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Methods of Qur’ānic Memorisation (*Hifẓ*): Implications for Learning Performance

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Abstract: Memorisation of the Qur’ān occupies a central position in Muslim conception of religious education. The awareness of preserving the Qur’ān through memorisation (*hifẓ*) is becoming prevalent and is still continued in these modern days in many educational institutions in many parts of the Muslim countries. This article examines different methods of Qur’ānic memorisation being practiced in Malaysia. Similarities and uniqueness of those methods will be presented. The evaluation of those Qur’ānic memorisation techniques brings to the foreground the educative value of memorisation as a learning tool and the implications memorisation methods have in enhancing an individual’s learning performance.

Keywords: Qur’ānic Memorisation; Rote learning; Preservation of the Qur’ān; *Hifẓ*; Religious value.

Abstrak: Penghafalan Al-Qur’an menduduki kedudukan sentral dalam konsepsi Muslim mengenai pendidikan berkaitan agama. Kesedaran untuk memelihara Al-Qur’an melalui penghafalan (*hifẓ*) menjadi semakin ketara dan masih diteruskan pada zaman moden ini di banyak institusi-institusi pendidikan di banyak bahagian negara-negara Islam. Artikel ini meneliti pelbagai kaedah penghafalan Qur’ān yang diamalkan di Malaysia. Persamaan dan keunikan kaedah-kaedah tersebut akan dibentangkan. Penilaian terhadap kaedah-kaedah

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penghafalan Qur'ān tersebut membawa kepada rumusan mengenai nilai pendidikan melalui kaedah penghafalan sebagai satu alat pembelajaran dan implikasinya dalam meningkatkan prestasi pembelajaran individu.

Kata kunci: Penghafalan Al-Qur'an; Pembelajaran secara ulangan; Pemeliharaan Al-Qur'an, *Hifz*; Nilai Keagamaan

Introduction

The Qur'ān was revealed in the Arabic language to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) through Jibrīl (A.S). The revelation came in stages and took over a period of twenty-three years. The contents of the Qur'ān are sacred and guarded by Allah (S.W.T) from any form of corruption or fabrication. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and his companions took very seriously the preservation of Qur'ān and it was done entirely through oral transmission or memorisation. The act of memorising the Qur'ānic verses is indeed traditional since it can be dated back to the time of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) who was taught by Jibrīl (A.S) to recite and memorise the Qur'ān (Cimen, 2012). The tradition of memorising the Qur'ān was then continued and practiced by the companions to preserve the authenticity of the contents of the Qur'ān. The title *Hāfiẓ* is given to a person who memorises the entire Qur'ān and the word *Tahfiẓ al-Qur'ān* refers to the activity of Qur'ānic memorisation.

Qur'ānic schools, that classically patronise the culture of Qur'ānic memorisation, were the bedrock and torchbearers of a system of Islamic education that flourished in many parts of the Muslim world and they continue to play significant roles in shaping the development of the Muslim world. Drawing on data from an extensive field research in Morocco, Yemen, and Nigeria, Boyle suggests that Quranic memorization in these schools “is a process of embodying the divine—the words of God—and as such is a far more learner-oriented and meaningful process than is typically described” (Boyle, 2006, p. 480). Thus, Qur'ānic schools “constitute an authentically non-Western tradition of education that predates the penetration of European institutions into the non-European world in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries” (Boyle, 2004, p. 1). The tradition of memorising the Qur'ān in these schools continues until today with the establishment of many formal and informal educational institutions, commonly known in Malaysia as

Tahfīz institutes or Ma'āhid Tahfīz. Various techniques of memorisation have been discovered and all come with the only aim to ensure that the Qur'ān remain intact in the heart of its followers (Ariffin et al., 2013).

This article reviews different methods of memorisation of the Qur'ān practiced in many institutes of Tahfīz Al-Qur'an in Malaysia. Prior to this, the article presents the virtues and significance of memorising the Qur'ān within the life of a Muslim. Following the review on the memorisation methods, the importance of memorisation as a learning tool to enhance any individual's learning performance will be highlighted.

