

STUDY ON THE NURUL QURAN METHOD AT THE SYAKIRIN CENTER OF AL-QUR'AN EDUCATION**Abd. Wahid¹, Nursyahindah Binti Mahmud², Asnawiyah³, Nazaryani⁴**^{1,3,4}Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh²Lembaga Pendidikan Syakirin Subang Selangor MalaysiaEmail: nurrindah96@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

Every believer is obligated to possess the ability to read the Quran proficiently. This obligation extends not only to adults but is also encouraged from a young age, ensuring that children learn the sacred verses of the Quran. The significance of this mandate is earnestly acknowledged by the Youth Department of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS), which has established several renowned Quranic Education Centers throughout Malaysia. These educational centers have received widespread recognition and are considered pioneers in the establishment of Quranic Education Centers (TPA). Over the past half-century since its inception, TPA has continued to evolve, employing a teaching methodology known as the "Nurul Quran Method." This article aims to assess the effectiveness of the Nurul Quran Method in the Quranic learning process at TPA Syakirin. Additionally, the article explores the challenges faced by teachers and administrators at TPA Syakirin in their efforts to enhance students' abilities within the institution. This study adopts a qualitative approach, utilizing methods such as observation, interviews, and documentation for data collection. The research findings indicate that the learning process using the Nurul Quran Method proceeds smoothly. This method incorporates elements of "learning through play" and various other creative techniques. One of the key strengths of TPA Syakirin lies in its utilization of a distinctive teaching methodology, not only in Malaysia but also from Quranic education institutions in other countries across Southeast Asia.

Keywords: *TPA Syakirin, Nurul Qur'an, Child Education.*

ABSTRAK

Setiap mukmin diwajibkan memiliki kemampuan membaca Al-Qur'an dengan baik. Kewajiban ini tidak hanya berlaku bagi orang dewasa, tetapi juga dianjurkan sejak usia dini agar anak-anak mempelajari ayat-ayat suci Al-Qur'an. Pentingnya hal ini diakui secara serius oleh Departemen Pemuda PAS (Partai Islam Pan-Malaysia), yang telah mendirikan sejumlah Pusat Pendidikan Al-Qur'an yang terkenal di seluruh Malaysia. Pusat-pusat pendidikan ini mendapat pengakuan luas dan dianggap sebagai perintis dalam pendirian Pusat Pendidikan Al-Qur'an (TPA). Sudah setengah abad sejak berdirinya, TPA ini terus berkembang dengan menggunakan metode pembelajaran yang disebut "Metode Nurul Qur'an". Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji keefektifan metode Nurul Qur'an dalam proses pembelajaran Al-Qur'an di TPA Syakirin. Artikel ini juga mengeksplorasi tantangan-tantangan yang dihadapi oleh para guru dan pengelola TPA Syakirin dalam upaya meningkatkan kemampuan siswa di lembaga ini. Kajian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa proses pembelajaran dengan metode Nurul Qur'an berjalan lancar. Metode ini diperkaya dengan pendekatan "belajar sambil bermain" serta beberapa teknik kreatif lainnya. Salah satu keunggulan TPA Syakirin terletak

pada penggunaan metode pembelajaran yang berbeda, tidak hanya di Malaysia, tetapi juga di negara-negara lain di kawasan Asia Tenggara.

Kata Kunci: *TPA Syakirin, Nurul Qur'an, Pendidikan Anak.*

A. Introduction

Looking at the appropriate age of children, Al-Qur'an education typically begins at the ages of six to twelve years, while at the age of seven, children are already encouraged to perform prayers. During this time, Islamic religious education, especially learning to read the Qur'an, needs to be instilled.¹ However, with the development of the education system in the present era, Al-Qur'an education has also developed, with Al-Qur'an learning starting from an earlier age, with some even being taught around the age of four.² At this age, children have been trained to recognize Hijaiyah letters, and some have even memorized short surahs found in Juz Amma. This is evidenced by the number of religious education institutions such as primary schools (Sekolah Dasar) that require prospective students to memorize short Surahs and some knowledge of reading the Al-Qur'an according to the rules of Tajweed science as a prerequisite for entering primary school.

