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The Advantages of Qur'an Memorization Toward Children's Social-Emotional Development

Muhammad Naufal Fairuzillah[1]✉, Yudi Dirgantara[2]
Pendidikan Islam Anak Usia Dini, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia(1)
Pendidikan MIPA, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia(2)
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Abstract

This study is a literature review aimed to discover the advantages of Qur'an memorization toward children's social-emotional development. Collective morality and social-emotional values are contained in the Qur'an. Several advantages of Qur'an memorization toward children's social-emotional development are: listening to the Qur'an recitation helps to reduce anxiety/stress and to produce relaxation, memorizing the Qur'an tends to develop social competencies, memorizing the Qur'an supports self-control memorizing the Qur'an encourages persistence. However, parents or teachers should be concerned about their children's characteristics. Therefore, the implementation of Qur'an memorization for children should be in accordance with the children's learning abilities and development. Parents can optimize the social-emotional advantages of their children through learning and memorizing the Qur'an if they apply the appropriate Qur'an memorization strategies to their children.

Keywords: *Qur'an memorization; early childhood; social development*

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✉ Corresponding author: Muhammad Naufal Fairuzillah
Email Address: naufal.fairuzillah41612@gmail.com (Bandung, Indonesia)
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Introduction

Al-Qur'an or Koran is the Holy Book of the Islamic religion as the guidance for mankind that was revealed from God (Allah) to the Prophet Muhammad through the Archangel Gabriel (Jibril) (Denffer, 1994). The Qur'an is organized into around 6,200 verses (*ayah*), 30 parts (*juz*), and 144 chapters (*surah*) from chapter *Al-Fatihah* to chapter *An-Nas*. This Islamic Holy Book is considered an inimitable miracle by Muslims, both in terms of the language, which contains high and magnificent Arabic literature, and the content, which explains the principle of faith, worship, norms, economic, political, and social laws (Ghayyadh, 2020; Yanggo, 2016). Muslims who read, memorize, understand, and even practice the content and the values of the Qur'an believe that they will be rewarded happiness and salvation in the world and hereafter (Siddiqi, 1993; Topbaş, 2003).

Recently, the public interest of the Muslim community has been high to create Huffaz/Hafiz (someone who has a good memorizing ability toward Qur'an verses). The numbers of *Huffaz* increase yearly, especially in Muslim-majority countries, such as Indonesia, where there are approximately 30.000 Huffaz of 210 million Muslim population (Hanafi, 2018; Hasni & Yuwanto, 2010). Besides, Pakistan has been producing one million *Huffaz* in the last three decades (Jalandhari, 2019). Most of the mosques and Islamic educational institutions in Muslim-majority countries hold Qur'an memorization learning in their programs (Bani et al.,

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2017; Hasbiyallah, 2012; Ranjha & Roofi, 2016). On the other hand, many Muslim parents also organize Qur'an memorization learning to their children since the early years at home (Ahmad Sabri, 2020; Dewi, 2020).

There are various glories in memorizing the Qur'an, as stated in the Qur'an and Hadith. The rewards flow in every reciting a letter of the Qur'an (At-Tirmidzi, 2008)Moreover, someone who tries to memorize the Qur'an verses must read them many times, so the rewards will be as huge as the quantity of the Qur'an verses he/she has read. Besides, in the Islamic view, a *Hafiz* is entitled as an honorable person; he is the most prioritized person to be leader (Imam) in prayer (Daud, 1998). The God (Allah) also will spare the *Huffaz* and their family members from hellfire and award them a crown and glory clothes on the Day of Judgment (At-Tirmidzi, 2008). Thus, this activity is one of the greatest worships in Islam and is highly recommended by the Prophet Muhammad.

Early childhood, which is a sensitive period in receiving various stimuli given by the environment, is very effective in educating children about the Qur'an (Ratnasih & Garnasih, 2020). The activity of Qur'an memorization is very closely related to several aspects of children's development (Yusuf, 2010). Several previous studies tried to reveal the influence of Qur'an memorization activities on the aspects of children's development, in fact, that these activities can intensify an individual's development simultaneously (Shukri et al., 2020). One of the influential aspects is the social-emotional development of children. Therefore, using the literature review method, this study tried to describe the advantages of Qur'an memorization toward children's social-emotional development.

The activity of Qur'an memorization, which in the Arabic language is called *hifz-ul-Qur'an*, is derived from حفظ (*hafazha*) which means to keep, to maintain, or to protect (Yunus, 1999). Furthermore, someone who has memorized the Qur'an well after going through the process of memorizing verse by verse of the Qur'an deliberately is called *Hafiz-ul-Qur'an* (Zamani & Maksum, 2009). Therefore, from the Arabic term of *hifz*, a *Hafiz* can recite the verses of the Holy Qur'an without looking at the sheets of the Qur'an and he/she always tries to keep or maintain it in his/her memory. This activity has been becoming a tradition among Muslims since the Prophet Muhammad received the revelation to maintain the authenticity of the Qur'an and to reach the blessings of God (Alaydrus, 2019).