Religious Value of Qur'ānic Memorisation

The act of memorising the Qur'ān has been a tradition to Muslim starting from the time the Qur'ān was revealed and continued until today. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) was considered the first memoriser as he was asked to commit the first revelation (96:1-5) via the form of oral transmission by the Angel Jibrīl (A.S). The Prophet (S.A.W) is instructed in the Qur'ān to follow the Qur'ān recital: "When we have recited it to you (O Muhammad through Gabriel) then you follow its (Qur'ān) recital" (75:18).

The tradition to commit the Qur'ān to memory is followed by Prophet's companions. While a number of them could read and write, particularly the scribes who were formally charged with the task of recording the Qur'ān, a greater majority relied on memorisation (al-Zarqānī, 1995, p. 202). Verbatim memorisation was heavily utilised. As a result, many companions memorised the entire Qur'ān word by word. Some of the noticeable companions who memorised the Qur'ān include Zayd ibn Thābit, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Mu'adh ibn Jabal, Abū Zayd and Abū al-Dardā' (al-Zarqānī, pp. 198-201). Muslims, regardless of background and native language have been highly encouraged not only to read the Qur'ān, but also to memorise it. Allah (S.W.T) has stated that the Qur'ān is made easy for memorisation (54:17) "And We have certainly made the Qur'ān easy to understand and remember, so is there any who will remember?" In the life of Muslim, memorising the Qur'ān can be considered as a way to continue the tradition of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) as well as one of the modes to preserve the authenticity of the Qur'ān as the guidance to mankind. The Qur'ān from the time it was revealed has been preserved via the superb memory ability of the

Prophet (S.A.W) and his companions. The Qur'ān states that Allah (S.W.T) Himself is the protector of the Qur'ān (15:9) "We have, without doubt, sent down *al-dhikr* (the Message); and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)." As the Qur'ān is under the protection of Allah (S.W.T), in the general sense those reading and memorising the Qur'ān can be understood as under the protection of Allah as well.

Allah has promised special privileges to the one who memorises the Qur'ān in a number of ways in this world and hereafter, as stated in several *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W): "The most superior among you (Muslims) are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it" (Al-Bukhārī, v. 6, h. 546). He also states: "The example of the person who knows the Qur'an by heart is like the owner of tied camels. If he keeps them tied, he will control them, but if he releases them, they will run away" (Al-Bukhārī, v. 6, h. 549). In another *ḥadīth* reported by Al-Tirmidhī, the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) is reported to have said:

The one who memorized the Qur'an shall come on the Day of Judgement and (the reward for reciting the Qur'an) says: 'O Lord! Decorate him.'" So he is donned with a crown of nobility. Then it says: "O Lord! Give him more!" So he is donned with a suit of nobility. Then it says: "O Lord! Be pleased with him.'" So He is pleased with him and says: "Recite and rise up, and be increased in reward with every Ayah (Tirmidhī v. 5, h. 2915).

On the virtue of recitation of the Qur'ān, the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) states: "It shall be said to the Companion of the Qur'ān, 'Recite [of what you have memorised] and rise up, recite [melodiously] as you would recite in the world. For indeed your rank shall be at the last Ayah [verse] you recited'" (Tirmidhī v. 5, h. 2914). All this demonstrates a significant role Qur'ānic memorisation and recitation plays in the life of a Muslim.

A Review of Methods of Qur'ānic Memorisation

This section reviews different methods of memorisation of Qur'ān practiced in many institutes of Tahfīz Al-Qur'an in Malaysia. These include Deobandy method, Panipati method, a method from Saudi Arabia and a method from Indonesia. These methods of Qur'ānic memorisation are among the most commonly practiced methods in

India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia as well as in many institutes of Tahfīz Al-Qur'an in Malaysia. The following review is based mainly on several studies conducted by Ariffin, Abdullah, et al. (2014, 2015), Ariffin and Wahid, (2014), Ariffin, et al. (2013), Ariffin (2011), and Ariffin, et al. (2011).