Several aspects of Fitrah that characterize other elements in forming humanity should be treated and improved, starting with nurturing and teaching. Therefore, it is the parents and teachers who need to take responsibility for introducing pure and excellent values. The development of Fitrah will then take place with an emphasis on the potential of Fitrah to form an excellent Muslim personality and in line with the pure values taught by the Islamic religion.³

Based on the initial exploration by the author, one of the problems in Subang Jaya is that there are still children who are unable to read the Qur'an. This situation is very concerning and should be changed so that children at the age of 6 can already read the Al-Qur'an and make the Al-Qur'an a guide in shaping noble character, as psychologists state that early childhood is the most suitable period because at this age, they are still unspoiled, hence children are quicker in understanding and imitating what they hear and see. This situation should be utilized by educators, as at this age, educators can quickly and very easily teach educational materials and noble morals to them. So, this is the right opportunity to maximize learning from various materials.

In improving the standard of Al-Qur'an learning in children, it is not only possible to be done by formal institutions but can also be assisted by non-formal institutions that exist

¹ Tayar Yusuf dan Syaiful Anwar, *Metodolog Pengajaran Agama Dan Bahasa Arab* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 1995), p. 2.

² R. Renny Pudjiati and others, 'Tahfizh Al-Qur'an Learning Management Model in Early Children in Family Education: A Study in Serang City, Indonesia', *Saudi Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 7.1 (2022), 14–20 <<https://doi.org/10.36348/sjhss.2022.v07i01.003>>.

³ Ikhwannul Muslimin, "Efektivitas Pembelajaran Al-Qur'an Di TPA Muhadzabul Akhlaq Gampong Lueng Ie Kecamatan Krueng Barona Jaya Kabupaten Aceh Besar" (UIN Ar-Raniry, 2018), p. 29.

widely in the community⁴. One such example is the Quranic Educational Center (TPA), a non-formal institution that operates in the field of Islamic religious education. In this TPA, in addition to teaching the reading of the Al-Qur'an, they also teach other materials such as worship, beliefs, and morals.⁵ It is hoped that the presence of this Quranic Education Center (TPA) program will be able to alleviate the increasingly critical issues among early-age children to some extent. It is also expected that all graduates from the TPA are able to recognize and read the verses of the Al-Qur'an from an early age.

According to the author's initial observation, it can be explained that the general description of the learning process at the Syakirin Quranic Education Center (TPA) involves teaching young children using the Nurul Quran method and repetitive techniques. This was evident when the author observed and heard some of them reading verses of the Qur'an and learning to recite daily prayers. Mastery of the science of Tajweed cannot yet be said to be successful because it is still too early to focus on the theoretical aspect of pronouncing sounds correctly or the articulation of letters (*makhraj harf*). However, there are a few students among them who are able to read it well. The curriculum reference used by the Syakirin TPA includes aspects of reading the Al-Qur'an, memorizing the Al-Qur'an, the Prophet's history, morals, and other materials as demanded in the national education system. The overall reference to educational materials refers to aspects of theology, law, and Islamic history, in addition to studies of languages and other sciences related to human life.

In Malaysia, TPA, also known as PASTI (Islamic Generation Care Center), has been recognized by various parties as the longest-standing preschool based on Islamic teachings and has produced the most children with religious knowledge even at a young age. Today, this TPA continues to grow in tandem with the times and advancements in the world. TPA classes in all areas are increasing day by day. Another reason the author chose this topic is the interesting aspect of TPA Syakirin, where its students aged 4 to 6 years are already capable of reading and memorizing the Quran proficiently. Based on the above reality, the advantages of this TPA are its nearly 50-year existence since 1970 and the unique learning method used there, which is different from other TPAs, namely the Nurul Quran method they developed themselves. This has sparked the author's interest in conducting specific research related to this Nurul Quran method at TPA Syakirin. This study adopts a qualitative approach, utilizing methods such as observation, interviews, and documentation for data collection.

