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# Creating New Market Space Through Tahfidz Entrepreneur Innovation: A Blue Ocean Strategy for Islamic Education

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**Abstract:**
Islamic educational institutions face increasingly complex competition as communities expect schools to provide not only religious knowledge but also practical competencies that support students' future independence. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Blue Ocean Strategy through the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program as an innovative approach to creating new market space through educational value differentiation. A qualitative case study design was employed to examine the implementation process, institutional differentiation, competitiveness, and community response. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, and analyzed using data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. The findings indicate that the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program creates value innovation by integrating Quranic memorization with entrepreneurial development. The integration strengthens the distinctive educational identity of the madrasah, contributes to institutional competitiveness, builds public trust, and increases community interest. The program also demonstrates that religious and entrepreneurial competencies can be developed within an integrated educational model. The study implies that Blue Ocean Strategy can provide an alternative strategic framework for Islamic educational institutions seeking to develop adaptive, distinctive, sustainable, and community-oriented flagship programs.

## INTRODUCTION

Islamic education has a broader social responsibility than transmitting academic knowledge because it shapes students' religious identity, character, and capacity to participate productively in society. As communities face rapid economic, technological, and social change, educational institutions are increasingly expected to prepare learners with competencies that connect moral values with practical life skills. This expectation is particularly relevant for Islamic Senior High Schools, where educational quality is judged not only by academic achievement but also by religious character and future-oriented competencies (Bigovic et al., 2024; Husain, 2025). When schools integrate these dimensions coherently, education can respond more effectively to family expectations and changing social needs. Therefore, strengthening innovative Islamic education is

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important because it can produce graduates who are spiritually grounded, socially responsible, and capable of adapting to contemporary economic challenges while maintaining strong religious values and meaningful social identities.

The importance of educational innovation also extends to the sustainability and relevance of Islamic educational institutions. Schools offering meaningful and distinctive educational value can remain responsive when educational preferences and social expectations change. Institutions that rely primarily on conventional indicators such as tuition costs, facilities, academic achievement, or student enrollment may face difficulties in communicating distinctive value. Blue Ocean Strategy emphasizes creating new value through innovation and differentiation rather than competing directly within saturated market spaces (Mamo et al., 2026; Ziolo, 2024). For Islamic schools, this perspective is socially relevant because innovation can connect religious education with competencies needed for future independence. Strategic innovation is therefore not merely an institutional concern; it can contribute to a more responsive educational system by aligning spiritual development, practical competence, and community expectations with the changing needs of contemporary society.

A major problem underlying this study is the difficulty faced by Islamic Senior High Schools in differentiating their educational offerings while maintaining their religious mission. Many institutions operate within a crowded educational market where programs, facilities, costs, and conventional academic achievements become common points of comparison. Such competition can make it difficult for schools to establish a distinctive and sustainable value proposition. At the same time, families increasingly expect education to develop independence, creativity, entrepreneurial competence, and practical life skills alongside religious knowledge (Hassan & Laval, 2024; Kustitskaya et al., 2023). The challenge becomes more complex when religious programs and entrepreneurial preparation are implemented separately. Without an integrated strategy, schools may provide valuable educational activities but fail to transform them into a distinctive institutional identity. This condition creates a need for an educational strategy that combines religious excellence with practical competencies in a coherent, recognizable, and sustainable educational model.

This situation is reflected in the emergence of educational programs that combine Islamic identity with innovative learning experiences. Previous studies indicate that flagship programs such as boarding schools, Quran memorization, and digital learning can increase the attractiveness of Islamic educational institutions (Suyatman et al., 2025; Najihah & Tharaba, 2025). Entrepreneurship education has also received attention because it can encourage student independence and prepare learners to respond to economic challenges. At Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program represents an effort to integrate Quran memorization with entrepreneurial development. This phenomenon is important because tahfidz-based education combined with entrepreneurship remains relatively limited at the Islamic Senior High School level (Mamo et al., 2026; Kusumawati et al., 2026). The program consequently provides a relevant context for examining whether the integration of religious and entrepreneurial competencies can become more than an educational activity and function as a distinctive institutional response to changing community expectations.

