

SEMANTIC MEMORY TENDENCY IN QURAN MEMORISATION TECHNIQUE TOWARDS MEMORISERS IN MITS KLANG

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Abstract. Quranic memorisation refers to the systematic and gradual practice of consistently reading the Quran, enabling individuals to commit it to memory and recite it without relying on the physical text. Furthermore, although there is an increasing amount of research on the influence of Quranic memorisation on different cognitive functions, there is a notable lack of information regarding its precise effects on semantic memory. This study aimed to identify and evaluate the proficiency of Quran memorisation strategies among memorisers at Maahad Integrasi Tahfiz Selangor (MITS) Klang, based on their gender. This study was conducted at MITS Alam Impian using a survey approach. Based on the breakdown of the highest percentage and frequency of practice of the Quran memorisation technique, it is proposed that the technique most often used by both gender categories is "memorising the literal meaning of the verses (S2)." This study concludes that female Quran memorisers often practice the technique of "memorising the literal meaning of the verses." Future studies should continue to explore the subtleties of semantic memory in Quran memorisation, which could potentially lead to innovative approaches that religious educational contexts worldwide can adopt, thereby enriching the spiritual and educational journey of Quran memorisers embarking on the noble quest of Quran memorisation.

Keywords: *semantic memory, memorisation techniques, gender, MITS*

Introduction

Quranic memorisation refers to the systematic and gradual practice of consistently reading the Quran, enabling individuals to commit it to memory and recite it without relying on the physical text. The Muslim world reveres the Quran, a sacred scripture, as one of Allah's miraculous gifts to the Prophet (peace be upon him, pbuh). The process of Quranic memorisation can be comprehended by examining the progressive revelation of the Quran to the Prophet (pbuh). Majid and Sugitanata (2021) outlines four main conditions for the delivery of the Quran: (a) Jibrail (or Gabriel), one of the archangels, who is present in an unseen state, delivers it; (b) Jibrail appears as a male individual; (c) Jibrail delivers it in his true appearance; and (d) Jibrail delivers it to the Prophet (pbuh) after he perceives a loud bell-like sound. The transmission of the Quran from Jibrail to the Prophet (pbuh) typically occurred through the recital of its verses. Jibrail imparted the recital of the Quran to the Prophet (pbuh) through talaqqi. Talaqqi is a teaching method for acquiring the skill of reciting the Quran, wherein the student emulates the recitation style of the teacher (Safie et al., 2022). The recitation of the Quran typically takes place in incremental steps, facilitating the Prophet's (pbuh) memorization of it (Nawi et al., 2021). This procedure ensures that the memorization of the Quran by the Prophet (pbuh) is constantly proficient and reliable. Several verses of the Quran explain this situation:

“Move not your tongue with it, [O Muhammad], to hasten with recitation of the Qur'an. Indeed, upon Us is its collection [in your heart] and [to make possible] its recitation. So when We have recited it [through Gabriel], then follow its recitation. Then upon Us is its clarification [to you].”

(Saheeh International, 2021)

Furthermore, the practice of Quran memorisation serves to safeguard the Quran from any form of misappropriation or falsification, as observed by the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) (Daud and Musa, 2021). Allah Almighty perpetually safeguards the Quran in its sacredness, despite ongoing attempts to discredit it. Multiple Quran passages clarify this situation:

“Indeed, it is We who sent down the Qur'an and indeed, We will be its guardian.”

(Saheeh International, 2021)

“Say: If mankind and the jinn gathered in order to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like of it, even if they were to each other assistants.”

(Saheeh International, 2021)

To preserve the integrity of the Quran, individuals who have committed it to memory typically possess the ability to recite it with tartil with a proper tajweed (Fakhruddin et al., 2020). These skills are anticipated to aid those who memorise the Quran in retaining their recitations for an extended period. It is strongly advised to read the Quran with tartil (reciting it slowly and melodiously) with a proper tajweed (using the rules of proper pronunciation and intonation).