B. Result and Discussion

1. Various Methods of Al-Qur'an Learning

Reading and studying the Qur'an is an obligation for every Muslim. The Al-Qur'an is a holy book that contains the word of God, laws, and all of life's regulations. To understand the contents of the Al-Qur'an, of course, requires ability; therefore, educating young children

⁴ Nurjannah Nurjannah, 'Pendampingan Orang Tua Dalam Menstimulus Hafalan Al-Qur'an Anak', *Jurnal Anifa*, 1.1 (2021), 46–58 <<https://doi.org/10.32505/anifa.v1i1.2437>>; Fajarwati Kusuma Adi, Titik Vitriani, and Muhammad Daqok, 'PENDAMPINGAN PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA ARAB DI TPQ WONOGIRI', *Jurnal Al Basirah*, 1.2 (2021), 127–36 <<https://doi.org/10.58326/jab.v1i2.22>>.

⁵ Muslimin.

to read the Al-Qur'an is a priority in religious education.⁶ The learning of the Al-Qur'an is divided into several stages: first, learning to memorize verses in the Al-Qur'an; second, learning to read fluently according to the rules of Tajweed; and third, learning to contemplate the verses of the Al-Qur'an as was done by the companions during the time of Prophet Muhammad.⁷ Nowadays, learning requires a method to make the learning process easier and faster, so the method of teaching the Al-Qur'an has undergone rapid development, leading to the emergence of new methods to read and study the Al-Qur'an. Specifically, in Indonesia and Malaysia, there are methods used in studying the Qur'an. Scholars, community leaders, and religious leaders have created many methods to study the Qur'an quickly; among them are:

a. *Baghdadiyah Method*

The Baghdadiyah method was developed by Al-Baghdady. His full name is Sheikh Iman Abu Bakar Muhammad Ahmad bin Ali bin Thabit, better known as al-Khatib al-Baghdadiy. The Baghdadiyah method is a Quranic learning method that has long been established in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. This method is also recognized by the term Juz Amma, which is the 30th Juz in the sequence of Juz in the Quran and is widely used. The Baghdadiyah method is an organized or tarkibiyah method, meaning a method that is arranged sequentially and involves the repetition of the same material so that students quickly master the subject matter.⁸

b. *Qira'ati Method*

The word Qira'ati comes from Arabic and means "my reading". The Qira'ati method is a method of reading the Quran directly and practicing tartil recitation according to the rules of Tajwid science and its practice.⁹ This method can also be implemented little by little, meaning that students do not move on to the next page until they have mastered the current one. The Qira'ati method has been widely used in Quranic Education Centers as it is considered one of the most practical and effective methods for facilitating accurate and rapid

⁶ Z. Sardar, 'Reading the Qur'an: The Contemporary Relevance of the Sacred Text of Islam', *Choice Reviews Online*, 49.07 (2012), 49-3817-49-3817 <<https://doi.org/10.5860/CHOICE.49-3817>>; Muhammad Alwi HS and Iin Parninsih, 'Semiotics Integration in Understanding Story on Al Qur'an (Applying Narrative Theory of A.J Greimas towards the Story of the People of the Garden on QS. Al Qalam 17-32)', *Islah: Journal of Islamic Literature and History*, 2.1 (2021), 1-13 <<https://doi.org/10.18326/islah.v2i1.1-13>>.

⁷ Rachmad Putro Santoso and Rahmad Salahuddin, 'Application of Discovery-Inquiry Learning Strategy in Tajweed Learning to Improve Al-Qur'an Reading Skills for High School Students', *Indonesian Journal of Education Methods Development*, 19 (2022) <<https://doi.org/10.21070/ijemd.v19i.658>>.