Previous research has demonstrated that Blue Ocean Strategy can support value innovation, differentiation, and the creation of new market spaces in business, higher education, and school management (Sholikhin, 2023; Bigovic et al., 2024). Kim and Mauborgne emphasize the importance of creating uncontested market spaces through value innovation. Research in Islamic education has likewise examined innovative flagship programs as mechanisms for increasing institutional attractiveness, while other studies have highlighted entrepreneurship education as a means of developing student independence. However, these research streams have generally developed separately. Tahfidz-oriented studies tend to emphasize religious achievement, whereas entrepreneurship studies focus primarily on economic competencies and independence (Narmaditya et al., 2024; Syadidunniam et al., 2026). Consequently, limited research has examined the integration of these two dimensions as an institutional strategy for creating new educational market space. This limitation represents an important research gap because the strategic implications of combining religious and entrepreneurial education remain insufficiently understood.

The state of the art of this study is the conceptualization of the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program as an integrated institutional strategy for value innovation in Islamic secondary education. Rather than treating Quran memorization and entrepreneurship as independent programs, this study positions their integration as a distinctive educational value proposition. The proposed approach connects religious identity, entrepreneurial competence, institutional differentiation, and community needs within a single strategic framework. Its novelty lies in examining how an Islamic Senior High School can transform an integrated educational program into a distinctive market-space strategy rather than merely adding another extracurricular or flagship activity. This perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of how religious and economic competencies can be simultaneously developed through institutional innovation. Such an approach is important because it offers a strategic model for Islamic educational institutions seeking to differentiate themselves while remaining aligned with their religious mission and contemporary educational demands.

The research problem concerns how Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid implements the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program as a strategy for creating distinctive educational value and strengthening institutional competitiveness. The study focuses on three interconnected questions: how the program is implemented, how its integration of Quran memorization and entrepreneurship contributes to institutional competitiveness, and how the community responds to the resulting educational value. The central argument is that the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program can function as a value innovation when religious formation and entrepreneurial development are deliberately integrated into the institution's strategic identity. Through this integration, the program is expected to provide a distinctive educational proposition that moves beyond conventional competition based primarily on cost, facilities, or student numbers. The study therefore examines the program as an institutional strategy for creating new educational market space while addressing religious, social, and economic dimensions of community expectations.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a case study design to examine the implementation of the Blue Ocean Strategy through the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program at Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid. A qualitative case study was selected because the research seeks to obtain an in-depth and contextual understanding of institutional strategies, implementation processes, and meanings developed by educational actors (Fantinelli et al., 2024; Mebratu et al., 2024). The design enables the phenomenon to be examined within its natural institutional setting, particularly regarding the integration of Quran memorization and entrepreneurship as an educational differentiation strategy. The qualitative approach is appropriate because the study emphasizes processes, experiences, interactions, and interpretations rather than numerical measurement. Through this design, the research explores how the program is developed and implemented as an institutional innovation and how its implementation reflects efforts to create distinctive educational value and new market space within Islamic secondary education.

The research was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, which implements the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program as one of its distinctive educational programs. The location was selected purposively because it provides a relevant empirical setting for examining the integration of Quran memorization and entrepreneurship within an Islamic Senior High School. The madrasah was considered appropriate because the program represents an institutional effort to develop religious competencies alongside entrepreneurial skills and to differentiate its educational offerings. The selection also considered the availability of relevant information and documentation concerning the program, accessibility to research informants, and the suitability of the institutional context with the research objectives. Therefore, Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid provides a contextual setting for understanding how an integrated educational program can be implemented and positioned as an institutional strategy for responding to competition and changing community expectations.

Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to examine the implementation of the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program, learning activities, student participation, and relevant aspects of institutional culture. In-depth interviews were conducted using semi-structured guidelines with informants who had direct knowledge or involvement in the program, including the madrasah principal, vice principal for curriculum, tahfidz teachers, entrepreneurship teachers, students, and parents. The semi-structured format allowed the researcher to maintain alignment with the research objectives while providing flexibility to explore emerging information. Documentation was used to obtain supporting evidence, including madrasah profiles, curricula, program plans, activity reports, photographs, and other relevant institutional records (Fife & Gossner, 2024; Lim, 2025). Secondary literature and academic sources were also reviewed to support interpretation and contextualize empirical findings within Blue Ocean Strategy and Islamic education innovation.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data condensation involved selecting, simplifying, coding,

and organizing information obtained from observations, interviews, documentation, and literature sources according to the research focus. The condensed data were then displayed through descriptive narratives, thematic categories, and matrices to identify relationships and recurring patterns concerning program implementation, institutional differentiation, and competitiveness. The final stage involved drawing and verifying conclusions by comparing emerging patterns across data sources and checking their consistency with the empirical evidence. Verification was conducted continuously throughout the analysis process to ensure that interpretations remained grounded in the collected data. This procedure enabled the study to generate systematic and contextual conclusions regarding the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program as an institutional strategy.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

