



**DARI TRADISI KE TREN: TINJAUAN KRITIS SOSIOLOGI
PENDIDIKAN TERHADAP FAKTOR-FAKTOR YANG
MENDORONG ORANG TUA DI LOMBOK MEMILIH SEKOLAH
TAHFIDZ**

***FROM TRADITION TO TREND: A CRITICAL REVIEW FROM THE PERSPECTIVE
OF EDUCATIONAL SOCIOLOGY ON THE FACTORS DRIVING PARENTS IN
LOMBOK TO CHOOSE TAHFIDZ SCHOOLS***

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Abstrak

Fenomena meningkatnya minat masyarakat perkotaan di Lombok, Nusa Tenggara Barat, terhadap pendidikan berbasis tahfiz Al-Qur'an menunjukkan pergeseran preferensi pendidikan yang signifikan. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis faktor-faktor yang mendorong pilihan tersebut dalam perspektif sosiologi pendidikan. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis library research, dan dianalisis melalui model interaktif Miles et al. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa preferensi orang tua terhadap sekolah tahfidz dipengaruhi oleh religiusitas, habitus budaya masyarakat Sasak-Lombok, kekhawatiran terhadap degradasi moral, serta pertimbangan rasional yang mengintegrasikan dimensi duniawi dan ukhrawi. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada pendekatan integratif dari para sosiolog termuka, yaitu Max Weber, Pierre Bourdieu, Émile Durkheim, James S. Coleman, George Herbert Mead, Joel M Charon, Paulo Freire, dan Anthony Giddens. Namun demikian yang harus dicatat bahwa dominasi pendidikan tahfiz juga berpotensi mereduksi makna pendidikan menjadi simbol kesalehan, memperkuat dikotomi ilmu, dan mendorong komodifikasi pendidikan agama. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan pengembangan model pendidikan tahfiz yang integratif dengan menyeimbangkan hafalan, pemahaman kritis, dan pengembangan intelektual, terutama dalam bidang sains dan teknologi.

Kata kunci: Pendidikan Tahfidz, Preferensi, Orang Tua, Lombok, Sosiologi Pendidikan.

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Abstract

The growing interest among urban residents in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, in Qur'an memorization-based education indicates a significant shift in educational preferences. This study aims to analyze the factors driving this choice from the perspective of the sociology of education. The study employs a qualitative approach using library research, analyzed through the interactive model proposed by Miles et al. The findings reveal that parents' preference for tahfiz schools is influenced by religiosity, the cultural habitus of the Sasak-Lombok community, concerns regarding moral degradation, as well as rational considerations that integrate both worldly and otherworldly dimensions. The novelty of this study lies in its integrative approach drawing on the work of leading sociologists, namely Max Weber, Pierre Bourdieu, Émile Durkheim, James S. Coleman, George Herbert Mead, Joel M. Charon, Paulo Freire, and Anthony Giddens. However, it should be noted that the dominance of tahfiz education also has the potential to reduce the meaning of education to a symbol of piety, reinforce the dichotomy of knowledge, and encourage the commodification of religious education. Therefore, it is necessary to develop an integrative model of tahfiz education that balances memorization, critical understanding, and intellectual development, particularly in the fields of science and technology.

Keywords: *Tahfiz Education, Preferences, Parents, Lombok, Sociology of Education.*

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in interest among the Muslim community in Indonesia in Qur'an-based education, particularly the tahfidz education model. This phenomenon is not only growing in major cities but is also gaining momentum in regions with a strong religious foundation, such as Lombok in West Nusa Tenggara. This development indicates a shift in the educational paradigm from a purely academic orientation toward the integration of cognitive, spiritual, and moral aspects. As noted by Azyumardi Azra (1999), Islamic education in Indonesia is undergoing a transformation toward a model that more fully integrates knowledge with religious values.

Parents' choices regarding their children's education are strategic decisions influenced by various factors, including religious, social, and cultural values. In the context of Muslim society, religiosity is a primary determinant in shaping educational preferences. Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark (1965) explain that religiosity encompasses dimensions of belief, practice, experience, knowledge, and consequences

that directly influence individual behavior, including educational decision-making. In more recent studies, parental religiosity has been shown to have a positive correlation with the tendency to choose religion-based education (Fauyan et al., 2024; Haryati et al., 2024; Rahman, 2025).