⁸ Endin Mujahidin and others, 'Tahsin Al-Qur'an Untuk Orang Dewasa Dalam Perspektif Islam', *Jurnal Pendidikan Luar Sekolah*, 14.1 (2020), 26 <<https://doi.org/10.32832/jpls.v14i1.3216>>.

⁹ Nurzayyini Nafisah, Sofyan Sauri, and Yayan Nurbayan, 'Al-Akhtā'u Al-Şautiyah Fī Qirā'ati Al-Nuṣūsi Al-'Arabīyyah Bi Istikhḏāmi Taṭbīqāti Praat', *ALSUNIYAT: Jurnal Penelitian Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Budaya Arab*, 5.1 (2022), 30-45 <<https://doi.org/10.17509/alsuniat.v5i1.41710>>; Mohamad Khairul Latif, Talhah Jimaain, and Kamarul Azmi Jasmi, 'Competence and Method of Teaching Tarannum Al-Quran Among Teachers of Special Class on Reading and Memorizing Al-Quran Skill (KKQ) in Johor', in *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Research of Educational Administration and Management (ICREAM 2019)* (Paris, France: Atlantis Press, 2020) <<https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.200130.177>>.

learning of the Quran. The application of the Qira'ati method is implemented directly, taking into account the rules of Tajwid science.¹⁰

c. Iqra' Method

The Iqra' method is a popular method in Indonesia and Malaysia. It uses a guidebook consisting of six volumes that starts at the basic level, then becomes simpler until it reaches a nearly perfect level.¹¹ The Iqra' method is a method that emphasizes direct reading exercises, namely producing Quranic letter readings or sounds fluently and correctly in accordance with their articulation and reading. This method was first compiled by Haji As'ad Human in Yogyakarta. The Iqra' method book is also printed in six volumes at a time. Each volume has teaching instructions with the aim of facilitating each student who will use it later.¹² The Iqra' method was introduced in 1988 as a development of the Qira'ati method.¹³

2. TPA Syakirin Profile and Nurul Qur'an Method

a. The idea of establishing the Syakirin TPA in Pinggiran USJ

This Al-Qur'an Education Park is an institution under the umbrella of the PAS party in the field of education focused on early childhood. This TPA consists of three basic fields of Islamic learning, namely *fardhu ain*, *fardhu kifayah*, and tool knowledge. The TPA curriculum has proven to be the best curriculum in Selangor, consisting of Malay, English, Arabic, Jawi, mathematics, science, Al-Qur'an, Muslim personality, and pre-writing. This is evidenced by the high achievements of many TPA graduates in tests in elementary school, which is a special requirement for admission to that level of school. TPA is equivalent to kindergarten, where the curriculum emphasizes providing the basics of reading the Qur'an as well as helping children's spiritual growth and development so that they are ready to enter further education.¹⁴ It was a pleasant place, while Al-Qur'an education is an effort to develop personality in accordance with the instructions of the Al-Qur'an.¹⁵

The TPA Syakirin institution was established in 2013 by Zatul Izzati Farahiyah binti Ghazali along with her close friend Nurul Atikah binti Mohd Ariffin, located in Taman Pinggiran USJ, Subang Jaya, Selangor, with a rental fee of RM1300 per month, serving as a learning place for 15 students at that time. TPA Syakirin was born when the condition of the Pinggiran USJ community at that time was more dominantly inhabited by young

¹⁰ Alimatul Ulfa Ricka, 'Implementasi Metode Qira'ati Dalam Meningkatkan Kemampuan Membaca Al-Qur'an Pada Mata Pelajaran Al-Qur'an Hadis Di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darussalam Merandung Jaya' (IAIN Metro, 2020), p. 20.