#### Increasing Madrasah Competitiveness through Value Innovation and New Market Space

The findings indicate that the Tahfidz Entrepreneur Program is associated with changes in the competitive position of Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid. Competitiveness is reflected in increased interest from prospective students, parental trust, institutional image, and public perceptions of the relevance of the madrasah's educational program. The distinctive value presented by the institution consists of the simultaneous provision of religious education and entrepreneurial development. The program provides an educational offering for families seeking Islamic education while also expecting their children to develop practical competencies for future economic independence. The findings show that the institution's competitive position is expressed through the value attached to this integrated educational offering rather than through conventional indicators such as facilities or tuition costs alone.

Interview data indicate that the number of new students has increased significantly each year since the implementation of the Tahfidz Entrepreneur Program. Parents reported being attracted to the combination of strong religious education and opportunities for developing entrepreneurial skills. One parent explained that the choice of Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid was influenced by the expectation that the child would receive religious education while also developing an entrepreneurial spirit and life skills. These findings indicate that the program has become an identifiable consideration in parental educational choices. The program's value is represented through the combination of religious and entrepreneurial outcomes, allowing the institution to present an educational profile that responds simultaneously to spiritual and practical expectations.

Observations show that the institutional image has increasingly been associated with the Tahfidz Entrepreneur Program. Promotional activities emphasize students' Quran memorization achievements together with entrepreneurial activities, including product bazaars, student cooperatives, and digital marketing. Students' participation in productive economic activities provides visible evidence of the program's practical dimension. The madrasah has also developed collaboration with surrounding communities, alumni, and small-

business partners. These relationships extend program activities beyond the internal school environment and provide additional spaces for entrepreneurial practice. The findings indicate that the program affects both internal institutional activities and external relationships. Internally, it organizes students' productive learning experiences; externally, it contributes to interaction with community members, alumni, and business partners.

**Table 1. Documentary Findings on Value Innovation and New Market Space**

| Madrasah Document | Key Findings | Forms of Value Innovation |
|---|---|---|
| PPDB Brochure | The Tahfidz Entrepreneur Program is the main flagship program | Differentiation of educational services |
| Institution Profile | The vision of the madrasah emphasizes the balance of faith, knowledge, and economics | Institutional rebranding |
| Annual Report | The number of applicants increases every year | Attraction of new market space |
| Work Program | Collaboration with MSMEs and entrepreneurial alumni | Strengthening economic networks |
| Activity Documentation | Student business training and student product bazaars | Implementation of practice-based entrepreneurship |

Table 1 shows that the documentary evidence consistently identifies the Tahfidz Entrepreneur Program as an important component of the madrasah's institutional development. The PPDB brochure presents the program as the main flagship program, while the institution profile reflects an educational orientation that combines faith, knowledge, and economic development. The annual report documents an increase in applicants, indicating growing institutional demand. The work program records collaboration with MSMEs and entrepreneurial alumni, while activity documentation demonstrates the practical implementation of entrepreneurship through student business training and product bazaars. The findings therefore show that the program is represented across promotional materials, institutional planning, reporting, external collaboration, and student activities. These documents provide consistent evidence of the program's presence within both the institutional identity and operational activities of the madrasah.

The combined interview and observation findings show that the increased competitiveness of Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid is reflected in the institution's ability to present educational value that combines religious, productive, and future-oriented dimensions. The Tahfidz Entrepreneur Program functions as a central component of this educational identity. The findings indicate that competitiveness is not represented solely through physical facilities or tuition fees, but also through the availability of an integrated program that corresponds with community expectations. The data further show that stronger integration between religious values and entrepreneurship is accompanied by stronger public trust in the madrasah. The program is consistently identified as a distinctive feature that contributes to the institution's position among Islamic educational institutions.