Deobandy and Panipati Methods

Deobandy method is a method of memorisation that originated from India and has gained a great prominence among the *Tahfīz* students in Malaysia. The term 'Deobandy' refers to the region of Deoband which is located in Uttar Pradesh India. In the Deobandy method, there are five basic techniques of memorisation known as *Sabak*, *Para Sabak*, *Ammokhtar*, *Halaqah Dauri* and *Syahadah Hafiz*.

Panipati method is also known as the Pakistani method as the term Panipati refers to the name of the first teacher who pioneered this method in Pakistan. The teacher was from a province called Panipati. This memorisation method is composed of seven techniques or stages known as *Sabak*, *Six Sabak*, *Sabki*, *Separah*, *Mutlaah*, *Tertib Wifak* and *Dastar Bandi*.

In both Deobandy and Panipati's first stage, *Sabak* is a term used to describe new memorisation of Qur'ānic verses. In other words, each new verse being recited to the teacher is referred to as *Sabak*. In Deobandy method, the students are required to repeat their reading of the new verses 40 times with the *mushaf* before they commit the verses to their memory. Interestingly, the memorisation starts from the last five *juz'* (division), that is starting from *juz'* 30, then followed by *juz'* 29 reversely to 26. This backward technique of starting the memorisation from the last *juz'* is assumed to be practiced because these *ajzā'* (plural of *juz'*) are easy to memorise since the verses are shorter and simpler, and are commonly recited in prayers. The students will then proceed to memorise from the front (*juz'* 1) up until *juz'* 25. *Sabak* in Deobandy method starts before the dawn as early as 4.30 am until 7.30 am, which is later on continued from 8.30 am to 9.30 am, bringing the total period/duration of memorisation to four hours every day.

Similarly, in Panipati method, its *Sabak* involves repetition of Qur'ānic verses in which students need to memorise the verses smoothly within the allocated time. The range of memorisation pages for *Sabak* is

to be on average half of page to four pages, the students normally will be able to memorise about one to two pages. What is unique in the *Sabak* phase of Panipati method is the consideration on the students' ability to memorise and monitor the recitation. The students' memorisation is monitored by the teachers. The role of teachers is deemed significant in the monitoring and checking of *Sabak* recitation. If the students are not able to present smooth recitation, canning punishment or reduction in the number of *sabak* is necessary.

The difference between the *Sabak* stage in Deobandy and Panipati methods is in terms of the time allocated for the new memorisation. While the *Sabak* in the Deobandy method is carried out in the early morning for a total of four hours daily, in the Panipati method, its *Sabak* stage takes a shorter time that is about two and half hours and starts in the evening. The memorisation continues till before the dawn where students are to be awakened to smoothen up their *sabak* before presenting them to the teacher for recitation after the dawn prayer.

The second technique or second stage of the Deobandy method is termed *Para Sabak*, also known as weekly memorisation. *Para Sabak* is done by reciting one *juz*' in the back of the new memorisation (*Sabak*) and the session usually starts in the morning. The process requires the students to revise their *Para Sabak* before being read in front of their teachers. In carrying out this stage, the students are paired with their respective partners of the same level or nearly the same level to ensure the compatibility between them. The role of the partners is to check for the students' reading by looking at the *mushaf* and calculate the number of mistakes which will then be reported to the teacher. This second technique of Deobandy method is similar to the third technique of Panipati method; *Sabki*. However, in Panipati method, prior to moving from the *Sabak* stage to *Sabki* stage, students need to first pass the *Six Sabak*. *Six Sabak* refers to six times memorisation of the latest memorisation materials. Moving from one page to another, both *Para Sabak* in Deobandy method and *Six Sabak* accompanied with *Sabki* in Panipati method require patience and fortitude for students to follow. This is because students are not allowed to proceed to the new memorisation if their recall is not smooth and not approved. Again here, the element of blind repetition or maintenance rehearsal is also brought to light in order to promote smooth recitation and memorisation with minimal mistakes.