Lombok, a region known as the “island of a thousand mosques,” possesses a distinctive socio-religious character. The religious culture of the Sasak people makes Islam not only a belief system but also a social identity that is internalized in daily life (Fahrurrozi, 2015; Santoso, 2022; Suprpto, 2020). From an educational sociology perspective, this situation reinforces parents’ tendency to choose educational institutions aligned with Islamic values. According to M. Amin Abdullah, the integration of religion and social life is a defining characteristic of Indonesian Muslim society that influences various aspects of life, including education (Abdullah, 2020b).

In addition to religious factors, concerns about the moral degradation of children due to the currents of globalization and digitalization also serve as a strong reason for parents to choose tahfidz schools. Modernization that is not balanced by the strengthening of spiritual values is often seen as having the potential to weaken the character of the younger generation. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas (1978) asserts that the primary crisis in modern education is the loss of adab, which can only be addressed through education grounded in revelatory values. In this context, tahfidz education is viewed as an alternative solution capable of preserving morality while holistically shaping children’s character.

On the other hand, Quran memorization education has also undergone a transformation from a mere religious tradition into a social trend that holds symbolic value and even a certain prestige within society. Many parents view children who memorize the Quran as a form of both spiritual and social investment. This phenomenon aligns with rational choice theory, which states that individuals tend to choose options perceived to provide maximum benefits, both material and non-material (Coleman, 1990). In recent studies, Quranic memorization education is understood not only as a means of worship but also as a strategy for building religious identity and social mobility (Jahroni, 2024; Kamalia et al., 2025; Sriyanto, 2024).

Although this phenomenon is growing stronger, academic studies specifically examining the factors driving parents in Lombok to choose tahfidz education remain relatively limited. Some existing studies focus on aspects of the tahfidz curriculum or teaching methods, such as those conducted by Mahmud Hibatul Wafi et al. (2023). There are also studies focusing on the relationship between tahfiz and the character development of students, such as that conducted by Rita Anisaturrizqi et al. (Anisaturrizqi et al., 2025). Additionally, there are studies on parents' motivations for enrolling their children in tahfiz schools due to spiritual needs and character development, such as those conducted by Ridha Khairani et al. (2025) and Dini (2023).

Based on the literature review above, it can be concluded that research on tahfidz education that specifically highlights parents' preferences as the primary decision-makers in educational decision-making—particularly within a local context such as Lombok—has not been thoroughly explored from an educational sociology perspective, especially in the context of tahfidz schools in Lombok. Therefore, this study is important to fill this research gap.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a library research design, which focuses on critical analysis of scientific literature sources as the main data. The qualitative approach allows the exploration of the meaning and social construction behind the phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Meanwhile, library research provides an analytical framework to synthesize various findings and theoretical perspectives in a systematic and reflective manner (Zed, 2008). Thus, this research is not only descriptive, but also interpretive and critical in examining the dynamics of educational preferences in the context of the sociology of education from the perspective of leading sociologists, namely Max Weber, Pierre Bourdieu, Émile Durkheim, James S. Coleman, George Herbert Mead, Joel M. Charon, Paulo Freire, and Anthony Giddens. This approach aims to analyze the phenomenon of increasing parental preferences in Lombok for tahfidz education through searching, studying, and interpreting various relevant literature sources.

Library research allows researchers to build conceptual and theoretical analyses in depth without direct involvement in the field, by utilizing primary data in the form of books written by these prominent sociologists. The secondary data is taken from scientific journals, books, research reports, and official documents related to the research object. The data is analyzed using a combination of content analysis and thematic analysis to produce a comprehensive and layered understanding. Content analysis is used to systematically identify and categorize the units of meaning in the text, while thematic analysis allows for the exploration of deeper patterns of meaning through open, axial, and selective coding processes (Krippendorff, 2018).

In this context, social phenomena are analyzed through the perspective of the sociology of education to understand the relationship between religiosity, culture, and educational choices. The data analysis process was carried out through three stages of the Miles et al. model model, namely: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The use of interactive data analysis models from Miles et al. (2014), is based on the characteristics of research data that are qualitative, complex, and multidimensional. The data reduction stage allows researchers to filter and focus relevant information, while the data presentation serves to systematically organize findings so that conceptual patterns can be identified. Furthermore, the conclusion drawing stage allows for the integration of empirical findings and theoretical frameworks, thus resulting in an analysis that is not only descriptive, but also interpretive and explanatory in explaining parents' preferences towards tahfidz education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Dominance of Religiosity as the Basis for Educational Preferences

The first theory that can be proposed is that religiosity emerges as the most dominant determinant in shaping parents' preferences regarding tahfidz. This theory can be linked to Max Weber's (1978) view that human action is meaningful (social action), rational, and value-oriented (value-rational action), carried out within the constraints of a social structure that defines the horizon of choice.

