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Key Factors Influencing the Success of Quran Memorization Among Tahfiz Students

Faktor Utama yang Mempengaruhi Kejayaan Hafalan Quran dalam
Kalangan Pelajar Tahfiz

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ABSTRACT

The tahfiz Quran institution in this country serves as a national human capital development entity. This institution addresses the community's regard for the Quran as a life guide. This institution cultivates tahfiz students capable of competing with their mainstream counterparts. However, some tahfiz Quran students face challenges and obstacles in memorizing the Quran, as their level of memorization at tahfiz schools in Pahang is relatively low. The purpose of this study is to examine the variables that influence the performance and success of tahfiz students in memorizing the Quran. This study adopts a qualitative approach, with data collected through interviews with five principals (Mudir) of madrasah tahfiz in Pahang to provide an in-depth understanding of their experiences and challenges in managing these institutions. In this study, thematic analysis was conducted to identify key themes. The results of the study show that there are several crucial factors that influence a student's success in memorizing the Quran, such as personal motivation, family and teacher support, effective memorization strategies, a conducive learning environment, and adherence to religious practices. This study emphasizes the importance of understanding these factors to improve the performance of tahfiz Quran students and contribute to a more structured approach to training excellent tahfiz Quran students.

Keywords: *Quran Memorization, Religious Practices, Study Techniques, Success factors, Tahfiz Students*

ABSTRAK

Institusi tahfiz Quran di negara ini berfungsi sebagai entiti pembangunan modal insan negara. Institusi ini menangani pandangan masyarakat terhadap Quran sebagai panduan hidup. Institusi ini melahirkan pelajar tahfiz yang mampu bersaing dengan rakan sebaya mereka dalam arus perdana. Namun begitu,

sesetengah pelajar tahfiz Quran menghadapi kesukaran dan cabaran dalam menghafal Quran, kerana tahap hafalan dalam kalangan pelajar di sekolah tahfiz di Pahang adalah sederhana. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji pemboleh ubah yang mempengaruhi prestasi dan kejayaan pelajar tahfiz dalam menghafal Quran. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, dengan data di kumpul melalui temu bual dengan lima orang pengetua (mudir) madrasah tahfiz di Pahang untuk memberikan pemahaman mendalam tentang pengalaman dan cabaran mereka dalam menguruskan institusi ini. Dalam kajian ini, analisis tematik dijalankan untuk mengenal pasti tema utama. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa terdapat beberapa faktor penting yang mempengaruhi kejayaan pelajar dalam menghafal Quran, seperti motivasi peribadi, sokongan keluarga dan guru, strategi hafalan yang berkesan, persekitaran pembelajaran yang kondusif, dan pematuhan kepada amalan keagamaan. Kajian ini menekankan kepentingan memahami faktor-faktor ini untuk meningkatkan prestasi pelajar tahfiz Quran dan menyumbang kepada pendekatan yang lebih teratur dalam melatih pelajar tahfiz Quran yang cemerlang.

Kata kunci: *Hafalan Quran, Amalan Keagamaan, Teknik Pembelajaran, Faktor Kejayaan, Pelajar Tahfiz*

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INTRODUCTION

Quran memorization, or *hifz Quran*, refers to the act of committing the text of the Quran to memory, ensuring its verbatim retention and recall. This practice is rooted in the Islamic tradition, emphasizing the preservation of the divine revelation as delivered to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Memorizing the Quran not only strengthens memory retention but also improves focus, consistency, and the ability to work under pressure while minimizing distractions (Gulamhusein & Momanyi 2020). In the context of Quranic tahfiz education, the teaching and learning theory introduced by al-Qabisi emphasizes the importance of memorization and retention. Al-Qabisi, whose full name is Abu al-Hasan Ali bin Muhammad bin Khalaf al-Mu'afiri al-Qabisi al-Faqih al-Qairawaniy, was born in Kairouan, Tunisia (Andi & Dodi 2024). He asserted that the Quran is the fundamental subject in education, while other subjects are considered supplementary knowledge. The primary objective of tahfiz education according to al-Qabisi is to ensure that students can memorize the Quran well without looking at the *mushaf*, internalize and understand the verses they recite, and be able to recite the memorized verses fluently (al-Qabisi, 1955).