¹¹ Ahmad Annuri, Ending Bahruddin, and Didin Saefudin, 'Usaha KH. As'ad Humam Dalam Pembaruan Sistem Pengajaran Baca Al-Qur'an', *Ta'dibuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 3.2 (2014), 85 <<https://doi.org/10.32832/tadibuna.v3i2.563>>.

¹² Tanto Lailam, M. Ulul Albab Asas, and Nita Andrianti, 'Literacy Padepokan "Iqra": Awakening the Ta'awun Spirit in the Ecological Literacy Movement in Gampingan Village, Pakuncen Village, Wirobrajan District, Yogyakarta City', *Engagement: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 5.2 (2021) <<https://doi.org/10.29062/engagement.v5i2.444>>.

¹³ Mujahidin and others.

¹⁴ Sahri Putri Liana, 'Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an Sebagai Sarana Pembentukan Karakter Anak Di Desa Semawot', *Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an Sebagai Sarana Pembentukan Karakter Anak Di Desa Semawot*, 8.2 (2020).

¹⁵ As'ad Humam, *Pedoman Dan Pengembangan TKA/TPA Nasiona* (Yogyakarta: Balai Penelitian dan Pengembangan Sistem Pengajaran Baca Tulis Al-Qur'an, 1992).

newlyweds. The community was looking for early Islamic-based education for young children. (Interview with Puan Atikah binti Mohd Ariffin as donor to TPA Syakirin on March 13, 2023) This was further supported by the absence of any TPA or Islamic-based institutions in Pinggiran USJ, leaving children seemingly directionless in religious education, particularly in mastering the Qur'an. In such a worrying situation, the existence of the Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an Syakirin as a social institution greatly helped to anticipate this condition, because if left unchecked, it would result in the paralysis of education, especially in the learning of the Al-Qur'an, in this rapidly developing urban area. (Interview with Puan Zatul Izzati Farahiyah as donor to TPA Syakirin on 13 March 2022).

In early 2009, the idea for the establishment of this TPA came from two friends who have different educational backgrounds but share a common interest, namely, a love for children. Puan Atikah further explained that the two donors of this TPA come from backgrounds in electrical science and physics, respectively. At the final stage of their education, they both planned to leave their respective fields because the majority of those working in those areas were men. Then, after obtaining their master's degrees, they both transitioned into the teaching world as substitute and honorary teachers. It was during this time that they began to see the importance of young university graduates becoming involved in early childhood education, as at the time, many of the teachers at the TPA were from the elderly women community. (Interview with Puan Zatul Izzati Farahiyah as donor to TPA Syakirin on 13 March 2023)

With the assistance of the Branch Congregation and the Central PASTI, the TPA Syakirin was established in early December 2013. The initial costs and the students' needs received strong support from the community; parents only facilitated the opening process, which took about a month.¹⁶ The expenditures incurred, including other facilities and infrastructure, were obtained from various sources of aid, both in the form of endowments and other donors, as well as contributions from the TPA Syakirin students. Over time, TPA Syakirin continued to grow and now has 130 students, expanding to two buildings in the surrounding area of Pinggiran USJ in Subang Jaya City, Selangor.

3. TPA Syakirin Waste Management Organization

The main organization of Syakirin Waste Management is comprised of the Welfare Unit, headed by Ms. Nur Aleena Binti Muhammad Tarmizi, followed by the Curriculum Unit head, Ms. Fatin Aqilah Binti Ismail, then the Community Unit of the Waste Management, which is Ms. Nurhayati Binti Samlun, the head of the Economic Unit entrusted to Ms. Nur Hanan Najwa Binti Idris, the head of the Publication Unit is Ms. Nur Fatimah Binti Daiman, and is assisted by the main supporting organization, JIBG (Parents and Teachers Association), which is headed by Ms. Nur Afifah Binti Aminuddin Zaki.¹⁷

a. The teaching staff at Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an Syakirin

The teaching staff of Syakirin Waste Management is exclusively for women, as women are more adept at dealing with Waste Management children than men. A more precise reason is that during guidance processes for self-management with children, such as

¹⁶ *Profil Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an Syakirin*, 2023.