Methodology

In this study, the author analyzes various relevant literature to explore and describe the positive impact of Qur'an memorization on children's social-emotional development. The author gathers information from previous studies, scholarly articles, and Islamic literature to formulate the benefits of Qur'an memorization in enhancing children's social-emotional abilities.

The research process begins with the collection of secondary data, which involves gathering data from various relevant sources related to Qur'an memorization and children's social-emotional development. The author then analyzes the findings from different studies to identify the impact of Qur'an memorization on social-emotional aspects, such as anxiety reduction, increased social competence, self-control, and persistence. The findings are organized into several key themes, including the influence of Qur'an memorization on social competence, self-control, persistence, and relaxation.

Result and Discussion

Early childhood is a golden age for various growth and development, very valuable years for a child to recognize various facts in his environment (Robinson, 2008). According to a neurologist, David Perlmutter, cited by Marisa Laliberte (2022), there are about 100 billion neurons formed when a baby is born, and the baby's brain size has reached 60% of the size of an adult brain. Then, the size of the human brain enlarges to 80% when entering the age of 3 years. At the age of 20 years, the brain development in the frontal lobe tends to stagnate.

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During childhood, the brain develops rapidly and fundamentally, and the connections of neurons become stronger (Gilmore et al., 2018). Thus, many Muslim parents aspire to educate their children the Qur'an since early childhood by stimulating their abilities, it can be more attached to the brain and last longer than when they are adults, even the program can be started since a mother is getting pregnant by chanting the verses of the Holy Qur'an into the womb (Fathi, 2011).

Educating children to become a *Hafiz* needs strategies that can support them optimally and achieve the best result. So, the strategies that the author summarized from various kinds of literature are: (1) straighten strong intention and determination, (2) start the program since the mother is pregnant, (3) Try to understand the children's characteristics and preferences, (4) Make habits related to Qur'an, (5) build the faith, morals and love of the Qur'an to the children, (6) show role models to them, (7) teach them with pleasure and without compulsion, (8) Facilitate play activities, (9) appreciate every children's effort and avoid punishment, (10) use suitable methods for children (11) do murja'ah (repeat the rote) regularly, and (12) discipline and consistency (Fairuzillah & Agustin, 2022; Raihan & Raihan, 2005; Riyadh et al., 2019; Shukri et al., 2020).

However, parents must be concerned that the sensitive period of each child is different along with the rate of growth and development of the child individually (Santrock, 2011). A child's ability cannot be equated with other children, especially in terms of the target of Qur'an memorization, so it cannot be generalized in achieving a target of Qur'an memorization for children. Furthermore, the determination of the method used in memorizing the Qur'an should be by the preferences and learning abilities of the children (Ma'rufah & Windiarti, 2020; Senan et al., 2017)Moreover, young children have not reached the capability to read and write, and their concentration power is relatively short. Besides, the parents or educators must fulfill the children's rights, including playing, it should be noted that playing is their world and has many benefits for the children's growth and development (Brown & Taylor, 2008).

Social development of children is a children's learning process in adapting to norms, morals, and traditional values in a group (Schmidt & Tomasello, 2012). It is a behavior in which the children try to know and adapt themselves to the rules applied in the community. Human beings are social creatures who need to interact with other people to develop their potential so that they can be part of their social environment or society (Khasinah, 2013). (Piaget, 2013)stated that children initially follow moral norms to respect the adults' authority and the elder children. However, he also argued that young children have high egocentric because they can't understand other people's thoughts (Rubin & Schneider, 1973). Thus, the young children only care for themselves and cannot socialize well with others.

The parents' guidance significantly influences the social development of children in introducing various aspects of social life and norms (Paley et al., 2000). The quality of the parent-child relationship and children's functioning in peer relationships remains a need for a better understanding of social norms. The children's social development increases significantly when they enter a pre-primary educational institution such as kindergarten. In kindergarten, frequently, the children interact and play with peers; they also carry out group activities guided by the teacher. In social development in this stage, we can see that the children know the rules, either in the family environment or the play environment, then they begin to follow the rules and realize the rights and interests of others and cooperate with them (Nurmalitasari, 2015).

While emotions are feelings or mental states that occur when someone is involved in a condition or interaction with the environment (Santrock, 2008). The emotional development of children has existed since birth or infancy. The emotions in young children are represented by their behavior that expresses comfort or discomfort with the experienced situation, such as crying, moving, yelling, laughing, or chattering. As for emotional development in children, according to Santrock (2008), it is marked by the emergence of evaluative emotions of pride,

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shame, and guilt, in which these emotions show that the children have begun to understand the social rules and norms to assess their behavior.