Weber's view implies that every action an individual takes holds meaning for them personally – an action they deem rational and valuable (value-rational action). The meaning, rationality, and values held by the individual do not emerge from a vacuum but arise from the social context in which they live. The social context in which each individual lives must contain a “social structure” that operates subtly by determining what is considered “good,” exerting social pressure, and shaping collective expectations. Choices regarding what is “good” actually have many alternatives, but they are limited by the “horizon of choice” – that is, the boundaries of possibilities that an individual can imagine and select. This does not mean other options do not exist, but rather that they are not considered ideal or are socially unpopular.

In this case, parents choose a tahfidz school because they consider it valuable (value-rational action), such as wanting their children to be pious, memorize the Qur'an, earn divine reward, and so on. The view that “tahfiz is ideal” is not merely a personal belief, but rather the result of a construct shaped by the “social structure” of Lombok's religious environment, such as its religious culture (the “Island of a Thousand Mosques”), the role of the tuan guru, the dominance of pesantren, and societal norms regarding “good children.” Thus, parents' choice of a tahfiz school is not the only option. Many other schools outside of tahfiz schools are actually also good, such as junior high schools, senior high schools, Madrasah Tsanawiyah, and Madrasah Aliyah; however, within the context of the “horizon of choice,” these other schools are considered non-ideal or socially unpopular. Thus, parents' choice of a tahfiz school is viewed as rational, valuable, and highly ideal.

From a sociological perspective on education, Weber's view suggests that parents' actions in choosing tahfiz education on the island of Lombok can be categorized as value-oriented rational actions. However, within the framework of the sociology of education, such actions do not occur freely but are constrained by the “social structure” that shapes the horizon of choice. This means that educational preferences are the result of social construction influenced by religious norms, local culture, and the collective expectations of society, so that the choices individuals make

actually reflect broader social conditions.

In line with this, recent empirical findings indicate that the intensity of parents' religiosity is significantly correlated with their tendency to choose Islamic-based educational institutions (Kamalia et al., 2025; Khairani et al., 2025; Nur et al., 2025; Sriyanto, 2024). In fact, the presence of tahfidz programs is often positioned as an additional quality indicator that enhances the institution's legitimacy in the eyes of the public (Khairani et al., 2025).

2. Religious Habitus, Symbolic Capital, and Mechanisms of Social Reproduction

From Pierre Bourdieu's perspective (2011), educational preferences can be understood not as neutral individual choices, but rather as products of habitus (long-established ways of thinking) and a family's possession of cultural capital, such as religious background, being a hafiz or hafizah, educational attainment, and others. Theoretically, habitus shapes the framework of thought and value orientations that lead individuals to view certain types of education as "natural" or "ideal" choices, while cultural capital determines a family's capacity to access and realize those choices—specifically, which educational options are deemed high-quality and which are considered essential. Thus, educational decisions reflect the process of social reproduction occurring within family and societal structures.

From an educational sociology perspective, in Lombok's Muslim society, parents' choice of tahfiz institutions stems from the Sasak community's religious habitus, which shapes a collective tendency to reproduce Islamic values. Furthermore, Qur'an tahfiz institutions that produce hafiz function as a form of symbolic capital, providing social benefits in the form of recognition and legitimacy within the social structure.

From Pierre Bourdieu's perspective (2011), symbolic capital refers to a form of capital derived from social recognition in the form of honor, prestige, and legitimacy. In the context of tahfidz education, the status of hafiz or hafizah not only represents a religious achievement but also serves as a source of symbolic capital that enhances the social standing of the individual and their family within society. Thus, educational choices are not solely oriented toward pedagogical functions but also toward the

accumulation of symbolic value within the social structure.

This finding is supported by Kamalia et al. (2025) and Sriyanto (2024), who assert that tahfidz education contributes to the construction of contemporary Muslim social identity. On the other hand, active parental involvement has been shown to have a significant influence on students' motivation and memorization achievements (Rohmadhana et al., 2022).

3. Tahfidz Education as an Instrument of Social Regulation

Within the framework of functionalist theory, particularly the ideas of Émile Durkheim (1956), education serves as a mechanism for the internalization of values that maintains social cohesion. Through this process, education not only shapes cognitive capacities but also instills the social consciousness necessary to maintain social cohesion. Thus, education functions as the primary instrument in preserving social order and stability within society. In this context, tahfidz education serves as a response to growing public concerns regarding the moral crisis in the modern era.