¹⁷ *Profil Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an Syakirin*.

bathing, urinating, defecating, and so on, it is easier for women to manage than men. (Interview with Puan Zatul Izzati Farahiyyah as donor to TPA Syakirin on March 13, 2023) This is because teachers in waste management are substitutes for parents at school. If a female teacher is a mother, then a male teacher is a father. It can be observed in life that if a father is less patient in caring for a child, so too are male teachers in managing children.

Many of the female teachers at this TPA (Taman Pendidikan Al-Quran) have at least an SMP (Junior High School) education, a minimum of SPM (Malaysian Certificate of Education), or STAM (Higher Religious Certificate of Malaysia). However, there are still teachers who have a bachelor's degree or a master's degree who are willing to share their knowledge with the students, regardless of their educational background. A priority here is that the female teachers must be proficient in reading the Qur'an and Jawi script. (Interview with Puan Zatul Izzati Farahiyyah as donor to TPA Syakirin on March 13, 2023) The female teachers at TPA Syakirin are, on average, aged between 20 and 39 years. The total number of teachers is eight.

Based on the document from the TPA Syakirin Office, the total number of students (santri) is 127. On average, one teacher should ideally handle 15 students. However, this TPA has its own unique characteristics, where they consider the age of the students. The smallest group has 8 students, while the largest has 22. (Interview with Puan Atikah binti Mohd Ariffin as donor to TPA Syakirin on March 13, 2023) The variance in numbers is adjusted based on age factors, resulting in different female teachers (mu'allimah) handling varying numbers of students (santri). Allocating mu'allimah based on the students' age is one of the systems implemented by TPA Syakirin; the younger the students' age, the fewer students a mu'allimah is assigned to teach.

b. Facilities and infrastructure of TPA Syakirin

The facilities and infrastructure central to the activities of TPA Syakirin is a house rented by the manager, Mr. Mohd Nur Hafizal bin Muhammad, to serve as the main building for TPA Syakirin, especially as a facility for Al-Qur'an learning since the inception of this TPA (interview with Puan Zatul Izzati Farahiyyah as donor to TPA Syakirin on March 13, 2023) To facilitate the teaching and learning process, considering the continually increasing number of students each year to the point where they could no longer be accommodated entirely, especially during morning gatherings and prayers, the TPA management has rented an additional building unit to ensure comfort for the students (santri) and the female teachers (mu'allimah). (Interview with En Mohd Norhafizal as a manager at TPA Syakirin on March 16, 2023)

The contracted building is a two-story house. It has a multifunctional prayer room (musala) that also serves as the venue for TPA Syakirin's teaching and learning processes. The second floor is the learning area for children aged 6 and 5 years, while the first floor serves as a play-and-learn area for 4-year-olds and is also used as a dining space. Although the current facilities and infrastructure are not yet adequate, they are deemed sufficient for the time being to accommodate the children for their activities and congregational prayers, with the overall number still manageable.

Another facility provided at TPA Syakirin is an open field, which serves as a place for the children to engage in outdoor activities. There is also an office space and a designated

room for storing books, as well as various TPA Syakirin game equipment. As such, the Al-Qur'an teaching system continues to operate well despite the existing facility limitations. According to Mrs. Zatul Izzati, the most crucial aspect is the sincere intention of the mu'allimah to teach young children for the sake of Allah, coupled with the encouragement from the students' parents. (Interview with En Mohd Norhafizal, TPA Syakirin, on March 16, 2023)

