedures, regularly monitor and audit Tahfiz Center operations, and provide training and professional development programs for staff (Mahadeen et al., 2016). In addition, they can also plan and implement effective fundraising strategies to ensure a stable flow of funds for this center's operations.

Standardization of Integrated Curriculum

It is necessary to take some important steps to overcome the problem of curriculum inconsistency in private tahfiz centers. First, the application of the Standard Primary and Secondary School Curriculum in conjunction with the Tahfiz Curriculum is necessary to ensure that students receive a balanced religious and academic education, which allows them to have more opportunities to further their studies or enter the job market.

Second, by collaborating with the Ministry of Education and higher education institutions, we can develop an integrated curriculum that incorporates elements of tahfiz and general education, ensuring a holistic approach that aligns with national education standards. Thirdly, it is crucial to offer training and professional development to the teaching staff, enabling them to implement an integrated curriculum that incorporates modern teaching techniques and effective classroom management.

Fourth, establish cooperation with national schools and higher education institutions to share resources and expertise in curriculum development and implementation, including the exchange of teaching staff and joint training programs. A study by Poncini (2024) shows that the integration of the national curriculum can increase educational and career opportunities for these students, while other studies also emphasize the importance of professional training for teachers in improving the quality of teaching (Poncini, 2024; Kay & Smith, 2000).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the management of private tahfiz centers in Malaysia faces various challenges in human resource management. It is mandatory to focus on the measures to improve education quality, ensure operational effectiveness, and assist tahfiz centers in achieving their goal of producing high-quality Quran memorizers.

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