The institution of tahfiz Quran in Malaysia is an important institution for the development of the country's human capital. This facility helps raise Muslim's awareness of the importance of preserving the Quran in both writing and memorization. However, in order to produce a *Huffaz* who manages to memorize the Quran perfectly, there are several factors that are the trigger for the increase of this group (Mohd Jamalil et al. 2017). Previous studies have found that students of tahfiz Quran face some difficulties and challenges, such as a moderate level of proficiency in memorizing the Quran (Mohamad Marzuqi & Azmil, 2017 & Zainora et al. 2022). If this issue is not addressed, it may affect the quality of memorization of tahfiz students in *madrasah tahfiz* in Malaysia. This research will examine three significant factors influencing an individual's ability to successfully memorize the Quran, including the identity of Quran memorizer, effective techniques for memorizing the Quran and effective techniques for Quran revision.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review on the factors contributing to the success of Quran memorization focuses on the personal characteristics of the memorizer, effective memorization techniques, and systematic revision methods. Firstly, studies emphasize that the identity and background of Quran memorizers, including personal characteristics, family support, and education, significantly impact their commitment and motivation in memorization. According to Yusri (2021), a student's success in memorizing the Quran is shaped by both internal factors, such as resilience, patience, and motivation, and external influences, like family environment and educational support. Furthermore, factors like family encouragement, socioeconomic status, and whether the student is from an urban or rural area can enhance or hinder memorization efforts (Abd. Aziz et al. 2021). Studies from Mizanul Hasanah (2021) also show that students from academically supportive and well-educated families with strong values for tahfiz education demonstrate higher levels of commitment in their memorization journey. This underscores the need for a supportive environment and strong foundational values, where parental guidance, motivation, and cultural context play critical roles in shaping student's success in memorizing the Quran.

Secondly, research identifies effective memorization techniques that enhance both cognitive retention and spiritual engagement. Memorization is not simply a rote task but requires a deep connection with the meanings and messages of the verses. Rohana et al. (2020) argue that the dual engagement (recital and reflection) enables students to internalize the

Quran, preserving it within their hearts and minds. In this regard, Azihal et al. (2022) highlight that student interest, supportive teacher guidance, and structured repetition techniques strengthen the memorization process, while Muhammad Syafee Salihin et al. (2022) assert that structured *murajaah* methods can significantly enhance retention and fluency. In addition to repetition, both extrinsic and intrinsic motivations are crucial for success in memorization. Hayati Hussin et al. (2023) found that intrinsic motivation, including a sincere intention, combined with extrinsic support from family and teachers, fosters greater commitment and bolsters retention, helping students maintain and strengthen their memorization.

Lastly, effective techniques for revising memorized verses are essential in preserving them over time. According to Azmil Hashim (2014), systematic review schedules help students sustain their memorization efforts by creating consistency in their routine. Similarly, Yuliani Rahmi (2019) categorizes two critical methods for revision which are silent repetition, where students review silently to reinforce memorization internally and auditory repetition where verses are recited aloud to train both auditory and verbal recall. The latter method is especially beneficial for correcting pronunciation and deepening memorization. Studies emphasize the importance of structured, consistent revision to maintain retention, as students face significant challenges in retaining memorized verses after completing their initial *tasmi'* (recitation verification) with teachers (Khairul Anuar, 2016).