“...and recite the Quran with measured recitation (tartil).”

(Saheeh International, 2021)

Several strategies are anticipated to aid individuals in the process of memorising the Quran (Abdullah et al., 2021a). Nevertheless, the study of Quranic memorisation strategies should be conducted with consideration of the gender classification of the individuals dedicated to the Quran. This phenomenon arises because of gender differences in the implementation of Arabic learning techniques (Arifin et al., 2021). Arabic is an essential language for the daily religious practices of the Muslim population. Khaira (2021) and Nasier (2020) assert that the Quran's use of Arabic fuels this need. Furthermore, although there is an increasing amount of research on the influence of Quranic memorisation on different cognitive functions, there is a notable lack of information regarding its precise effects on semantic memory. Most studies have concentrated mainly on rote memory and recall, neglecting to explore the potential impact of memorising the Quran on the capacity to comprehend and retain meanings, concepts, and the interconnections between them. Moreover, the possible ways in which memorising the Quran could improve semantic memory, including the impact of repetitive exposure, profound cognitive processing, and emotional involvement, have not been thoroughly investigated. This knowledge gap provides an opportunity for more research to enhance our comprehension of the cognitive advantages of memorising the Quran.

This study aimed to identify and evaluate the proficiency of Quran memorisation strategies among memorisers at Maahad Integrasi Tahfiz Selangor (MITS) Klang, based on their gender. This study provides a multitude of advantages. Gender-based assessment can offer valuable insights into the cognitive and educational disparities that may exist between male and female Quran memorisers. This enables the creation of customised teaching approaches that address the distinct requirements of each gender. Implementing such a strategy can improve the efficiency of memorising methods and potentially result in more success in memorising the Quran as a whole. Furthermore, comprehending gender-specific propensities in learning and memory can enhance the inclusivity of the educational setting, enabling optimal growth and success for both male and female students. Additionally, it can assist in acknowledging and rectifying any subconscious prejudices in teaching methods while guaranteeing fair and equal access to educational materials and opportunities. Moreover, this information can contribute to the development of inclusive communities that cultivate reciprocal regard and comprehension among students, a crucial aspect of religious education. By acknowledging the unique strengths and difficulties associated with each gender, educators can foster a cooperative environment in which students can mutually benefit from one another's knowledge, thus enhancing the experience of memorising the Quran. In essence, this research can enhance the overall conversation on gender equality in education, in line with Quranic principles that highlight the significance of knowledge for everyone, irrespective of gender.

Literature review

Quran memorisation is a revered practice among Muslims, and various techniques have been developed to aid individuals in this endeavour. One such technique involves semantic memory, which is the ability to recall information about the world (Annafiri, 2022). Researchers have delved into the semantic analysis of Quranic words to deepen the understanding of the text (Rahman and Rashid, 2021). Understanding the semantic nuances of Quranic vocabulary can enhance the memorization process by providing a richer comprehension of the text (Parbo, 2024). Moreover, the use of Arabic language schemata has been found to have a direct and indirect impact on memorization achievement through Quranic comprehension (Hussin et al., 2021). Studies have identified a range of techniques for Quran memorization, including listening, reading, understanding, and repetition (Ismail et al., 2023). These techniques not only aid in memorization but also contribute to the development of higher-order thinking skills (Abdullah et al., 2020). Research has shown that repeatedly reciting Quranic verses enhances brain function, memory retention, and information-processing abilities (Draman et al., 2023). Additionally, Maula and Fijianto (2021) have linked the application of interventions like listening to Quranic recitations to positive health outcomes, such as reducing blood pressure in the elderly. The effectiveness of Quran memorisation techniques can vary among individuals based on their inclinations, abilities, and auditory acuity (Khamaruddin and Fasehah Muhamad, 2021). Motivation plays a crucial role in maintaining Quranic memorization, with extrinsic factors and challenges influencing students' dedication to the practice (Hussin et al., 2023). Scholars have explored the integration of Quranic memorisation with academic subjects to enhance students' learning experiences and their comprehension of the Quran (Hilmi et al., 2022). Furthermore, the quality of memorization among teachers can impact their ability to impart knowledge effectively to students (Pangilun and Baharudin, 2021).