The next stage in Deobandy method is *Ammokhtar*, referring to the revision of past memorisation with the addition of one new *juz'*. For example, for a student to retain the 15th *juz'*, he needs another 14 days to accommodate one *juz'* each day before reading *juz'* 15 (*ammokhtar*). Similar to *Ammokhtar*, Panipati method promotes *Separah* as a technique for repeated memorisation of the verses which were long remembered. The time for *Separah* in Panipati method is from 10 in the morning until noon; two hours period for the students to repeat the memorisation of verses that have been memorised to smoothen up those less fluency verses. In Panipati method, following *Separah* stage, students proceed to *Mutlaah* technique which requires the students to recite verses of the Qur'ān which will later to be memorised. *Mutlaah* is usually done in the afternoon in front of the teacher and by looking at the *mushaf* to ensure that the recitation is accurate and with good *tajwīd*. After recitation of *Mutlaah* in front of the teacher, students are required to proceed with the preparation of *separah* recitation for the next day. Different from previous techniques, the recitation limit is not determined by the teacher, instead it depends on the students themselves. Normally, the students will choose the *juz'* which they are not so fluent in recitation. To compare between *Ammokhtar*, *Separah* and *Mutlaah*, their uniqueness on the whole, lies in the concept of revision that is making a full round of all the past memorisation of verses or *juz'* while memorising the new ones. This is done to avoid students from forgetting those *ajzā'* that have been memorised.

The last stage of the Deobandy method is *Halaqah Dauri*. *Halaqah Dauri*, also termed as repetitious memorisation class, is a group that involved the students who already finished memorising the whole Qur'ān to repeat their memorisation. Those who failed at *Halaqah Dauri* will have to repeat *Sabak* technique, while only those who pass *Halaqah Dauri* are qualified to sit for *Syahadah Hafiz* (memorisation test). Likewise, Panipati method consists of *Tertib Wifak* referred to a timeframe for each student who has memorised the 30 *ajzā'* of the Qur'ān to repeat memorisations of the entire Qur'ān. Memorising the 30 *juz'* of the Qur'ān is the first level of *Tertib Wifak*. The second level is *tertib syahadah* – the stage where the students strengthen their memorisation prior to taking the final examination. The time taken to sit for this class is within three months. Upon completion of three months the *tertib wifak*, students will sit for an examination specifically for 30 *juz'* of the Qur'ān. To compare, in *Syahadah Hāfiz* of Deobandy method,

the students cannot do mistakes for more than 10 times for all 30 *juz'* being recited or else, this test is considered void and the student shall be asked to re-enter the *Halaqah Dauri*. Similarly, those students who succeed at *Tertib Wifak* of Panipati method will be considered to have passed the memorisation of the whole Qur'ān, whereas those who failed will have to repeat this *Tertib Wifak* class by sitting an examination for the next session. *Dastar Bandi* in the Panipati method is a stage where students who have successfully passed in *Tertib Wifak* would be given graduation certificates for completing their memorisation.

Saudi Arabia Method

The Saudi Arabia module of Qur'ānic memorisation entails four techniques, known as *Tasmi' Luh*, reversed memorisation, repetition of memorisation, and *Syahadah Hifz al-Qur'an*. *Tasmi' Luh* refers to the technique of listening to the recitation of the verses by the teacher. The teacher will first read the new verses to be memorised to the student. Then, the student will recite the same verse to the teacher. The second stage is the reversed memorisation stage. This stage involves memorisation in the reverse order that is it begins from the last *juz'* (*juz'* 30) to the first *juz'* (*juz'* 1). Students will then proceed to repetition of memorisation stage in which new memorisation is done alternately with old memorisation. The new memorisation in Saudi Arabia method is similar to *Sabak* technique in Deobandi and Panipati methods. In Saudi Arabia method, every old memorisation requires 10 times recitation in front of the teacher. As with the Deobandi and Panipati methods, the final stage in Saudi Arabia method is the certification stage known as *Syahadah Hifz al-Qur'an*. This stage consists of an examination that is divided into two levels. The first level is the completion of the last 15 *juz'* in the Qur'ān. Students must recite one page for each question asked (total of 3 questions) and results are graded in *mumtāz* (excellent), *jayyid jiddan* (very good), *jayyid* (good), *maqbul* (satisfactory) or *rāsib* (failed). Any grade qualifies the students to proceed to the next level. The second examination level is the *Khatm* the whole Qur'ān (30 *juz'*). Students are required to recite one page for each question asked (total 10 questions). Questions are randomly picked. Completion of this level with success qualifies the students with *Syahadah Hifz al-Qur'an*.

