

EXPLORING THE PERSPECTIVE OF UPTQ STUDENTS: SURPASSING LIMITATIONS WITH DIGITAL APPLICATIONS FOR MEMORIZING THE QUR'AN

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Abstract

The presence of 4.0 technological advancements and the transformative forms of globalization have significantly impacted various aspects of life for modern society. Changes in culture, mindset, activities, politics, economics, and even the field of education nowadays tend to diminish the spiritual values of individuals and groups, particularly among students. The existence of the digital Qur'an also contributes to their interest in exploring the depth and convenience of memorizing the Qur'an. This research aims to describe the perspectives of students in memorizing the Qur'an with the help of a digital Qur'an application. The research method employed is qualitative research with a descriptive approach. The research subjects consisted of 68 individuals who joined a WhatsApp group. Data collection techniques involved observation, and in-depth interviews with the subjects, and the obtained data were analyzed descriptively. The study's findings recommend that the students' perspectives on the application for memorizing the Qur'an are highly positive, including a high interest in using the digital Qur'an, the beneficial features it provides, the impact of the digital Qur'an's existence, and the functions it encompasses.

Keywords: digital Qur'an, Qur'an memorizer, student

Introduction

The position of the Quran holds a highly significant role in the Islamic faith. (Anam et al., 2022). Memorizing the Quran is an activity that is highly emphasized in the Islamic religion because it provides religious values and blessings to individual Muslims as well as the entire society. In line with the changing times and challenges faced by the Muslim community, it is crucial for the government and relevant institutions to implement policies that support and encourage the memorization of the Quran (Nurbaiti et al., 2021).

The Tahfidz al-Quran program aims to produce students or disciples who are not only intelligent in their knowledge but also possess good morals and character. (Frasandy & Nimah, 2019). Like any new program, especially in the context of evolving globalization, this program may be considered outdated and not aligned



with current trends. Consequently, in its implementation, the program faces various diverse challenges (Syarifuddin & Baso, 2020).

Studying, practicing, and memorizing alone is not sufficient when facing the Qur'an. Reciting the Qur'an from memory is one of the ways to preserve its sanctity and authenticity (Supriono & Rusdiani, 2019). In reciting the Qur'an, sincere intention is crucial. With a sincere intention for the sake of Allah SWT, a person who memorizes the Qur'an will experience joy in every effort made to memorize it. Obstacles will be easily overcome because their heart is bound to Allah, seeking His pleasure and reward alone (Maarif, 2019).

Memorizing the Quran is an act highly commendable in the sight of Allah (SWT). The process of memorizing the Quran significantly differs from memorizing a dictionary or a book because, to memorize the Quran, one must have a good understanding of tajweed and proficiency in recitation. If someone who wishes to memorize the Quran is unable to read correctly and has not mastered tajweed, they will face difficulties in the process of memorization (Hanifah & Hasanah, 2023).

Efforts to enhance the quality of Islamic education, particularly in Quranic studies, continue to evolve (Mahmudah & Putra, 2021). Because the Qur'an is the central reference for fundamental concepts that serve as a guide for all people, there is often a limited understanding of the meaning of Qur'anic education or learning, which is confined to merely reading or memorizing the Qur'an. However, Qur'anic education encompasses a broader meaning that includes all knowledge related to the Qur'an, such as Tajweed (proper recitation), Tafsir (interpretation), Uloom al-Qur'an (Qur'anic sciences), and so on (Hidayati, 2021).

The trend of memorization is a process that involves the entire body as a whole, including the eyes, ears, mouth, and mind (Syahid & Wahyuni, 2019). If a child consistently memorizes the Quran, it will have an impact on their growth and development (Rusdi, 2023). Children who cultivate the habit of memorizing the Quran will experience progress in their intellectual, emotional, and spiritual capacities, leading to positive behavioral patterns and noble character development (Hakim & Permatasari, 2020).