Researchers have studied the effectiveness of integrating Quranic teachings in schools to enhance students' learning experiences (Nurhasan et al., 2023). Khoiruddin and Kustiani (2020) have developed management strategies for teaching Quranic recitation based on methods like “tilawati” to optimise the learning process. Researchers have also investigated the impact of digitalising the Quran on students' reading habits and engagement with the text (Fajrie et al., 2023). Additionally, Mohamed (2021) has introduced intensive Quran memorisation training modules to strengthen students' memorization skills. Analysing the stylistic aspects of Quranic verses, such as phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and imagery, can provide a deeper appreciation of the text and aid in memorisation (Gunarti and Ahmadi, 2022). Understanding the stylistic elements of Quranic verses can enhance the memorisation process by creating a more vivid and engaging learning experience. By exploring the linguistic and semantic intricacies of the Quran, individuals can deepen their connection to the text and improve their memorization abilities. The integration of Quranic teachings with modern educational approaches and technologies can further enhance the memorisation process and promote a deeper understanding of the Quranic text. The literature review, in summary, explores the relationship between Quranic memorisation and semantic memory, highlighting the various methods developed to aid in this process. The statement emphasises the importance of understanding the subtle meanings of Quranic words as well as the influence of Arabic language patterns on memory success. The review also examines the significance of motivation, personal predispositions, and aptitudes in sustaining Quranic memorization. The study explores the incorporation of Quranic memorization with academic disciplines, the efficacy of Quranic instruction in educational institutions, and the influence of digitising the Quran on students' reading behaviours. Lastly, it underscores the importance of examining the stylistic elements of Quranic verses and incorporating Quranic teachings with contemporary educational methods and technologies to improve the process of memorising and foster a more profound comprehension of the Quranic text. The literature review's flow of topics is simplified into the framework (*Figure 1*).

