

Realization of Values: Stages of Meaningful Living For Hafiz Quran Students

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ABSTRACT

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Keywords:

Realization of Values Meaning of Life Memorizing the Alquran Orphaned Students This study aimed to analyze the journey of finding meaning in life, focusing on the transformation from students' meaningless inner feelings into meaningful feelings. This research is a field study with qualitative and phenomenological approaches. It involved six respondents with an average age of 17-18 years old. It examines the meaningfulness of life for students (santri) from the perspectives of the presence of meaning and the search for meaning. The results showed that childhood is a golden period for happiness, especially with parental support. However, orphans often lose motivation and a sense of meaning in life, feeling more pressured in boarding schools with the monotonous routine of memorizing the Qur'an. Students often pursue this education due to family pressure. In conclusion, the journey to find meaning in life for hafiz Qur'an students involves stages of suffering, selfacceptance, discovering the meaning of life, realizing that meaning, and leading a meaningful life.

INTRODUCTION

The depiction of parental death can lead to the loss of family function, causing detachment from affection or enduring life's hardships without support (Nur Latifah & Rahmasari, 2023). Individuals may lack a clear purpose in life and are unsure of the steps to take, as well as experiencing negative emotions such as emptiness, as well as feeling purposeless and worthless.

From a psychological perspective, orphaned children have two views of life's challenges. Some view life positively because of the support received from the environment to increase optimism (Tanesib & Huwae, 2023). Others perceive various issues negatively due to the feeling of being insignificant, with a high level of pessimism from a lack of environmental support. Therefore, economic, religious, and intellectual empowerment should be pursued simultaneously. In this context, empowerment can take the form of spiritual aspects, particularly related to prayer and Quran reading abilities (Asrowi, 2020).

The sense of meaning in life is attained by hafiz Quran students when they have smooth recitation. A sense of fulfillment is experienced because of the opportunity to share knowledge with others, deriving meaning from teaching the Quran and mentoring students. For the hafiz Quran students, few things bring greater satisfaction than attaining fluency and maintaining consistency in their recitation efforts (Khaoro, 2020). Concerning the matter, Pondok Pesantren Tahfidzhul Qur'an

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(PPTQ) Daarul Fath Islamic boarding school promotes religious education by providing scholarships. This institution offers educational and Quran learning study until becoming a hafiz Quran, comprising primary, junior high school, senior high school, and Ma'had Aly with scholarship programs.

In this study, various previous researches were discovered, which also reported meaning of life among orphaned students. These include the process of searching for meaning in the lives of teenagers living in Surakarta (Isnaningtyas, 2013), self-regulation and meaning of life among students at the orphanage-based Tahfidz Quran in Palembang (Paulina et al., 2021) and the relationship between meaning of life and resilience among teenagers in the Bani Adam orphanage in Medan (Effendi & Haryati, 2022).

Among the numerous previous results and limitations, no study addresses the process of finding meaning in the lives of individuals with an orphaned background who decide to become the hafiz Quran and students at Islamic boarding schools, particularly at PPTQ Daarul Fath. Previous study regarding meaning of life among orphaned children has primarily focused on environments such as orphanages and Tahfidz Quran institutions. There are students with orphaned or fatherless backgrounds who are dedicated to memorizing the Qur'an. The discovery of meaning in the lives of the hafiz Quran students does not happen suddenly but goes through several stages. Bastaman (2007) reported several stages to achieve meaningful life. The first stage is suffering and experiencing life without meaning, where individuals are in a state of meaninglessness due to experiencing tragic events or unpleasant conditions. This leads to feeling a lack of purpose, emptiness, and a sense of aimlessness (Qori'ah & Ningsih, 2020).

The second stage is self-acceptance, where individuals who previously experienced suffering are evaluated to understand themselves, accept circumstances, and change attitudes towards betterment (Tanesib & Huwae, 2023). The third stage is discovering meaning of life, which consists of two components, namely the discovery of meaning and the determination of life goals in the form of creativity, appreciation, and attitude values (Nafisah, 2018). The fourth stage is the realization of meaning, where individuals can feel the zest for life by understanding and knowing what matters. The fifth stage is the embodiment of meaningful life, which occurs when an individual has passed through the preceding stages. Therefore, an orphaned hafiz Quran student will feel a positive change in life conditions and can achieve meaningfulness (Rezaputra et al., 2022).