The process of memorizing the Quran also involves internalizing the letters, verses, and chapters of the Quran into the mind through repetition, both by reading and listening, to remember them consistently (Pohan & Sudarmayah, 2021). Therefore, with the Tahfidz program, students can utilize their leisure time to memorize the Quran, which in turn will reduce their time for playing. (Hakim & Permatasari, 2020).

There are many scholarship opportunities available for those who have expertise in memorizing the Quran (Febryani & Permana, 2023). The purpose of these programs is to support and motivate the memorization of the Quran among the Muslim community while providing recognition and encouragement for their achievements in memorizing the holy book. Just like the Pasuruan Regency Government is committed to supporting and promoting quality education and equal opportunities in the pursuit of knowledge. There are no longer financial constraints that hinder access to education. Seize this opportunity and strive for a bright future, Regent of Pasuruan, HM Irsyad Yusuf, accompanied by the Head of the Department of Education and Culture, appreciates students and Quran memorizers for their

achievements. This is a form of recognition from the Pasuruan Regency Government (Rusdi, 2023).

This topic has garnered significant attention from researchers, and over the past three years, it has been discovered that memorizing the Quran is an important endeavor (Anggraini, 2019). To become someone who memorizes the Qur'an, it is not enough to merely memorize it; it is also important to understand the meanings and explanations of the verses of the Qur'an (Sulastini & Zamili, 2019). In memorizing the Qur'an, strategy becomes a crucial element, and memorization will reach its maximum level. If there is a lack of student achievement, it is not due to their lack of ability, but rather due to a lack of strategy in the learning process. (Mubarakah, 2019).

However, most tahfiz schools still adhere to traditional methods and teaching processes of the Quran, which are not aligned with the advancements in information technology. This is due to the lack of strategies and approaches to assisting huffaz (those who have memorized the Quran) in memorizing the Quran (Hassan, 2022). In the current era, technology has advanced rapidly, and with just a single grip, the world will be in our hands (Azhari & Saleh, 2023).

To reveal the novelty of the above research or study, it is evident that the issue of memorizing the Quran using digital applications among university students has not received attention or been explored. Therefore, the researcher aims to describe the perspectives of students in memorizing the Quran with the assistance of digital Quran applications.

Method

This research used a qualitative research design with a field study approach. The research method was designed using qualitative research with a descriptive qualitative type by presenting data from questionnaires distributed to 68 members in a WhatsApp group. The data was analyzed, and conclusions were drawn. The data collection technique used was brief observation and online interviews through WhatsApp chat with members of the UPTQ to validate the existing findings, thus utilizing an open-ended questionnaire. The research was conducted among students of UPTQ at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya.

Findings and Discussion

The high interest and usage of digital applications

One of the main findings is the increased interest of students in digital applications. They are more interested in using digital apps as a means to fulfill various daily needs and activities. Digital applications encompass various types, such as social media apps, e-commerce platforms, transportation services, financial services, and many more (Yadewani et al., 2020). This diversity provides users with the flexibility to choose applications that align with their preferences and needs, especially when it comes to memorizing the Quran, as described in the research findings illustrated in the diagram below.



Figure 1. Time of using digital Quran

The data in Figure 1 presents the findings of research conducted by students of UPTQ (Qur'an Memorization Development Unit) on the significant assistance provided by digital Qur'an applications in memorizing the Qur'an. The field results regarding the time spent using digital Qur'an applications varied among the students.

Several factors can explain the high interest and usage of this digital Al-Quran application (Yuyun, 2023). First, the advancement of technology and the widespread availability of smartphones and internet access have provided better accessibility for users to access the digital Quran. With the ease of downloading and installing Quran applications on their devices, users can quickly read and refer to Quranic verses whenever and wherever they are (Nuryana, 2019)

The second digital Quran application offers various features that facilitate users in studying and understanding the Quran (Hidayat, 2016). For example, the translation of the Quran into various languages, the interpretation of the Quran, searching for specific verses using keywords, as well as the ability to add bookmarks and personal notes. These features help users in gaining a better understanding of the content of the Quran and make the reading experience more interactive and personal.