In summary, the literature suggests that an optimal Quran memorization approach should be systematic and multifaceted, addressing personal background and motivation, employing proven memorization techniques, and incorporating effective, regular review practices to ensure memorized verses are preserved long-term.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative approach with phenomenological design to understand the experiences and perspectives of tahfiz school Mudirs (principals) regarding factors influencing student's success in Quranic memorization. The phenomenological approach was chosen as it enables researchers to deeply explore and understand the studied phenomena through informant's lived experiences. Five (5) tahfiz school Mudirs in Pahang were selected as study informants using purposive sampling based on specific criteria such as minimum 5 years of experience as tahfiz school administrator and educational background in tahfiz. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews. The interview protocol was

developed based on literature review and validated by experts in qualitative research methodology. Interview sessions were conducted over a month period, with each session lasting 60-90 minutes. Interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder with informant's consent. Interview locations were at the informant's madrasahs around Kuantan to ensure comfort and privacy. The recorded interviews were then transcribed verbatim to facilitate detailed analysis. The analysis process was conducted using NVivo 12 software, following a systematic coding approach. This involved three main stages which are open coding to identify key words and important phrases, axial coding to connect related codes, and selective coding to develop themes and subthemes. The findings were then presented according to the emerging main themes. To ensure research trustworthiness, a validation was employed expert validation from qualitative methodology experts.

CRITICAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE SUCCESS OF TAHFIZ STUDENTS IN QURAN MEMORIZATION

Existing literature has extensively documented the factors affecting Quranic memorization among tahfiz students. However, there is still considerable room for improvement in research, particularly in identifying more practical and clearly defined critical factors. The success of tahfiz students in memorizing the Quran is influenced by several critical factors that encompass their identity, effective memorization techniques, and systematic revision methods. Firstly, the identity of the memorizers, including their personal characteristics, backgrounds, and intrinsic motivation, plays a significant role in shaping their commitment to this spiritual journey. Secondly, the application of effective memorization techniques is essential, as these strategies can greatly enhance student's retention of verses and streamline the learning process. Lastly, the implementation of systematic revision methods is crucial, as these practices ensure the long-term preservation of the memorized verses. Together, these elements are vital in understanding and improving the success rates of tahfiz students in their Quran memorization endeavours. Among the examples of effective systematic *murajaah* methods are those mentioned by informant 5:

“Our target is that one student will finish his reading in a month, one *juz*’. If you follow exactly what I'm targeting. Because we have *tasmi*’ and *sabak*. *Tasmi*’ with *Sabak*. We target people for 23 days, which equates to one and a half pages a day. Then we have *Tasmi*’ after the *sabak*. Our example is, it's like a first *juz*’. Our

student will finish his *sabak*. This *sabak* is a new text. New *Tasmi'*, he will finish in two weeks.”

The Identity of Quran Memorizers

The identity of Quran memorizers, or Hafiz, is shaped by various factors. The journey of memorizing the Quran often begins at a young age, with many students enrolling in tahfiz schools or programs designed specifically for Quranic studies. These institutions not only focus on memorization but also emphasize the holistic development of the students, instilling in them the values of discipline, commitment, and spirituality.

Informant 2 stated:

“Be on time, take care of study time, take care of prayer time, sleep time, *qailulah*, what do we have to take care of”

Culturally, being a Hafiz is highly regarded in Malaysian society, where memorizing the Quran is considered an esteemed achievement. This status motivates many students to pursue Quranic memorization, as it not only enhances their spiritual identity but also earns respect within their communities. The identity of Quran memorizers is often intertwined with their roles as community leaders, educators, and spiritual guides, which further reinforces their commitment to maintaining the teachings of Islam.

Informant 4 stated:

“Right. Morality affects. For example, if it is for a *shahadah* student. We are the reason, and *alhamdulillah*, that I was able to successfully obtain three shahadah students. When we see that there is a student who does not take care of his conversation and does not take care of his morals, we see that he has the quality for *shahadah* that is slow. Ha, so before going to the *shahadah* examination, we will say to this student to hold first. Keep the conversation going. Take care of your morals; take care of your heart with friends, with teachers, with the villagers. All that plays a role. We'll see if he takes care of it; he has an approval for his *hifz*, fast. For his *hifz* is fast. But if he maintains it like that. He sacrificed a lot at that time. Add this time, add this time, but I don't see that he has the impression that it is quite difficult. Slow down, slow down.”

Moreover, familial support plays a crucial role in shaping the identity of Quran memorizers in Malaysia. Many students come from families that value Islamic education, with parents encouraging their children to pursue Quranic memorization as a means of spiritual growth and community contribution. This familial encouragement often provides the emotional and motivational support necessary for students to navigate the challenges of memorization.