**Public Response to the Tahfidz Entrepreneur Program in Building Institutional Trust and Image**

The findings show that community response to the Tahfidz Entrepreneur Program is reflected in active participation, satisfaction with the program, perceptions of spiritual and economic benefits, trust in management competence, and recommendations or promotion of the program to others. Community involvement is demonstrated through participation in student entrepreneurial activities and interaction with the madrasah. The findings also show that community perceptions extend beyond religious development to include the economic and practical benefits provided through the program. Trust is reflected in recognition of the madrasah's ability to manage an integrated religious and entrepreneurial program. These responses indicate that the program has become an identifiable component of the institution's educational offering and contributes to how the community perceives the madrasah's educational relevance and institutional capabilities.

Interview findings from parents indicate that the Tahfidz Entrepreneur Program is an important consideration in selecting Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid. One parent stated that the program was the primary reason for choosing the institution because it provides both religious literacy and entrepreneurial skills in concrete forms. Community leaders similarly reported that the program contributed to greater recognition of the madrasah because students participate in religious, social, and economic activities. These findings indicate that community trust is associated with direct perceptions of the program's implementation and benefits. The institutional image is therefore formed not only through formal promotional activities but also through experiences and observations of students' participation in religious and entrepreneurial activities.

Observations further show that community involvement in the Tahfidz Entrepreneur Program is active and continuous. Parents participate in student product bazaars, provide support for student entrepreneurial activities, and engage in small-business mentoring. Members of the surrounding community provide opportunities for students to practice product marketing and participate in simple business collaborations. Alumni and community leaders also participate in the madrasah's educational activities. These findings demonstrate that community involvement occurs through both direct participation in program activities and broader social interaction. The program consequently creates recurring opportunities for interaction between students, parents, community members, alumni, and the institution.




**Figure 1. Community Response to the Tahfidz Entrepreneur Program in Building Trust and Institutional Image**

Figure 1 shows three interconnected components emerging from the findings. The first is Community Response, consisting of support and active participation, satisfaction with program implementation, perceptions of spiritual and economic benefits, trust in management competence, and program recommendation and promotion. The second is Supporting Factors, comprising program transparency and accountability, quality of learning and mentoring, effective communication and socialization, and the integration of Islamic and entrepreneurial values. The third is Impact on Trust and Institutional Image, which includes development of public trust, strengthening of a positive institutional image, increased credibility and reputation, program sustainability and resource support, and institutional competitiveness and differentiation. The figure therefore summarizes the observed relationship among community responses, conditions supporting program implementation, and the institutional outcomes identified in the findings.

The combined interview and observation findings demonstrate that the Tahfidz Entrepreneur Program is accompanied by public trust and recognition of the institutional image of Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid. The program is perceived as addressing contemporary educational expectations while maintaining an Islamic identity. The findings indicate that trust is associated with visible program implementation, community involvement, and consistency in maintaining the program. Community support is expressed through participation in activities, perceptions of program benefits, and continued interaction with the madrasah. The institutional image is consequently reflected through the combination of program implementation, community participation, and recognition of the educational characteristics presented by the madrasah.

## Discussion

The findings demonstrate that the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program creates a distinctive educational offering by integrating Quran memorization with entrepreneurial development. This finding is consistent with Nasor et al. (2026), who emphasize the potential of integrated educational programs to generate added value beyond conventional academic achievement. It also corresponds with Kim and Mauborgne's concept of Blue Ocean Strategy, in which value innovation involves creating new value rather than competing solely within established market dimensions. In the context of Madrasah Aliyah, the integration of religious and entrepreneurial competencies represents a shift from conventional educational differentiation toward a more comprehensive value proposition. The finding also supports Tihami (2025), who highlights the importance of distinctive institutional advantages in increasing educational attractiveness. Theoretically, this finding extends the application of Blue Ocean Strategy to Islamic secondary education by demonstrating how educational program integration can constitute value innovation.

The findings further indicate that integrating tahfidz and entrepreneurship contributes to increasing public interest in the madrasah. Parents consider religious development alongside economic prospects, practical competencies, and students' future independence. However, the finding differs from approaches that position tahfidz primarily as a spiritual or religious achievement without integrating broader life competencies (Umam et al., 2025; Ziolo, 2024). The present findings suggest that the combination of these dimensions provides a broader educational proposition. Theoretically, this strengthens the understanding that institutional differentiation can emerge from combining complementary educational values. Practically, madrasahs can respond to changing parental expectations by designing programs that simultaneously accommodate religious formation, practical skills, and future-oriented competencies.