From an educational sociology perspective, parents' choice of tahfidz educational institutions in Lombok stems from the fact that there, children are taught to memorize the Qur'an, practice disciplined worship, and exhibit good manners toward teachers and others. Through such mechanisms, children become religious individuals, society maintains homogeneous values, and most importantly, harmonious social relationships are fostered. Thus, tahfiz education is not only for the benefit of the individual but also for the benefit of society as a whole.

Various studies indicate that concerns regarding the negative impacts of technology, promiscuity, and the disruption of values drive parents to seek more protective educational alternatives (Santosa & Aida, 2022). The tahfidz educational environment is viewed as capable of providing a disciplined and religious training system (Susanto, 2021). Furthermore, the synergy between teachers and parents in the educational process at tahfidz schools has contributed to strengthening the effectiveness of social control (Rahanyamtel & Sunatar, 2024).



4. Rationality of Choice within Secular and Transcendental Frameworks

From James S. Coleman's (1990) perspective, educational decisions are understood as the result of an individual's rational calculation of expected benefits. Parents choose educational institutions based on considerations of the benefits gained, whether in the form of academic achievements, character development, or social and spiritual values. In the context of a religious society, this rationality extends to include a transcendental dimension, so that tahfiz education is viewed as a long-term investment that provides both worldly and otherworldly benefits.

From an educational sociology perspective, in religious communities such as Lombok, this rationality becomes broader. Here, parents' choice of a tahfiz institution is not merely for worldly interests but also to secure rewards, blessings, and salvation in the hereafter. This is what is referred to as religious or transcendental rationality. Therefore, tahfidz education is positioned as a long-term investment that encompasses moral, social, and spiritual dimensions simultaneously (Abeng et al., 2024; Basri et al., 2023).

5. The Symbolic Dimension in the Construction of Social Identity

Symbolic interactionism is a sociological approach that emphasizes that social reality is shaped through the process of interaction between individuals using symbols that carry specific meanings. These meanings are not fixed but are constructed and negotiated through the process of social communication. Among the key figures in this theory are George Herbert Mead (1934) and Joel M. Charon (1979), who emphasize that self-identity is formed through social interaction and the use of symbols, particularly language. Individuals understand themselves through the perspective of others (the generalized other), making social reality intersubjective.

From an educational sociology perspective, the choice of parents in the Sasak-Lombok community regarding tahfiz institutions can be interpreted as a symbolic act, where tahfiz education functions as a strong marker of social identity. The status of being a hafiz or hafizah confers high cultural legitimacy within Muslim society. In this context, education serves not only as a means of knowledge transmission but also as a medium for representing the family's social identity.

Research conducted by Azka Syifaul Maula and Naeli Sangadah (2025) confirms that tahfidz education contributes to building a highly valued religious image in the social sphere. This indicates that educational preferences are also influenced by the need for social and symbolic recognition.

6. Reconstructing Tradition within the Framework of Modernity

The development of tahfidz education in Lombok reflects a process of transformation from traditional practices toward a modern phenomenon. From Anthony Giddens' (2023) perspective—which he terms “reflexive modernity”—modernity does not simply eliminate tradition but rather reconfigures traditional practices into forms that are more reflective and adaptive to social change.

From an educational sociology perspective, parents' choice of tahfidz institutions stems from the fact that tahfidz education has undergone a transformation and shift from the traditional pesantren model toward educational institutions that integrate modern curricula, technology, and contemporary managerial strategies. Thus, tahfidz education represents a hybrid form between the continuity of tradition and the demands of modernity.

This is evident in the emergence of tahfidz institutions with professional management systems, integrated curricula, and more systematic pedagogical approaches. Consequently, tahfidz education is no longer positioned as a traditional alternative but rather as part of a competitive contemporary educational trend (Sunardi & Mujtaba, 2025).

7. Critical Discussion: Reflections and Future Projections

The growing preference among parents in Lombok for tahfidz-based education is often interpreted as a resurgence of positive Islamic values. However, from the perspective of critical sociology of education, this phenomenon requires a more in-depth analysis rather than merely being celebrated in a normative manner. Rather than viewing it solely as an expression of religiosity, this phenomenon must be understood as a complex social construction shaped by symbolic power, cultural reproduction, and the pressures of advanced modernity. The following are reflections on this reality as well as projections for the future.

First, the growing appeal of tahfidz education risks reducing the meaning of education to a form of symbolic religiosity. From the perspectives of Weber (1978) and Pierre Bourdieu (2011), memorizing the Qur'an functions not only as a religious-spiritual achievement but also as symbolic capital that enhances a family's social prestige. In this context, educational choices become part of a strategy for social differentiation, where having a hafiz or hafizah can elevate a family's moral standing in society. This can lead to serious problems, where, when symbolic recognition becomes dominant, the substantive goals of education—such as intellectual development, critical thinking, and the formation of a holistic personality—risk being marginalized.