Based on the pre- study conducted, WN as an orphaned student, and ZM as the hafiz Quran orphaned student expressed different feelings. WN expressed that the background of his late mother's family was hafiz Quran-oriented, hence WN felt compelled to memorize the Qur'an. Advice was received from the grandmother about the hafiz Qur'an, with the promise that WN's late mother would be pleased (WI, WN, November 9, 2023).

ZM stated that becoming hafiz Qur'an students was a request from the mother. However, the true desire was to study at a different school, but ZM had no interest in memorizing the Qur'an. There was no clear understanding of the desires or objectives because of the inability to express wishes to the mother (WI, ZM, November 9, 2023). The initial interviews with the two students showed that WN found meaning in life through the Qur'an recitation/memorization, unlike ZM. These two phenomena provide an interesting comparison of how individuals find meaning in life based on different foundations.

METHODS

This study falls under a field analysis with a Qualitative approach using a phenomenological design. The portrayal of life's meaning is analyzed among the hafiz Qur'an orphaned students from an individual's experience of a phenomenon through study. The processes, experiences, and meanings of life from several subjects were uncovered through the qualitative phenomenological approach. The depiction of life's meaning is stated based on field data collection through interviews conducted following a predefined guide.

The study location is PPTQ Daarul Fath. The choice of the institution is because PPTQ Daarul Fath nurtures students in memorizing the Qur'an through scholarship programs. Primary data are taken from observation and interviews, while secondary data refers to information derived from documents such as books, study reports, journals, and others.

As for the data collection system, the online databases such as Sinta and Elsevier was used. The keywords employed were 'the meaning of life among hafiz Qur'an students in psychological studies.' Data extraction was conducted thematically, following a deductive pattern from specific to general. This means that although the presentation of research findings followed a deductive format (from general to specific), the organization and mapping of data were approached deductively, ensuring a measured and organized scope for the study, preventing it from expanding arbitrarily. Furthermore, a research framework (outline) was developed where the obtained data would be presented according to the predetermined outline established from the outset.

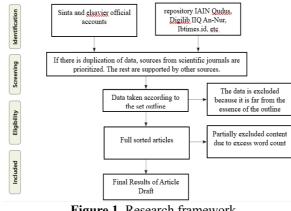


Figure 1. Research framework

The analysis technique is the systematic process of collecting data to facilitate conclusions. Qualitative data analysis follows three pathways developed by Smith (2009) namely data reduction, display, and conclusion. These three processes are considered highly essential in qualitative data analysis.

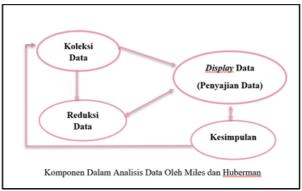


Figure 2. Qualitative data analysis

The data were analyzed using the phenomenological analysis method as applied by La Kahija (2018). In this study, the interviews with orphaned Hafidz Qur'an students were carried out by using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) procedure. Initially, many orphaned students did not enjoy the early stages at the pesantren (Islamic boarding school), particularly due to the strict routines and pressure of memorizing the Qur'an. Through the IPA procedure, the researcher provided personal reflections before conducting the main analysis on the interview data. This step aims to enhance the credibility of the qualitative data by ensuring that the researcher's subjectivity does not influence the interview results.

By applying the concept of Epoche, it is expected that the transparency and objectivity of the informants' data can be maintained. This process is crucial as phenomenological research relies on a deep understanding of the students' subjective experiences. Thus, the profound meanings of their experiences at the pesantren can be uncover, from the initial challenges to the stages of acceptance and the discovery of life's meaning through Qur'an memorization.