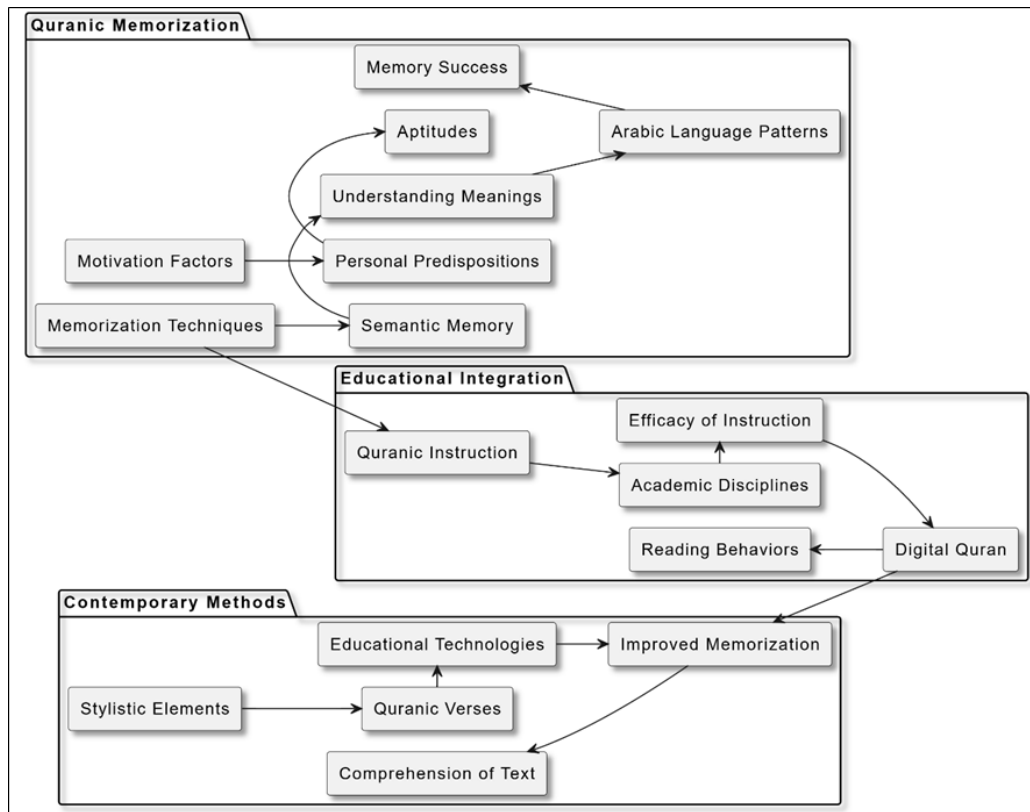


Figure 1. The topics flow of literature review.

Materials and Methods

This study was conducted at MITS Alam Impian using a survey approach. Quran memorisers among MITS Alam Impian students (n=192) were involved as respondents. The Krejcie and Morgan (1970) technique was used to determine the sample size. A questionnaire and IBM SPSS Statistics computer software are used as instruments in data collection and analysis, respectively. The content of the questionnaire was developed by using a literature search and encoded according to the following types of memory (Table 1). The respondents used a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 to indicate the frequency with which they engaged in various memorisation techniques. The scale included options such as "never (1)," "very rarely (2)," "sometimes (3)," "frequently (4)," and "very often (5)." During the process of organising data, values ranging from 1 to 3 are assigned to the category "not practising," whereas values ranging from 4 to 5 are assigned to the category "practising." A pilot study has been conducted with individuals who had memorised the Quran (n=30), applying the Johanson and Brooks (2010) technique to determine the sample size. The study took place at Maahad Tahfiz An-Nabawi in Shah Alam, Selangor. The reliability of the items in this questionnaire was evaluated using the Alpha Cronbach test, which yielded a high reliability value ($\alpha=0.796$) (Bryman and Cramer, 2012).

Table 1. Coding of the Quran memorisation techniques.

No.	Code	Item
1.	S1	Memorising the storyline of the verses
2.	S2	Memorising the literal meaning of the verses

3.	S3	Memorising the circumstances of revelation
4.	S4	Memorising the lesson of the verses

Results and Discussion

Based on descriptive statistical analysis (*Table 2*), it is proposed that all Quran memorisation techniques are identified as recording the diversity of practice levels according to the gender categories of Quranic devotees. However, the techniques "memorising the circumstances of revelation (S3)" and "memorising the lesson of the verses (S4)" recorded the least practical level for both male and female categories. Based on the breakdown of the highest percentage and frequency of practice of the Quran memorisation technique, it is proposed that the technique most often used by both gender categories is "memorising the literal meaning of the verses (S2)." A high level of practice is defined as the frequency of Quranic memorisation strategies that surpasses half (>50 percent) of the whole sample for each gender category. Male individuals who have memorised the Quran are found to possess a significant level of proficiency in the technique of "memorising the literal meaning of the verses (S2)", with a frequency of 48.4 percent (n=46). While, regarding female Quran memorisers, there are two approaches used to track the frequency of practice. The first technique involves "memorising the literal meaning of the verses (S2)", which is done by 71.1 percent (n=69) of the participants. The second strategy involves "memorising the storyline of the verses (S1)", which is done by 47.4 percent (n=46) of the participants. The findings indicate that male and female Quran memorisers are more inclined to employ the strategy of "memorising the literal meaning of the verses (S2)" (*Table 2*).

Table 2. Percentage and overall frequency of practice of Quran memorization techniques based on gender (male, n=95; and female, n=97).