c. Learning System at TPA Syakirin

Each educational institution has a different system for its teaching and learning activities. One example is at the Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an Syakirin, where every student is required to wear green-colored attire, referred to as "little green ants." Before starting the teaching and learning process, students conduct a "morning gathering" collectively by reciting prayers, the Asma' al-Husna (the 99 Names of Allah), singing the "Negaraku" (likely referring to the national anthem of a country, possibly Malaysia), and other TPA songs, guided by specially made video or audio recordings for children to motivate and cheer them up for learning every morning. This routine activity is performed by all children collectively from 8 in the morning until the completion of the Dhuha prayer, as well as other prayer recitations such as the prayers for entering and exiting the mosque and for entering and exiting a house. After the prayers, students will enter their respective classrooms and start the class with a prayer they often practice, which is:

اللَّهُمَّ افْتَحْ عَلَيْنَا حِكْمَتَكَ وَأَنْشُرْ عَلَيْنَا مِنْ خَزَائِنِ رَحْمَتِكَ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ

O Allah, bestow upon us Your wisdom and shower upon us Your treasures, O Allah, the Most Merciful and Most Compassionate.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي وَاخْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي

O my Lord, expand for me my chest, ease for me my task, and remove the impediment from my speech, so that they may understand my words. (Surah Taha: 25-28)"

إِنِّي رَأَيْتُ أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِي سَجِدِينَ

Indeed, I have seen [in a dream] eleven stars, the sun, and the moon. I saw them prostrating to me. (Surah Yusuf: 4)"

During the recitation of the pre-study prayer in this class, some students were attentive and diligent in their recitation, while others appeared less committed and were unfocused during the prayer. However, the instructors continuously monitored the students, actively participating by raising their hands and praying alongside the students until the conclusion." (Researcher's observation results during the study at TPA Syakirin on March 19, 2023) The duration of the pre-study prayer recitation is approximately one minute. Following that, the *mua'llimah* will begin guiding the students in memorizing short chapters. The memorization technique used at TPA Syakirin employs repetition, ensuring that the students master the prescribed chapters for memorization, starting from Surah al-Ikhlās up

to Surah al-Bayyinah, before proceeding to the first subject. (Researcher's observation results during the study at TPA Syakirin on March 19, 2023)

After finishing their communal meal around 10:30 in the morning, the students reconvene in the activity room to continue reciting daily prayers and etiquette collectively, such as the prayer after eating, the prayer upon waking up, the prayer when putting on clothes, and so on. This activity is repeated daily so that students can remember it without guidance from the *mu'allimah*.

Subsequently, they proceed with their second subject until its completion in their respective classrooms. Before the "End-of-Day Gathering" is held, students recite hadiths corresponding to their age groups. For instance, 4-year-old students will recite one hadith from the first five hadiths; 5-year-old students will recite three hadiths from the first ten; and 6-year-old students will recite five hadiths from a specialized set of 20 hadiths designated by PASTI Malaysia. (Researcher's observation results during the study at TPA Syakirin on March 19, 2023) Following this, the students proceed with Al-Qur'an lessons using the Nurul Quran method. In this learning session, students are initially directed to familiarize themselves with the 25 Hijaiyah letters in the first volume of the four Nurul Quran volumes before moving on to the pronunciation and understanding of each letter and line. This method incorporates hand movement techniques to maintain the focus of young children and prevent them from easily becoming bored. (Researcher's observation results during the study at TPA Syakirin on March 19, 2023)