The Saudi Arabia method seems to emphasise on the role of the teacher to monitor the student's memorisation. It is with no doubt that

Qur'ānic memorisation is more effective if monitored by a teacher or mentor and this is also applied in the Saudi Arabia method especially in the first stage that is *Tasmi' Luh*. The role of the teacher is to monitor the student's recitation and correct any errors in *tajwīd*. Interestingly, this method also proposes memorisation to begin from the last *juz'* up to the first *juz'*. The reason can be assumed to be also similar to the reason inferred in India, Pakistan and Indonesian methods. The only difference is that the Saudi Arabia method prioritises the order of *surah* more than the order of *juz'*. This is to why memorisation should also begin from the last *surah* in every *juz'*, starting from *juz'*30. Repetition again plays a role as revision in the students' memorisation to ensure they will not forget their old memorisation while adding new memorisation. The last technique is the examination in which the students will be assessed in two levels. Interestingly, the students are qualified to proceed to the second level for whatever grade they receive in the first level. However, they should still take the first assessment seriously since the second assessment will be tougher and harder, and it determines whether or not they will pass the examination.

It can be concluded that the Saudi Arabia method also practices *tasmi'* which highlights the role of teacher in the process of *hifz*. Unlike those methods from India, Pakistan and Indonesia, though memorisation starts from the last *juz'*, yet priority is given more to the order of *surah* than the order of *juz'*, with repetition becomes important in securing the memorisation in the memory. Students should pursue the *hifz* class with total honesty and perseverance because the real challenge comes in the final examination.

Indonesian Method

This method was founded by a teacher named Maesun binti Talmad in Western Cirebon Jawa, Indonesia (Ariffin, 2011). *Hifz* module from Cirebon, Indonesia involves *Hifz al-Jadīd* (memorisation of the new), *Al-Hifz al-Uṣbū'ī* (weekly memorisation), *Al-Hifz al-Qadīm* (memorisation of the old), and *Syahadah Hifz al-Qur'an* (certificate of the memorisation of the Qur'an). The Indonesian method also applied the backward memorisation in which students start memorising verses from *juz'*30 up until *juz'*1. This will facilitate the students' memorisation as the verses in the later chapters are shorter, simpler and easier to memorise compared to those in the front chapters of the Qur'ān.

There are many similarities between Indonesian method and the methods from India (Deobandy) and Pakistan (Panipati) that have been reviewed above. In Indonesian method its *Hifẓ al-Jadid*, is similar to Sabak in Deobandy and Panipati methods. Next, the weekly memorisation or *Para Sabak* in Deobandy and Panipati methods refers to *Al-Hifẓ al-Uṣbūʿī* for weekly repetition. *Al-Hifẓ al-Qadīm* in Indonesian method is the revision of past memorisation. Similarly, with the other methods reviewed before, the last stage of Indonesian method is *Syahadah Hifẓ al-Qurʿan* which can be assumed to adapt and combine *Halaqah Dauri* and *Syahadah Ḥāfīz* in the Deobandy method.

Rote Learning and Learning Performance in Qurʿānic Memorisation

Memorisation was a practice well known to the Arabs long before the emergence of Islam. Noticeably, since Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) was illiterate and also because of lack of sources, the only way for the people to possess retention of information was to memorise. Memorisation during that time was not only an ordinary practice to preserve knowledge but also a fundamental trait and character of a knowledgeable person. Furthermore, according to Imam Shāfiʿī, knowledge is that which we keep in the heart and always remains accessible (Yusuf, 2010). Memorisation has indeed been a backbone of learning in the Arab culture. Their enhanced memory ability has enabled them to learn fast and imprison information within a short period. The memorisation practice has prepared them to further receive the Qurʿān and internalise its wonderful information into their hearts (al-Zarqānī, pp. 197-198).