In addition, source of motivation for effectively memorizing the Quran is a student's unique identity. If the person in question lacks enthusiasm and does not sincerely attempt to commit the Quran to memory. They will then have trouble honing their memorization skills. To ensure that someone memorizes the Quran well, it is also necessary to apply the qualities of *istiqamah* and consistency to their identity.

Informant 1 stated:

"The first thing he needs to do is he have to memorize it himself. If you want to memorize that, you must have high willpower. Because there are many, if we ask especially Muslims, who don't like the Quran? Everyone likes it. Only by memorizing the Quran does he have the ability he needs to have. That ability, one. Another self-will. If he doesn't want it, it won't happen. Like, really like. But, if you don't have the will, it's hard. One, he has that interest. Self-interest. Interest and desire must be high, then it is easy for him to memorize. In terms of ability, each person is different but even if he is different, he will still be able to. For example, get one page, this hat gets half a page. Only if you don't want it, it's hard to get one".

The informant's assertion indicates that an individual must possess a strong will, profound curiosity, and aptitude for memorizing the Quran. These three components can assist students in committing the Quran to memory in accordance with the objectives established by the institution. A tahfiz student cannot memorize effectively if he depends solely on willpower without the support of capability. Likewise, if a tahfiz learner possesses the capability but lacks the will to memorize the Quran, it will result in inconsistency in their memorization efforts. Vinni Sabrina et al. (2022) stated that strong self-determination one of a person's success factors in memorizing the Quran was a strong determination from himself. Sedek Ariffin et al. (2015) stated that age factor does not become a measurement or obstacle for someone to memorize the Quran but the ability, period,

exertion, and interest in a person become the very important factors in the process of memorizing the Quran.

Effective Techniques for Memorizing the Quran

Effective techniques for memorizing the Quran are strategies that help individuals retain Quranic verses more efficiently and permanently. Key techniques include repetition (*al-takrar*) and learning directly from a teacher (*talaqqi*), which ensures correct pronunciation and *tajweed*. These methods not only aid in memorization but also help maintain the accuracy of recitation, reinforcing the verses in memory over time.

a) Talaqqi and Musyafahah

The Talaqqi and Musyafahah techniques are employed by all schools offering a tahfiz syllabus in this country. These methods aim to facilitate student's Quranic memorization. Without using these techniques, students may memorize the Quran with incorrect *makhraj* (articulation points) and tajwid (rules of recitation), which would make it harder for them to rectify those mistakes later.

b) Takrar

Repetition, also known as the al-takrar method, is a memorization technique that involves repeating the specific passage you wish to memorize. Repetition helps improve discipline, especially in time management. As described in several definitions, takrar involves repeating Quranic recitations when starting or reviewing memorization. This repetition can focus on either pronunciation or meaning, depending on the purpose or objective. However, the takrar method can be time-consuming, as continuous repetition is necessary to ensure that the memorized content remains firmly ingrained in the memory (Imam Mashuri et al., 2022).

Informant 3 said:

“If it's the *murajaah* method, he'll turn around. One and a half *juz* a day, repeating the old *juz* after Zohor.”

Informant 2 said:

“Actually, the first thing to do is to have a stronger memory, you have to read a lot. That's the most important thing. That's why we say we want to feel love for the Prophet. The Prophet said: Whoever loves something, mention it more often. Ha, the

meaning of a sign of love for someone, he has to say a lot. It's the same if we love the Quran, we have to read a lot of Quranic verses. Because we say a lot, read a lot, and remember a lot."

The study from N. Hashimah, M. Khalid & Khadijah (2020) emphasizes the importance of repetition and frequent reading as effective strategies for Quran memorization, which directly supports Informant 2's assertion that frequent engagement with Quranic texts not only enhances memory but also deepens emotional and cognitive connections with the Quran. The article outlines various educational strategies, including repetition, attention, and understanding, which are crucial for effective memorization. These strategies are consistent with the *murajaah* method mentioned by Informant 3, which involves revisiting and repeating previously memorized sections to reinforce memory. The literature review further highlights that consistent interaction with the Quran, through methods such as repetition and frequent reading, is recognized as an effective approach in the field of Islamic education, thereby validating the practices described by both informants.