Second, this phenomenon reveals a tension between religious authenticity and epistemic fragmentation. Although tahfidz education aims to strengthen Islamic identity, its expansion—if not accompanied by an integrative curriculum—can reinforce the dichotomy between religious and general knowledge. This situation contradicts the vision of integrative Islamic education, which emphasizes the unity of revelation and reason. Without adequate integration and interconnection between Islamic and general knowledge, as proposed by Amin Abdullah (2006, 2020b, 2020a), tahfidz institutions risk producing graduates who are morally strong but ill-prepared to face contemporary social and scientific complexities.

Third, from the perspective of rational choice theory, as explained by James S. Coleman (1990) and Weber (1978), parents' decisions appear rational; however, in practice, they often operate within the framework of bounded rationality. Choices are not based solely on cost-benefit calculations but are also influenced by social pressures, dominant religious narratives, and community expectations. In Lombok's religious and cohesive society, the normalization of tahfidz education can create a form of subtle coercion, where alternative choices become less legitimate. Subtle coercion refers to a form of social pressure that is implicit and indirect, in which individuals are driven to act in accordance with collective norms without explicit coercion. Durkheim (1956) called it "coercive power," Bourdieu (2011) called it "symbolic violence," and Foucault (Foucault, 1977) termed it "disciplinary power."

Fourth, the rapid growth of tahfidz institutions reflects the increasing commodification of religious education (the process of making religious education a "commodity" (goods/services) that are produced, marketed, and exchanged in market logic). Tahfidz practices, which were previously community-based, are now undergoing institutionalization and commercialization. The "tahfidz" label is often used as a branding strategy to attract the Muslim middle class. Critically, this indicates the penetration of market logic into the realm of religious education, where spiritual values risk being instrumentalized for the sake of institutional competition – and may even lead to economic interests.

Fifth, the pedagogical implications of the dominance of tahfidz education also require critical examination. A strong emphasis on memorization, if not balanced with reflective and dialogic learning, can limit the development of students' critical awareness. Unlike the concept of transformative education proposed by Paulo Freire (2020), the dominance of memorization methods risks producing passive students, rather than critical and reflective subjects engaged with social reality.

Furthermore, the psychological dimension of intensive memorization programs is often overlooked. The social glorification (the process by which something, such as an individual, practice, or choice, becomes praised, glorified, and highly valued by society, often exceeding its actual substance) status of hafidz (Qur'anic memorizers) can mask the potential emotional and cognitive distress that children experience of the status of a hafiz can mask the potential emotional and cognitive pressures experienced by children. Without a student-centered pedagogical approach, the tahfidz process risks transforming from a spiritual experience into a coercive burden.

Finally, this phenomenon must be situated within the framework of "reflexive modernity," as described by Anthony Giddens (2023). Tahfidz education does not simply represent a return to tradition, but rather a form of traditional reconstruction in response to modern anxieties, such as moral crises, digital disruption, and identity fragmentation. Thus, tahfidz education emerges as a hybrid formation: traditional in content, yet modern in its institutional form, social function, and symbolic meaning.

CONCLUSION

The growing preference among parents in Lombok for tahfidz education is the result of an interplay between religiosity, local culture, and modern social dynamics. This decision reflects a value-based rational action, as described by Max Weber, in which Qur'anic education is viewed as possessing high spiritual and moral value. From Pierre Bourdieu's perspective, this choice also represents the reproduction of the Sasak community's religious habitus, while simultaneously serving as a form of symbolic capital that enhances the family's social legitimacy. Furthermore, tahfidz education functions as a mechanism of social control in upholding the morality of the younger generation amidst the tide of modernity, as emphasized by Émile Durkheim. Thus, tahfidz education in Lombok is no longer merely a religious tradition but has transformed into a strategic social trend, integrating religious, cultural, and rational dimensions into the educational choices of contemporary Muslim communities as Anthony Giddens argues.

However, critically speaking, this phenomenon also has the potential to reduce the meaning of education to a symbol of piety, reinforce the dichotomy of knowledge, and open the door to the commodification of religious education. Therefore, tahfidz education needs to be directed in an integrative manner, combining memorization, understanding, and intellectual development, so that it does not merely become a social trend but truly functions as a transformative model of Islamic education relevant to the challenges of the times.

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