RESULTS

The data were analyzed using the phenomenological analysis method, as outlined by Bastaman (2007), by employing the technique of bracketing or epoche. In this context, bracketing refers to the researcher's efforts to suspend or counteract their personal biases and assumptions that may influence the interpretation of the data. In this particular case, the informants being studied are orphaned Hafidz Qur'an students: individuals who have memorized the Qur'an. Bastaman (2007) emphasizes the importance of this effort in maintaining the objectivity and authenticity of the analysis results. Through bracketing, researchers ensure that their theoretical frameworks or personal experiences do not taint the deep understanding of the participants' subjective experiences.

The process of bracketing or epoche allows researchers to delve deeper into the meaning of the data without being influenced by their personal views or beliefs. This contributes to a more objective investigation and enables a more accurate interpretation of the participants' experiences. Thus, phenomenological analysis conducted with consideration that bracketing or epoche can provide a richer and more connected depiction of the subjective experiences of orphaned Hafidz Qur'an students. The breakdown is as follows: (1) stages of suffering, self-acceptance, meaning discovery, meaning realization, and meaningful living, and (2) presence and search for meaning (Bastaman, 2007).

Stage of suffering

In this phase, an individual is found in situations that are not consistent with the expectations. Bastaman (2007) suggested that events in this stage included the experience of tragic or unpleasant events, such as making mistakes and sins, illness, and receiving injustice from others (Fauziah et al., 2023). At this stage, each student experiences different unpleasant events from one another.

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NK informant	Informant NK feels deprived of the opportunity to make choices, experiencing a sense of compulsion
	to reside in the boarding school and memorize the Qur'an. Adapting to the boarding environment is
	not easy for NK, and at times, thoughts of self-harm have crossed the mind as a form of resistance
	against the mother.
WN informant	Informant WN lost the mother at a young age, and the father relinquished parental responsibilities.
	WN lost the grandfather in 2021, leaving them without direction and feeling a constant urge to cry.
	Economic factors weigh heavily on WN, who has nobody.
HK informant	HK harbors a sense of pessimism. Nearly failing to advance a grade caused the informant to fall and
	fear facing the future. The father passed away when HK completed memorizing the entire Quran,
	leaving the informant wanting to stop progressing and feeling empty because HK lost a father while
	striving to complete memorizing the entire 30 juz of the Qur'an. The recitation progress is not smooth
	due to personal issues.
SM informant	SM has felt unsupported by the parents since the beginning of memorizing the Qur'an. The informant
	feels envious when the parents of their friends render clear support. The sad news of the father's
	passing makes SM feel devastated, even angry at God for taking the most precious person,
	specifically while striving to memorize the Qur'an.

Tabel 1. Stage of Suffering and Meaningless Endurance

The events faced by the informants show that NK, WN, HK, and SM are included in experiences of living without meaningfulness (meaningless).

Stage of Self-Acceptance

In stage of self-acceptance, an individual evaluates themselves to understand and accept circumstances. Changing attitudes after self-evaluation or introspection includes modifying behavior from being incongruent to congruent when facing problems, life conditions, and unavoidable calamities (Bastaman, 2007).

NK informant	NK tries to become aware by reflecting on the opportunities still provided by God. The presence
	of friends makes the informant feel supported, reducing the loneliness. NK also accepts and
	regains enthusiasm to eliminate negative thoughts.
WN informant	WN consistently maintains memorization of the Qur'an to avoid being consumed by sadness. The
	biggest challenge at the boarding school is time management, and the informant tackles this by creating a schedule with the hope of impacting personal development, specifically in positive
	aspects.
HK informant	HK has the determination not to give up and keep praying. The informant tries to understand the prolonged sadness and distinguish between temporary and eternal aspects of life. The eternal aspect refers to the effort in memorizing the Qur'an, which is beneficial for the future.
SM informant	SM views death as an evaluation, acknowledging the inevitability, which does not discriminate against any particular individual. The informant deeply regrets having been angry at God for taking the father.

Tabel 2. Stage of Self-Acceptance

The statements from the four informants can be summarized through stage of self-acceptance. The informants engage in introspection and then decide to rise above painful events and experiences. There is a shift towards better attitudes as the informants begin to realize what should be embraced in the present moment.