The practicality of digital Quran applications is also a significant factor in the increasing interest of users (Andika et al., 2021). Users do not need to carry a large and heavy physical Quran everywhere (Arifin et al., 2020). Simply by opening an application on a smartphone or other devices, users can easily read the Quran. This is highly advantageous for individuals who frequently travel, are busy students or professionals, or simply desire quick and convenient access to reading the Quran. (Sriyanti, 2022).

Useful features in a digital Qur'an application

Digital Qur'an can be developed based on research findings to enhance the user experience in reading, studying, and understanding the sacred text of the Qur'an (Ida, 2023). With the presence of translation and interpretation, digital Quran applications can provide diverse language translations and comprehensive interpretations from trusted scholars (Istianah & Surya, 2019).

The proper use of punctuation and rules of Tajweed (the science of recitation) in reading the Qur'an can be implemented in digital Qur'an applications to assist users in reading correctly and respecting the appropriate pronunciation nuances (Faizah et al., 2020). This feature can include clear visual displays and correct audio pronunciation for each verse. Efficient Search In a digital Quran application, an

efficient search feature can help users quickly find specific verses or words. Research on indexing techniques and text processing of the Quran can be used to develop accurate and responsive search algorithms (Akbar et al., 2021).

Memorization and Progress Tracking allows users to track their memorization progress and monitor their development in memorizing the Quran can be extremely beneficial (Noorhidayati et al., 2021). Notes and bookmarks in digital Quran applications can provide features for creating personal notes and marking important verses with bookmarks. In addition, Night Mode and Customizable Text Size allow users to modify the text display, such as using night mode for reading in low-light conditions or adjusting the text size for user convenience (Richtig & Saifullah, 2023).

Having daily notifications in a digital Al-Qur'an application can help send notifications containing Quranic verses or beneficial lessons. This aims to enhance users' awareness, knowledge, and engagement with the Quran, as well as assist them in practicing their worship and living by the principles of Islam.

The impact on the progress of Quran memorization

The presence of the digital Al-Quran has made it easier for the community by eliminating the need to always carry a physical copy of the Al-Quran. One only needs to install a digital Al-Quran application on their smartphone and can access it anytime (Septiara et al., 2019). In the present era, most people are never separated from their mobile phones and always carry them wherever they go. This is evident, as supported by the field observations depicted in Picture 2.

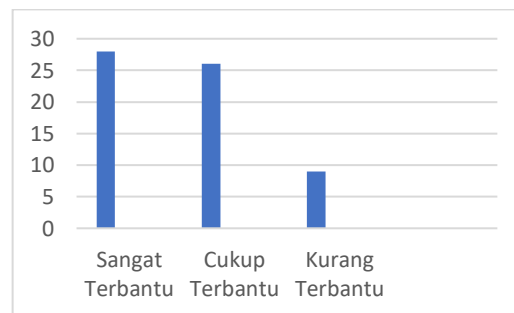


Figure 2. Benefits of using a digital Qur'an

Based on the field facts, 28 students stated that they were greatly assisted by using the Digital Quran application. The digital Quran facilitates users by providing easy and fast access to the complete text of the Quran. Users can easily read, search, and refer to Quranic verses through the installed application on their devices (Ramli et al., 2020). A digital Quran provides audio recordings by various renowned qaris, allowing users to listen to the melodious recitation of the Quran while simultaneously following the displayed text on the screen. This can help improve Quranic reading skills and deepen understanding and appreciation of the verses of the Quran (Pratama et al., 2021).

Eight students expressed feeling less assisted. The use of the digital Quran eliminates interaction with the physical Quran. Some individuals argue that experiencing and touching the physical pages of the Quran provides a deeper and

more spiritual experience than reading through a screen (Badaruddin & Zabidi, 2021; Riha & Agmawarnida, 2021).