The findings also show that the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program contributes to institutional competitiveness through institutional image, public recognition, and increasing numbers of new students. At the same time, the findings identify an important condition that is less visible in the positive outcomes: successful implementation requires adequate human resources capable of supporting both tahfidz and entrepreneurship components (Chawla et al., 2026; Mamo et al., 2026). Theoretically, this finding indicates that value innovation should not be understood only through the uniqueness of an educational offering but also through the organizational capacity required to implement it. Practically, madrasah leaders need to provide teacher development, appropriate infrastructure, operational planning, and coordination mechanisms to ensure that program innovation remains manageable and sustainable.

Another important finding concerns the relationship between changes in community needs and educational innovation. The Tahfidz Entrepreneur program reflects a response to expectations that Islamic education should prepare students not only for religious life but also for economic and professional challenges. This finding is consistent with Razak (2023), which associates educational change with broader socioeconomic and employment conditions. The present study indicates that changes in external expectations are reflected in the restructuring of

educational programs within the madrasah. However, the findings suggest that this response is not limited to curriculum adjustment; it also involves redefining the institution's educational identity through the integration of religious and entrepreneurial development. Theoretically, this contributes to understanding educational innovation as a process influenced by changing social and economic environments (Hermawan et al., 2025; Musthofa et al., 2026). Practically, the finding suggests that madrasahs need to monitor community expectations and labor-market developments when developing or modifying flagship educational programs.

The findings further support the view that the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program represents more than an educational marketing initiative because it influences how the madrasah defines and communicates its institutional identity. The program connects religious identity, student development, entrepreneurial competence, and institutional differentiation within one educational framework. However, institutional transformation requires continuous management rather than the introduction of a single innovative program. Program quality, human-resource capacity, community involvement, and operational support remain important conditions for maintaining effective implementation. The theoretical contribution of this study lies in connecting Blue Ocean Strategy with institutional transformation in Islamic secondary education. Practically, the findings demonstrate that strategic differentiation can be developed through integrated educational programs that respond to both the religious mission of madrasahs and contemporary community expectations while supporting sustainable institutional development (Mustaghfiroh et al., 2025; Syadidunniam et al., 2026).

Overall, this study contributes to Islamic education management by demonstrating how an integrated Tahfidz Entrepreneur program can function as a mechanism for educational differentiation, institutional competitiveness, and community engagement. Rather than treating tahfidz and entrepreneurship as separate educational components, the study highlights the value of integrating them within a unified institutional program. This integration provides a foundation for developing distinctive educational positioning while maintaining the madrasah's religious identity. Theoretically, the study extends the discussion of Blue Ocean Strategy by applying value innovation to the context of Islamic secondary education (Mukarromah et al., 2025; Nurjan et al., 2025). Practically, the findings emphasize the importance of sustainable managerial support, collaboration with entrepreneurial actors, continuous program evaluation, and alignment with student and community needs. The contribution lies in connecting strategic innovation with substantive educational value and institutional development to support the long-term relevance and sustainability of madrasah education.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Tahfidz Entrepreneur program represents a distinctive form of educational innovation by integrating Quranic memorization with entrepreneurial development, enabling Islamic senior high schools to create new educational value while strengthening institutional competitiveness, public trust, and community engagement. The most important lesson is that Islamic educational institutions can respond to changing societal expectations and educational competition more effectively by integrating spiritual development with practical competencies rather than relying solely on conventional academic

achievements or institutional facilities. The scholarly contribution of this study lies in extending the application of Blue Ocean Strategy to Islamic education management by conceptualizing the integration of tahfidz and entrepreneurship as a strategic mechanism for value innovation, educational differentiation, and institutional development. Nevertheless, this study is limited by its qualitative case study design involving only one madrasah, which restricts the transferability of the findings to other educational contexts and does not provide a quantitative assessment of the program's effectiveness. Future research should involve multiple Islamic educational institutions, incorporate quantitative or mixed-method approaches, and examine the long-term outcomes of the program for students, alumni, and institutional sustainability. The implications of these findings highlight the importance of strengthening strategic program management, developing competent human resources, expanding partnerships with entrepreneurial actors, and conducting continuous program evaluation to ensure that educational innovation remains relevant, sustainable, and responsive to community needs.

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## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest associated with the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

## USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGY

ChatGPT was used as an AI-assisted tool to support the revision and language improvement of the manuscript, including refinement of academic wording, organization, and clarity of presentation. The authors remain fully responsible for the research design, data, analysis, interpretation of findings, conclusions, and final content of the manuscript.

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