Stage of Discovering Meaning of Life

Bastaman (2007) suggested that there are three primary and valuable values to determine meaning of life when these values are applied and fulfilled. These three values are:

Creative Value

Creative value revolves around providing value and usefulness in life (Nathalia Palupi, 2021). This can be interpreted as activities, tasks, and responsibilities performed with diligence (Bastaman, 2019). Individuals can obtain meaning in life and experience meaningful existence through activities undertaken earnestly.

NK informant	NK enjoys the time spent memorizing and the companionship with friends. The informant keeps busy with organizational responsibilities.
WN informant	Informant WN became a better person, spending more time on muroja'ah Qur'an memorization.
HK informant	Informant HK allocates more time to the Qur'an, prioritizing memorization above all else. Additionally, the informant sets aside time, particularly when not praying, to read books as a method of escaping boredom or difficulty in memorization.
SM informant	SM focuses more on the Qur'an due to reduced attention from academics and organizations. The informant sacrifices rest time and evenings to ensure smooth recitation.

Tabel 3. Creative Values

The statements provided by the informants show that NK is focused on learning and enjoying time with friends. WN was improved over time by creating schedules and targets. Meanwhile, HK and SM are focused on specializing in the Qur'an.

Appreciation Value

Appreciation values include the attempt to understand, believe, and internalize life (Marliana & Maslihah, 2012), such as beauty, truth, virtue, faith, and compassion. These values comprise

believing in sacred texts, feeling closeness with family, and enjoying beautiful scenery (Bastaman, 2007).

NK informant	Informant NK feels much calmer in evaluating everything happening, attributing this to the effect
	of feeling closer to the Qur'an.
WN informant	Informant WN feels that since memorizing the Qur'an, many things have changed, such as the
	manner of speaking. For the informant, the Qur'an is a form of love.
HK informant	HK believes that life has become better because of memorizing the Qur'an. The informant
	considers understanding the content of the Qur'an to serve as a reminder when feeling tired of
	memorization and experiencing problems.
SM informant	SM feels closer to Allah SWT after realizing the significance of the Qur'an. The informant
	dedicated the daily activities to worshiping Allah SWT.

The statements made by NK, WN, HK, and SM hold appreciation values, where life is better because of the Qur'an, as well as stronger faith and belief, bringing the individuals closer to Allah SWT.

Value of Attitude

Values of attitude provide opportunities to respond to inevitable and sorrowful conditions and events (Zuldafrial, 2014). Specifically, addressing these situations enables individuals to obtain valuable lessons and bring forth meaning or wisdom (Bastaman, 2007).

Tabel 5. Aultu	Tabel 5. Autude Values	
NK	Informant NK approaches past negative experiences by striving to take responsibility and become more	
informant	aware of every good and bad action. Therefore, the informant turns to the Qur'an as a guide.	
WN	WN sees past negative experiences as lessons from repeating the same mistakes. The informant tries	
informant	to reignite the enthusiasm of having a similar experience in a positive way.	
HK	HK approaches previous experiences by pretending that what was unfortunate did not happen, thereby	
informant	avoiding remembering today's and previous lessons.	
SM	Informant SM learns not to become too comfortable with worldly pleasures, which can disappear at	
informant	any moment. Additionally, the informant accepted the unique and personal way of memorizing the	
	Qur'an.	

Tabel 5. Attitude Values

The statements of the four informants depict value of having a positive attitude in dealing with the past. NK, WN, HK, and SM are capable of learning from past experiences but the four informants have different perspectives.

Stage of Meaning Realization

Stage of meaning realization includes experiencing enthusiasm for life and performance. This stage comprises three components, namely self-engagement, directed activities, and fulfillment of life's meaning (Haryadi & Cludia, 2021). Self-engagement comprises having the determination to realize directed activities to develop existing potential. Various concrete activities are more directed toward fulfilling life's meaning and setting goals (Bastaman, 2007).

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NK informant	NK shows self-engagement by being determined to engage in beneficial activities. The directed activities are from the motivation to memorize the Qur'an and obtain a certificate. In stage of meaning realization, the informant regains enthusiasm by trying to follow the path.
WN informant	WN shows self-engagement through dedication to the Qur'an. The directed activities are from the motivation to achieve fluent memorization such as Bu Nyai Hannah, who serves as a role model.