The use of a physical copy of the Quran (mushaf Al-Quran) provides a sensory-engaging experience (Murjani, 2022), To kiss the aroma of the pages, to hear the sound of the paper being folded, and to treat it with special care in its storage. For some people, these sensory experiences are considered essential elements in building their relationship with the Quran (Nasir et al., 2022). The use of the digital Quran makes someone more dependent on electronic devices and internet access. If there is no access or the device's battery runs out, users cannot directly access the Quran (Musa & Ishak, 2021).

The functions of a digital Quran application

Students use the Al-Quran application in their daily lives, both during lectures and outside of lectures (Liyanti & Hakim, 2019). The application has customizable features to suit the users' needs. However, some weaknesses need to be considered, such as the possibility of spelling errors in the Quranic application due to the abundance of applications available on various platforms. Therefore, users need to be cautious in selecting a digital Quran application that has been certified by the Quranic Manuscript Improvement Agency (Lembaga Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Quran or LPMQ) (Puspitasari, 2021).

Field data shows that digital Quran applications are used for various functions. First, the application is used for reading the Quran. In this category, the author found that those who use this application as a substitute for a physical Quran because they do not carry a physical Quran or there is no Quran around them. In this context, those who read the Quran through the application also receive the virtues as described in the hadith.

“Whoever reads a single letter from the Book of Allah (the Qur'an) will earn one virtue, and each virtue will be multiplied ten times over. I do not say that "Alif Lam Mim" is one letter, but rather "Alif" is one letter, "Lam" is one letter, and "Mim" is one letter..” (HR. at-Tirmidzi, no. 2910) (Muhammad bin 'Isa at, 1998)

Secondly, for memorization purposes, the author discovered in the field that almost the entire digital Quran application is functional. They use this application as a substitute medium for the physical Quran (Istiqomah, 2022).

“Indeed, those who constantly read the book of Allah, establish prayer, and give out a portion of the sustenance We have bestowed upon them, both in secret and openly, are the ones who hope for a trade that will never incur loss. They seek for Allah to perfect their rewards and increase His blessings upon them. Indeed, Allah is the Most Forgiving, the Most Appreciative” (QS Al Fathir: 29-30)

Thirdly, in this category, it was found in the field that the digital Qur'an is utilized for murajaah (Maulida et al., 2021). This application is utilized to check the memorization of UPTQ students, whether the verses they have memorized are correct or not. Therefore, this application is very useful for them when they want to review but don't have a physical copy of the Qur'an. For respondents who have memorized, it is not appropriate for them to neglect their memorization. Lastly, it serves as a tool for learning and teaching (Atmaja & Sutisna, 2022), Digital Qur'an applications for learning or teaching. The features within the Qur'an application help save time in certain situations, such as when a Qur'an dictionary is needed and time is limited.

The fifth can listen to audio or murottal (Andika et al., 2021), In this category, the writer found that LPTQ students utilize a digital Al-Qur'an application to listen to MP3 audio or recitations within the application. The application offers numerous features and a wide range of options with famous reciters.

From the discussions above, students appreciate the convenience of access provided by the digital Al-Qur'an application (Oktapiani, 2020). Translate this sentence into correct English so that it can be accessed anytime and anywhere through a mobile device. This allows for efficient use of time to memorize the Quran. LPTQ students also benefit from the repetition and tracking features in the Digital Quran application. These features enable regular practice and repetition of the memorized verses of the Quran, while the tracking feature helps monitor and evaluate their progress in murajaah.

Conclusion

This research shows that students' perspectives on using applications to memorize the Quran are highly positive. Firstly, the high interest in using Digital Quran applications provides users with the flexibility to choose an application that suits their preferences and needs. Second, useful feature, this feature can be a clear visual display and correct audio pronunciation for each verse. Thirdly, many of the positive impacts of the digital Quran's presence have made it easier for people by eliminating the need to always carry physical Quran manuscripts with them. One just needs to install the digital Quran app on his smartphone and can access it at any time. Finally, the app provides significant help in terms of accessibility, interactive features, repetition and tracking, and variety and completeness of the material. In the context of Islamic education, the use of digital Quran applications can be a helpful tool in facilitating and improving the process of learning and memorizing the Quran for students.

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