Effective Techniques for Quran Revision

Techniques for Quran revision are methods designed to reinforce and preserve the memorization of Quranic verses that have been previously learned. These approaches aim to prevent forgetting and ensure that the recitation remains accurate. Regular revision is key for Quran memorizers to maintain and solidify their memorization, helping them to keep their recitation strong and precise over time. These memorization techniques should be selected based on the individual student's capacity and ability:

a) Memorizing Five *Juz* ' Daily

Once someone has memorized the Quran, this method is considered the most effective. To effectively implement this method, Quran memorizers need to dedicate three hours each day, indicating that it requires a significant time commitment.

Informant 3 stated:

"For madrasah students, it's simply repetition. Five *juz* ' and ten *juz*""

b) Memorizing Three *Juz* ' Daily

Quran memorizers often use this technique. It can be a practical solution for everyone, including office workers, lecturers, teachers, and students. This is because memorizing the Quran requires just one hour and thirty minutes each day. The time can be divided into segments based on prayer time, such as after Subh, Asr, and Isyak. The daily revision of three *juz*' is explained by Informant 5's statement that students must complete the Quran three times each month.

Informant 5 stated:

"He will complete *khatam* at least three times monthly".

c) Daily Memorization of One *Surah* and One *Juz*

Students memorizing the Quran will recite one *surah* each day. This method allows students to complete the Quran three times a year. One benefit of this method is the ability to recall the *surah*-based arrangement of the Quran. Additionally, one *juz*' should be added to this approach each day based on the date. The learner will memorize the first *juz*' if the date is the first of the month, and so on. Combining these two strategies aids students in retaining the orders of *surah* and *juz*. The *murajaah* approach is endorsed by informant 1, who indicates that the application of one and a half *juz*' occurs in their *tahfiz* madrasah.

Informant 1 stated:

"The *murajaah* procedure is conducted in rotation. One and a half *juz*' per day, reciting the previous *juz*' after *Zuhr*".

These three methods demonstrate different approaches to maintaining the memorization of the Quran, each with its own distinct advantages. These methods emphasize the importance of repetition and consistent time management to ensure effective and continuous memorization. This approach also shows flexibility in adapting memorization methods according to individual needs and daily schedules (Zainora et al. 2022).

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the key factors influencing the success of *tahfiz* students in memorizing the Quran, including the identity of the memorizers, effective memorization techniques, and systematic revision methods. The identity of the memorizers, encompassing personal characteristics and backgrounds, plays a significant role in shaping student's commitment to the

memorization process. Additionally, effective memorization techniques such as *talaqqi*, *musyafahah*, *takrar* enhance student's ability to retain Quranic verses. Systematic revision methods, such as memorizing five, three, or one chapter (*juz*) daily, are crucial for ensuring solid and lasting retention. By gaining a deeper understanding of these factors, the education of tahfiz can be strengthened, ultimately enhancing student's success in memorizing the Quran.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The researchers hereby declare that there are no conflicts of interest in relation to this research or the writing of this article. All data, findings, and interpretations presented are free from any external influence, including financial, personal, or professional, that could compromise the integrity and objectivity of the research outcomes.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

The authors confirm contribution to the paper as follows: **conceptualization:** Nik Ahmad Mumtaz Nik Din and Mohammad Ibrahim Md Khalis, **methodology:** Haizuran Mohd Jani and Muhamad Razif Ahmad, **writing-original draft preparation:** Nik Ahmad Mumtaz Nik Din, Mohammad Ibrahim Md Khalis, Haizuran Mohd Jani and Mohammad Haafiz Aminuddin Mohd Azmi, **data collection:** Muhamad Razif Ahmad, Nik Ahmad Mumtaz Nik Din, Mohammad Ibrahim Md Khalis and Haizuran Mohd Jani, **writing-review and editing:** Mohammad Haafiz Aminuddin Mohd Azmi. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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