Emotions have a vital role in children's social development, influencing their behavior and character. (Goelman, 1998) stated that people who have good emotional development are able emotionally to handle their own feelings, understand the feelings of others, and maintain motivation. Those competencies are major factors in supporting the success in a social relationship. Therefore, parents and teachers should stimulate the children's emotional development appropriately. It is very important to understand and help the children to keep a positive mental state so they can get along with others more easily and learn better (Denham, 2007).

Al-Qur'an, as a divine guidance message for humans, involves all aspects of human life and social-emotional norms. Collective morality is contained in the Qur'an such as justice, fairness, honesty, brotherhood, solidarity, and respect of others (Ali, 2015; Islahi, 2015). In the Qur'an *surah Al-Hujraat* verse 13 written:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنَّا خَلَقْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ وَّاُنْثٰى وَجَعَلْنٰكُمْ شُعُوْبًا وَّقَبَاۤىِٕلَ لِتَعَارَفُوْا ۚ اِنَّ اَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ اَتْقٰىكُمْ ۗاِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌ خَبِيْرٌ

"O mankind, indeed We created you from male and female and made you into races and tribes, that you may know each other. Surely the noblest among you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is knowing and acquainted"

The verse explains that humans were created from male and female who later consisted of different races and tribes. The goal is to be harmonious and know each other, as multi-ethnicity should not cause a conflict and every form of discrimination is unacceptable (Khasawneh & Al-Jamal, 2017; Wildan, 2019).

In another verse surah At-Taubah verse 71 mentioned:

وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ اَوْلِيَاۤءُ بَعْضٍ ۘيَأْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَيُؤْتُوْنَ الزَّكٰوةَ وَيُطِيْعُوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ ۗاُولٰۤىِٕكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللّٰهُ ۗاِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ

"The believers, men and women, are protectors one of another. They command beneficence and forbid maleficence, and keep up the prayer, and give 'zakah', and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah will show mercy to them. Surely Allah is Mighty. Wise"

The verse explains that in fact, people who believe, both male and female, have an empathic attitude, resulting in a brotherly bond, and the brotherhood can be established through prayer and almsgiving (*zakah*). That verse also is an order to invite other people to do goodness and prevent evil (Saihu, 2020).

Besides, many verses in the Qur'an express the values of optimism, self-confidence, enthusiasm, patience, and so on as a form of a servant's faith that can increase his emotional control (Butt, 2014; Gade, 2004).

Allah (God) said in the Qur'an *surah Al-Baqarah* verse 153:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اسْتَعِيْنُوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلٰوةِ ۗاِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ

"O, you who believe, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient"

From this verse, a believer when dealing with difficulties, relies on two things: patience and prayer (Ar-Rifa'i & Syihabuddin, 1999).

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In another *surah, Al-Furqan* verse 63, mentioned:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمٰنِ الَّذِيْنَ يَمْشُوْنَ عَلَى الْاَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَّاِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجٰهِلُوْنَ قَالُوْا سَلٰمًا

"And the servants of (Allah) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humbleness, and when the ignorant address them, they say, 'peace'"

The servants of Allah are the people who walk on the earth humbly, not arrogantly, and when the ignorant people greet them with insulting words, they reply and pray for them with salvation words (As-Suyuthi & Al-Mahalli, 2003). Those are few examples of verses related to social-emotional behavior of human being written in the Qur'an.

The important thing in memorizing the Qur'an is faith, and the important thing in learning any science is to have good manners (Hafnidar et al., 2020). (Sadida & Triman, 2018) concluded in their research that there is a correlation between faith education and social-emotional skills. The teacher or parent who teaches the Qur'an to their children generally not only about memorizing the Qur'an, but also about believing and understanding the content of the Qur'an. Therefore, teaching the Qur'an to the children is one of the effective ways to stimulate the children's social-emotional development. Several advantages of Qur'an memorization to children's social-emotional development based on various kinds of literature are:

Listening to the Qur'an Recitation Helps to Reduce the Anxiety/Stress and to Produce the Relaxation

Qur'an memorization is closely related to reciting and listening to the Holy Qur'an verses. One of the appropriate methods of Qur'an memorization for young children who have not been able to read and learners through audio is *sima'i* method, it is one way of Qur'an memorization through listening either directly by the tutor/parents or using assistive media such as MP3 or tape recorder regularly and repeatedly until the children can follow and memorize the Holy verses that they have listened (Irlina, 2019). Besides, the recitation of the Holy Qur'an is governed by a set of rules known as *tajweed* to prescribe the correct and appropriate pronunciation in reciting the Qur'an verses (Ahsiah et al., 2013; Akkila & Abu-Naser, 2018). Then, the characteristic of the Qur'anic language also has poetic language that the listener can savor the Qur'anic chant (Ghanem & Wahab, 2018).