The review of these methods has brought to light several common standardisations in the implementation of the memorisation techniques. Above all standardisations, the most significant standardisation in all the methods is credited to the concept of ‘memorise and repeat’. All the methods start with new memorisation whereby students start memorising the chosen verses in a verbatim manner. This means students recite and then memorise verse by verse and this needs to be done in a continuous manner, which means students repeat the recitation consistently to ensure the newly memorised verses or pages are committed to memory.

In the context of Western psychological literatures, learning via memorisation with no consideration to its meaning has been referred as rote learning (Mayer, 2002). In this form of learning, any information

is learned merely by repetitive reading or recitation, and it is meant to imprint and retain the material into the memory stores in much the same form in which it was taught. Memorisation in rote learning is done with the intention to access and regurgitate that information when needed. This form of learning, which emphasised on constant repetition and recitation and recall of content, is a very common pedagogical technique used in the field of education especially in Asian countries (Chua and Fatimah, 2014). As for the Qur'ānic memorisation, all the methods of Qur'ānic memorisation reviewed in the above section do emphasise on rote learning. This can be interpreted to reflect that this rote memorisation learning method is well recognised and acceptable as a way of learning and is always viewed as an effective learning method in Islamic education (Boyle, 2004, 2006; Iqbal and Ahmad, 2015).

Memorising without understanding of the memorised materials is a typical way of a surface learning approach, which is synonymous with a passive form of learning (Biggs, 2001, Duarte, Cabrito, Figuera, and Monge, 2015). In this surface or passive learning, the learner is simply and merely the receiver of the information. It is in contrast to a deep or an active form of learning whereby the learners are the explorer, the one who will look for and select information to learn and actively process the information (Duarte, Cabrito, Figuera, and Monge, 2015). A consistent research finding provides support for the advantages of an active form of learning over a passive learning form (Settles, 2012, Markant and Gureckis, 2014). Similarly, Cano (2005) and Diseth (2013) found that a surface approach is associated with poorer examination results in comparison to an active learning strategy. In some other studies, the mutual relationship between passive and active learning is found, whereby a high-quality active learning, which subsequently led to better overall performance, starts in a form of passive recipient of information (MacDonald and Frank, 2016).

The apparent downside to a surface or passive learning approach is its relatively superficial level of information processing. Within the framework of cognitive theories, the degree to which the information is processed can influence memory performance. Craik and Lockhart (1972) in their levels-of-processing theory argue that the deeper the level of information processing, the longer the information is kept stored and the better the memory performance. Thus, any information that is not subject to a deeper processing will result in a poor memory

performance. In rote memorisation, the learners simply go over materials again and again without actually properly absorbing and understanding or knowing the materials being learned. Learning via rote memorisation is said to not promote reflection or any analysis and challenge within that learned information.

This underrated value of rote memorisation highlighted in the Western psychological literatures goes beyond the framework of learning of Qur'ān via rote memorisation techniques. As reviewed above, rote memorisation forms part of a Muslim tradition of learning that stretches back to the time of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and his companions. The process of memorisation of the Qur'ān needs to be conceptualised differently from the existing psychological learning theories. The Qur'ān is revealed in Arabic language and is made accessible to all Muslims irrespective of their native mother tongue. *Hifẓ* or Qur'ānic memorisation is done by heart which fundamentally involves repetition of verse after verse. The voluminous amount of text of the Qur'ān has not been changed and remained to be the exact same words from the time of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) to the present day. Every Muslim, regardless of their native language is expected to uphold the trust to protect the Qur'ān from any errors and changes over time. This preservation of the Qur'ānic text 'as it is' is made possible by rote memorisation form of learning. Unlike studying any other materials which requires understanding and analysing of concepts for higher order executive functions, the learning of the Qur'ān involves the repetition of Qur'ānic text verbatim to ensure its authenticity.

The reviewed methods to memorise the Qur'ān differ only in details of techniques like the order of memorisation of the 30 *juz*', the order of page memorised first, number of times students are required to repeat the verses and how revision is done i.e. after a week or a month and individually or by peer-review. It can be argued that in the context of Qur'ānic memorisation, rote learning does provide educative value and can be regarded as the essence of learning. Apart from focusing on the preservation of the Qur'ānic text 'as it is', rote memorisation provides command over foundational principles of a concept, thus assisting for deeper consideration of further crucial and critical task. This means, rote memorisation of the Qur'ān is not the end of itself. Rather it becomes a means to an end of having meaningful understanding and application of the whole Qur'ān.