 Tabel 6. Stage of Meaning Realization

HK informant	HK shows self-engagement by striving to fulfill the responsibility of memorizing the Qur'an. The directed activities include engaging in activities to increase the level of happiness. In stage of meaning realization, the informant should muster the strength to continue the days with enthusiasm without fully recovering from the passing of the father.
SM informant	SM shows self-engagement by memorizing the Qur'an as a personal choice. The directed activities adhere to the principle of living freely. In stage of meaning realization, the informant values the life that Allah SWT has provided.

Based on the statements of the four informants, students are subjected to stage of meaning realization. The four informants engage in positive actions as evidence to achieve true meaning in life.

Stage of Meaningful Living

An improvement is reported when stages of meaningful living have been successfully traversed in living conditions and the development of appreciation, as well as happiness (Bastaman, 2007).

rader 7. Stage of Meaningful Life	
NK informant	Informant NK feels a change after understanding the position as the hafidz Qur'an student and
	going through the process of meaningful living as outlined above.
WN informant	Informant WN expresses gratitude to Allah SWT in the Islamic boarding school to memorize the
	Qur'an.
HK informant	HK believes that life in the boarding school has provided different lessons. For this informant,
	the Qur'an truly has the power to change individuals and serves as a healer.
SM informant	Informant SM believes that residing in the Islamic boarding school and memorizing the Qur'an
	is an opportunity.

Tabel 7. Stage of Meaningful Life

The four informants were subjected to a change in condition after realizing the personal benefits of the Qur'an memorization in the Islamic boarding school environment. There was an improvement since the informant reported feeling happier, more enthusiastic, and at ease.

Presence of Meaning in Students' Lives

The presence of meaning emphasizes the subjective and individual feelings regarding the context. This meaning of life has varying characteristics and cannot be guaranteed to be similar to other factors (Steger et al., 2006).

NK informant	Informant NK understands the concept of meaningful life, which is by doing good to others.
	Additionally, life is meaningful because of the Qur'an since the verses improve feelings.
WN informant	WN evaluates life to be more meaningful when practicing knowledge. Additionally, the informant
	intends to continue carrying the Qur'an until the end. For WN, the Qur'an is like a window that
	serves as a guide in life to bring individual back to the path of Allah SWT.
HK informant	HK understands that life is more meaningful than before. According to the informant, meaning comes from receiving support from family and friends. Analyzing the Qur'an is a way of finding meaning in life.
SM informant	SM understands that satisfying life objectives is relative due to personal criteria. For SM, a satisfying life objective can be enjoying the present moment. SM wants to enjoy and make life more interesting to achieve personal dreams.

Tabel 8. Aspects of the Presence of Meaning

The statements expressed by the four informants have different orientations. According to the concept of presence of meaning, individuals have subjective feelings. However, NK, WN, HK, and SM understand the purposes and have become better than before, with the Qur'an serving as a source of meaning.

Search of Meaning

Search of meaning represents an individual's drive and orientation to finding meaning of life in various aspects (Maslahat, 2020).

Tabel 9. Aspect of the Search of Meaning

NK informant	During the process of memorizing the Qur'an, NK faces challenges and strives to control thoughts
	and behaviors in facing problems, believing that struggling is a necessity in life. In determining
	future objectives, NK envisions changes but focuses on fulfilling the responsibility of memorizing
	in the boarding school.
WN informant	WN prioritizes patience when facing unpleasant situations. According to WN, knowing God
	better creates the realization that God will always provide. The objective of the informant is to
	become a teacher in the boarding school environment of the hafidz Qur'an students.
HK informant	The informant draws closer to Allah SWT and the Qur'an when facing unfavorable
	circumstances. In seeking future objectives, HK feels other objectives will be discovered with
	time.
SM informant	SM tries to be calm when facing unfavorable circumstances. To determine a future path in life,
	the informant needs to know what they want. SM also believes that tomorrow will provide the
	lessons about life.
	lessons about me.