No.	Code	Men		Women	
		Not practicing	Practice	Not practicing	Practice
1.	S1	72.6 (69)	27.4 (26)	52.6 (51)	47.4 (46)
2.	S2	51.6 (49)	48.4 (46)	28.9 (28)	71.1 (69)
3.	S3	90.5 (86)	9.5 (9)	79.4 (77)	20.6 (20)
4.	S4	83.2 (79)	16.8 (16)	63.9 (62)	36.1 (35)

Note: Percentage [%] (Frequency, N)

The method of "memorising the literal meaning of the verses" can assist individuals who are memorising the Quran during the memorisation process. The techniques mentioned above are consistent with the research conducted by Hanapi et al. (2022), Siddik et al. (2022), Abdullah et al. (2021a), Hussin et al. (2021) as well as Zaini et al. (2021) which propose that a thorough understanding of Arabic is beneficial for individuals memorising the Quran. This proficiency in Arabic encompasses three key elements: (a) nahu (grammar of Arabic linguistic); (b) sarf (Arabic word formation and morphology); and (c) the Quranic lexicon. Proficiency in the various aspects of Arabic linguistic skills is anticipated to assist individuals who are memorising the Quran in resolving challenges related to verses that are similar in nature, determining appropriate stopping and starting points for reading, achieving accurate pronunciation, selecting appropriate language, and identifying different types of punctuation. Hence, acquiring a deep understanding of Arabic language skills, particularly nahu, can significantly enhance the motivation of Quran memorizers. This knowledge enables them to

memorise the Quran with a sense of enjoyment and enthusiasm. The study's findings align with the approach of comprehending the significance of passages through attaining proficiency in Arabic. A thorough understanding of memory's orthographic, phonological, and auditory aspects links the semantic memory system to the acquisition of Arabic language skills. Nevertheless, as stated by Shukri et al. (2020) in their study, Quran memorisers dispute the notion that a lack of nahu skills contributes to difficulty in memorisation.

Nidhom (2018) propose that enhancing Quran memorisation skills can be achieved by comprehending the meaning of Quranic verses through translation from Arabic to one's native language. This is because it is common for individuals who memorise the Quran to first read its translation to comprehend its content before commencing the memorization process. Meanwhile, Karim et al. (2020) found that one of the Quran memorisation procedures linked to the practice of reading translations prior to memorisation is the Yada'in approach. The Yada'in approach of Quran memorisation focuses on visualising Quranic verses, allowing the memoriser to identify the location and number of each verse. This enhances the ability to recall the contents of the verses without necessarily comprehending their meanings. This approach is especially advantageous for memorising the Quran, as other sensory elements like sound and reading experience can also assist in the memorisation process. Additionally, this approach enables one to memorise a single page of the Quran by solely studying the word-for-word translation after finishing the process of reading and comprehending the verse's translation. This approach can also assist individuals who are memorising the Quran in the process of transcribing the verses of the Quran that pertain to Quran memorisation by incorporating the "mufradat" (a synonymous word) in Arabic.

Within the context of memory, the act of translating verses into one's native language to comprehend their meaning can be associated with the functioning of the working memory system. Specifically, this process involves the visuospatial components that facilitate language comprehension, particularly semantic memory. Female Quran memorisers commonly employ this practice. This study was supported by Abdullah et al. (2020). These researchers discovered that female Quran memorisers frequently employ various techniques. Research indicates that females demonstrate better performance on activities that necessitate the recollection of information and adherence to explicit rules compared to males. According to the results of this study, it is recommended that female Quran memorisers prioritise "memorising the literal meaning of the verses" as the initial stage in the Quran memorisation process. Furthermore, the educational atmosphere that prioritises the acquisition of linguistic skills in Arabic and English during Quran memorisation sessions and the learning process also enhances the semantic memory system of female Quran memorisers.

However, according to Sirin et al. (2021), male individuals who have memorised the Quran are more likely to prefer tasks that are autonomous, realistic, and practical. Male individuals who have memorised the Quran are often believed to have a greater ability to recall the specific path they have previously taken. In terms of memory, male Quran memorizers are required to recall the repeated verse without necessarily comprehending its meaning. This is because additional sensory stimuli, such as auditory cues and the act of reading, can aid in the process of remembering. Nevertheless, for a thorough understanding of the Quran, one must consult the Tafsir book. Hence, it is crucial to incorporate these preferences and talents into the design of teaching strategies and curricula, particularly for subjects that need extensive memorization, such as the Quran.