Mental health, which is instrumental for learning performance, could be improved by Qur'ānic memorisation. Research investigating the effect of the Qur'ān on human psychology has found positive relationship between Qur'ānic memorisation and one's mental health elements. Kimiaee, Khademian, and Farhadi (2012) have found that Qur'ān memorisers had better mental health, particularly in the areas of anxiety, depression, sleep disorders, and social function; the greater the number of the parts they memorised, the better their mental health was. Mahjoob and Nejat (2016) have also indicated that even a mere listening to the Qur'ān could improve mental health and help to achieve greater calmness.

In addition, the various activities of *hifz* enhances the memory capacity for further memorisation of other information. For instance, a great deal of attention and focus towards the Qur'ān is needed. The memoriser has to be consistent and committed in memorising and revising the Qur'ānic verses (Al-Hāfiz, 2002; Hashim, Tamuri, and Che Noh, 2014). Memorising the Qur'ān does challenge one's mental capacity as it requires a person to repeat and rehearse the text every day. This can be related back to the concept of training and automaticity because the memory enhance exercises in *hifz* makes the brain skilled and automatised for other learning and memory-based tasks (Yusuf, 2010). This automaticity in memorising ability makes it easier for the memoriser to perform other memory-based tasks such as other formal educational contexts. As a result, this certainly provides significant improvement in one's academic performance. In addition, in a study reported by Nawaz and Jahangir (2015), the academic achievement of students before and after memorising the Qur'ān by heart has been found to be significantly different. Furthermore, the study provided an overall positive impact on the educational and social cultural life of the students who engaged in rote memorisation of the Qur'ān.

Looking at the facts presented, it comes as no surprise that memorising the Qur'ān is not an easy task. The task of memorising the Qur'ān demands great patience and high self-discipline to ensure the targeted verses are memorised within the stipulated time. Students need to prepare themselves physically and mentally to face all forms of difficulties and challenges throughout the memorisation process. Consistency, perseverance and motivation are no doubt the essential traits that students need to have because what they have memorised can

easily fade away from the memory unless students are truly committed in ensuring the preservation of memorisation. As much as it is difficult for the students to memorise the Qur'ān, it is also difficult for the teachers to play their role in determining which technique is effective for Qur'ānic memorisation, as well as assessing the suitability of the technique each student adopts based on his/her ability and motivation. To crown it all, both students and teachers play their respective roles and commitments towards the goal of *hifz*.

In short, rote memory enhanced practices involved in the act of memorising the Qur'ān can indeed assist in any form of learning process. It sharpens and enhances memory capacity for other learned information and as a result, it will eventually promote improvement in academic and non-academic performance.

Conclusion

Memorisation has been practiced for centuries dating back to ancient times. It serves not only as a tool for learning but also preservation of knowledge and information, and this includes the preservation of Qur'ān. Learning will always involve the acquisition of knowledge and acquiring knowledge will always rely on ability to memorise. As learning and memory are closely related, it is often used interchangeably; learning is to memorise what is being learnt as similarly as memorising is to learn something. In general, memorisation as a learning tool is manifested as significant in the learning and understanding processes. It can also be regarded as a form of training which results in automaticity, hence elevates learning phase.

This article reviewed the methods of Qur'ānic memorisation and argued on the educative value resulting from rote memorisation methods. The current effort may lead to a more detailed analysis of other methods used to memorise the Qur'ān as at present this article only includes several methods of Qur'ānic memorisation commonly practised in Malaysia. Comparative studies on the various methods used may allow for more understanding and application of the most effective and efficient methods to be used. It is probable that each of these methods reflects the distinctive cultural-psychological characteristics of the locality in which it was introduced. The knowledge of peculiarities of each method and the understanding of each student traits will be helpful in matching and prescribing a particular method for a particular student.

This effort not only will promote Qur'ānic memorisation among anyone but also can lead to better learning experiences.

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