The statements expressed show different ways of dealing with unpleasant situations around the role of the Qur'an. Additionally, the informants believe that determining future life goals depends on the ability to envision an individual.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to describe the process of meaning-making among orphaned or fatherless hafidz Quran students. The process of meaning-making begins from a state of meaninglessness to meaningfulness. The aspects proposed by Steger (2006), namely the presence and search of meaning are used to formulate questions about meaning-making among orphaned or fatherless hafidz Quran studentss. The development of the aspect is contained in the presence and search of meaning. These aspects explain that each individual may have different feelings and orientations towards meaning of life compared to others. In terms of the presence of meaning, informants NK, WN, HK, and SM show differences.

According to Aji and Abidin (2019), the three informants have different perspectives in interpreting life. Similarly, Putri and Kurniati (2012) reported that the lives of the informants had different interpretations. NK states that life becomes meaningful by doing good to others. Meanwhile, WN believes that life is more meaningful when practicing knowledge. According to HK, meaning of the Qur'an serves as a method to discover meaning in life. For SM, finding fulfillment lies in embracing the present moment since dwelling on the past is futile. As reported by (Rezaputra et al., 2022), meaningfulness of life for hafidz Qur'an students can be achieved by becoming beneficial to the community. This is shown by the implementation of Qur'anic knowledge and as a form of dedication to Allah SWT. Hafidz Qur'an students implement values of the verses memorized and studied to serve as guidance in facing every unfavorable situation or enduring severe trials. Additionally, a committed hafidz Qur'an can also achieve deeper meaning in life with greater challenges.

The search of meaning differs among NK, WN, HK, and SM. After becoming hafidz Qur'an students, other unpleasant events may be encountered, such as challenges in memorizing the Qur'an and unfavorable situations while in an Islamic boarding school. NK strives to control the thoughts and behavior when facing a problem. WN prioritizes patience in dealing with unpleasant situations and focuses more on knowing God. HK interprets all occurrences, particularly unfavorable circumstances, through the Qur'an. SM deals with unpleasant situations, preventing himself from feeling sad by letting everything happen without fearing the unknown future.

Informants NK, WN, HK, and SM have a well-prepared future. Similarly, Ustadz Abdul Somad (as cited in Fachruddin, 2018) reported that a good and meaningful life could be achieved by

understanding purpose. The true meaning of life is worship and the knowledge is related to prayer, reading the Qur'an, and increasing blessings. However, the highest form of worship is to accept the fate of Allah willingly (Somad as cited in Fachruddin, 2018). Orphans or hafidz Quran students feel meaning of life, and the four informants have special values. The attitudes of these students can be changed after experiencing painful events and learning valuable lessons.

CONCLUSION

The study involved six respondents with an average age of 17-18 years. It examines the meaningfulness of life for students (santri) from the perspectives of the presence of meaning and the search for meaning. The results showed that childhood is a golden period for happiness, especially with parental support. However, orphans often lose motivation and a sense of meaning in life, feeling more pressured in boarding schools with the monotonous routine of memorizing the Qur'an. Students often pursue this education due to family pressure. In conclusion, the process of finding meaning in the lives of orphans or hafidz Qur'an students occurs in different stages. In the first stage, these children experience painful events such as abandonment and other unpleasant feelings of emptiness. In the second stage, the respondents are evaluated and assigned the responsibility of being memorizers of the Qur'an. In the third stage, past painful experiences are acknowledged and reassessed from different perspectives.

The fourth stage included informants engaging in positive activities to achieve true meaning in life. In the fifth stage, a change was encountered in understanding the presence of the Qur'an in becoming closer to Allah SWT. The informants were subjected to similar changes in condition, and these individuals became happy, enthusiastic, and comfortable. The aspect of presence of meaning showed statements with different perspectives and subjective feelings. In the aspect of search for meaning, NK, WN, HK, and SM possessed statements with different perspectives and interpretations. Furthermore, there were differences in the derivation of meaning during moments of joy and sorrow, possessing distinctive value. In this context informants NK, WN, HK, and SM strived to achieve personal life objectives.

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