Based on these findings, it is critical to consider the use of multi-sensory instructional techniques, such as the Yada'in approach, which highlights the use of visualisation and auditory cues. This is necessary to accommodate the learning preferences of male Quran memorisers, ultimately improving their ability to memorise and facilitating a more productive and efficient learning process.

The approach to comprehending the meaning of verses can be accomplished by studying the tafsir syllabus authored by reputable scholars or attending tafsir study sessions conducted by religious professionals, as stated by Abdullah et al. (2021b) and Samsiatun et al. (2024). Gaining a comprehensive understanding of the substance of a surah or verse can facilitate the process of memorising the Quran, making it more effortless and enduring in one's memory. It is essential to combine Quranic memorisation activities with the study of Quranic exegesis to indirectly enhance Quranic memorisation. Within the framework of semantic memory systems, acquiring comprehensive knowledge is an ongoing process to grasp the concept of a discourse. Baharudin et al. (2023) and Safie et al. (2022) provided evidence for the idea that female Quran memorisers typically attempt to comprehend new information by relating it to their prior knowledge. Furthermore, they typically possess the ability to comprehend novel material using their own linguistic abilities and imaginative thinking. Female Quranic memorisers sometimes employ the technique of "memorising the literal meaning of the verses." However, according to Shukri et al. (2020), the practice does not have a significant positive effect on people who memorise the Quran. Furthermore, their findings are entirely general, with no studies explicitly focusing on gender.

Conclusion

This study concludes that female Quran memorisers often practice the technique of "memorising the literal meaning of the verses." Examining the semantic memory tendencies in the Quran memorisation techniques greatly enhances our understanding of the cognitive processes involved. The findings from the study at MITS Klang underscore the intricate interplay between cognitive abilities and the efficacious acquisition and retention of Quranic verses. The memorisers' achievement in Quran memorisation is not solely a result of rote memorization, but rather deeply rooted in their semantic understanding and personal engagement with the text. This research opens avenues for further investigation into pedagogical strategies that can enhance the memorization experience, ensuring that it is not only successful in the short term but also sustainable and enriching in the long term. Furthermore, the research emphasises the importance of semantic understanding in Quran memorisation, demonstrating that a more profound grasp of the text can greatly improve the memorisation process. Additionally, it emphasises the significance of actively engaging with the text, implying that establishing a deeper and more profound connection with the Quran might result in a more fulfilling and enduring process of memorisation.

Future studies should continue to explore the subtleties of semantic memory in Quran memorisation, which could potentially lead to innovative approaches that religious educational contexts worldwide can adopt, thereby enriching the spiritual and educational journey of Quran memorisers embarking on the noble quest of Quran memorisation. This study recommends exploring the long-term sustainability of Quranic memorization and the effectiveness of various memorisation techniques. Studies could investigate the impact of different cognitive strategies, such as chunking, elaborative

rehearsal, and the loci method, on the retention of Quranic verses. Additionally, future studies could examine the role of modern technology, such as memory apps and online platforms, in supporting Quranic memorisation practices. Studies may also consider the psychological and motivational factors that influence students' Quranic memorisation processes and outcomes. It would be beneficial to conduct longitudinal studies to assess the retention of memorised verses over extended periods and to identify factors that contribute to the forgetting curve in Quranic memorisation students. Furthermore, comparative studies between traditional Quranic memorisation methods and contemporary pedagogical approaches could provide insights into optimising memorisation strategies for different learning styles. Finally, interdisciplinary research incorporating neuroscience, linguistics, and Islamic education could yield a deeper understanding of the neural mechanisms underlying semantic memory in the context of Quranic memorisation.

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Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest involve with any parties in this research study.

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