Those forms above have the power to reduce the anxiety and stress of children (Salam, Wahab, & Ibrahim, 2013). It is in line with the study conducted by Ghanem & Wahab (2018) about the positive effects of Qur'an recitation on Heart Rate Variability (HRV) as an indicator of student emotions. In addition, listening to the recitation of Qur'an verses produces a significant relaxation on human emotions (Mahjoob et al., 2016; Nayef & Wahab, 2018; Shekha et al., 2013). Some studies also proposed that performing melodious Qur'an recitation as sound therapy is in line with the positive effect associated with music therapy as sound therapeutic for specific mental symptoms (Tumiran et al., 2013). Thus, listening to the Qur'an recitation can convert the valence from negative emotions to positive emotions same as relaxing music does as Al-Galal Alshaikhli, Rahman, and Dzulkifli (2015) argued in their research.

Memorizing the Qur'an Tends to Develop Social Competence

Social competence means an ability to take another's perspective, work well in an environment with others to accomplish a task or to resolve a problem, and behave appropriately according to the situation and social norms (Dodge et al., 1986; Strain et al., 1986). As *Huffaz* who read or listen to the Qur'an verses regularly, they afford to instill the Qur'anic values in their daily lives, so the Holy verses are not only present in their memory, but also their behavior and character (Naviyah & Wahid, 2021). Those who memorize the Qur'an tends to be more polite and have excellent moral, also, they obey religious orders

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(Kosim et al., 2019). Moreover, there three levels of *Huffaz* according to Fikri cited by Abdurrahman and Fathoni (2018), firstly, those who memorize the Holy verses of the Qur'an only, secondly, those who not only memorize the Qur'an, but also understand the meaning of the Qur'an, and the last as the excellent and highest level is not only memorizing and understanding the Qur'an, but also practicing the values of the Qur'an in the life. Research in a pre-school by Aziz (2017)showed that there was a positive correlation between the program of Qur'an memorization with student's character as well as pro-social attitude. It is in line with the research conducted by Zadshir, Stoki, Emamipour (2009) that the social development and moral judgment of students who completely memorized the Qur'an were higher than the ordinary students.

Memorizing the Qur'an Supports Self-Control

Self-control or self-regulation refers to the ability to manage self-emotion and determine one's own response to a condition and situation. It is an emotional, attentional, and behavioral impulse in human beings (Bandy & Moore, 2010). Self-control also encourages a positive relationship with peers or others and better physical and mental health (Duckworth et al., 2014). In the book of *At-Tibyan fii Adab Hamalah Al-Qur'an*, Imam awawi (1996) suggested several manners that the Huffaz should follow, including they should always straightening their intentions, being sincere and grateful for the blessing of God, and always being humble as well as controlling themselves. If the virtues and glories of Qur'an memorization have been understood by the children who memorize the Qur'an, it will have an impacts on the motivation and self-control of the children (Hidayat, 2017). In intrapersonal self-regulation, the children who memorize the Qur'an have an organized schedule for their activities, especially for memorizing the Qur'an and repeating the rote (*murajaah*), they should regulate their spirit and motivation to keep their memorization (Darda & Uddin, 2019). While, interpersonal self-regulation shows that the children try to have good relationships with family members, friends, and teachers to bolster the success of Qur'an memorization and its values (Pangatin & Merdekasari, 2020).

Memorizing the Qur'an Encourages Persistence

Children who show persistence cannot only stay focused on task but also overcome setbacks and keep trying even if it is difficult. They can perform a set of tasks with care and effort from start to finish (Delale-O'Connor et al., 2012). Although the ability to persist increases with age, it remains how the environment affects the persistence (Oeri & Roebers, 2021). Children who try to memorize the Qur'an will face many barriers and challenges; meanwhile, to achieve good memorization of Holy verses, even the entire Qur'an needs more effort so that persistence could be encouraged. Afsari, Hafizah, Muzakkar, and Nashori (2020) argued in their study that not only self-control but also persistence play a role in the process of memorizing the Quran.

Conclusion

Muslim parents are highly interested in educating their children to become a Hafiz and memorize the Qur'an due to its various benefits, including social-emotional development. The Qur'an contains moral and social-emotional values, and parents and teachers aim to have children not only memorize it, but also understand its content and values. Listening to Qur'an recitation helps reduce anxiety and stress, while memorizing the Qur'an encourages social competence, self-control, and persistence in children. Parents and teachers need to consider children's characteristics when teaching Qur'an memorization. By using appropriate strategies, parents can optimize the social-emotional benefits for their children.

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