According to Mrs. Atikah, the uniqueness of this method lies in its use of the 'learning through play' concept, employing hand movement techniques, which serve as playful activities, to ensure that students don't feel bored during their studies. (Interview with Puan Atikah binti Mohd Ariffin as donor to TPA Syakirin on March 13, 2023) Besides the hand movement techniques, this TPA also implements various activities and facilities, such as the Nurul Quran games and watching animated instructional videos on Al-Qur'an—some specifically designed for TPAs in Malaysia and others featuring Hijaiyah letters like "Hadi and Huda", "Omar and Hana", "Aqil Story", and more. The incorporation of these resources largely depends on the creativity of a *mu'allimah* to foster students' interest in Al-Qur'an studies. (Interview with *Mu'allimah* Aleena binti Mohd Tarmizi (Guru 4 Year TPA Syakirin) on March 14, 2023). At 12:20 pm, the students gather again in the activity room to hold an assembly before returning to their respective homes. The activities in this assembly are led by the designated *mu'allimah*, who recites Surah al-Mulk 1:1, adopting the practice of studying one verse per week. This ensures that by the end of the year, students have memorized the entire Surah al-Mulk, which consists of 30 verses. Subsequently, students are taught to recite the prayer upon completing their studies. Lastly, they are taught prayers for their parents and prayers before embarking on a journey or boarding a vehicle.

4. Characteristic of Nurul Qur'an Method

The Nurul Quran method is one of the approaches adopted by most Quranic Teaching Centers (TPA) in Malaysia, utilizing a 'learning through play' strategy to expedite

and enhance the effectiveness of the learning process.¹⁸ The Nurul Quran method is a distinctive approach developed by TPA Syakirin itself through the central PASTI organization, setting it apart from other Quranic teaching centers (TPA). While the idea had long existed, it had not been systematically materialized as it was not yet documented. Observing that many students failed to achieve their learning objectives and struggled with mastering the lengths of pronunciations, an agreement emerged in 2005 among the academic training unit of PASTI Malaysia to produce four volumes of the Nurul Quran books. This compilation combined various ideas generated through brainstorming sessions involving six authors: Hajah Khairiah binti Muhammad, Ustaz Safinas binti Fahmi, Ustazah Rohana binti Abu Hanifah, Ustazah Zaimah binti Zainab Din, Ustazah Rosilawati binti Muhammad Isa, and Ustazah Hazlinda binti Jaluddin. (Interview with Puan Khairiah (Former Director of Materials and Textbook Division of TPA) on April 2, 2023)

In its initial stages, the Nurul Quran method places significant emphasis on several aspects, including recognizing the 25 Hijaiyah letters, contrasting long and short line readings, and mastering the sounds and nunation (tanwin). This method also directly emphasizes reading exercises, specifically articulating the sounds and pronunciations of the Qur'anic letters. Based on a collective interview with Puan Khairiah, the former Director of Material and Textbook Development at PASTI Malaysia, she stated:

"The primary method employed is Nurul Quran, because in PASTI, we practice the '5Cs', namely 'cilik minda' (nurturing the mind), 'cilik kreatif' (nurturing creativity), 'cilik Al-Qur'an' (nurturing Qur'anic understanding), and others. These represent PASTI's unique approach, emphasizing not just reading but understanding. The teaching method is 'learning through play'. Teachers at PASTI are required to attend courses to understand the correct teaching methodology of the Nurul Quran." (Interview with Puan Khairiah (Former Director of Materials and Textbook Division of TPA on April 2, 2023)

In line with the sentiments of the donor of TPA Syakirin, Puan Izzati stated:

"Our concept is 'learning through play'. Using hands is considered part of the game because if they are simply instructed to read, they will become bored." (Interview with Puan Zatul Izzati Farahiyyah as donor to TPA Syakirin on March 13, 2023)

Adding to that, Cik Fatimah, a mu'allimah at TPA Syakirin, stated:

"It's enjoyable to teach using the Nurul Quran method because the children don't get bored learning. Mu'allimhs need to attend courses to understand the method of Qur'an teaching." (Interview with Mu'allimah Nur Fatimah Binti Daiman on March 14, 2023)

Based on the interviews above, this method is also structured to cater to the ability to think creatively and critically, where students think while taking actions, as previously taught, and can read sentences with the correct elongations and nunation (tanwin). This approach is reinforced by guidance from mu'allimhs who have attended seminars and received proper directives from the central TPA institution. The 'learning through play' method involves using hand movement techniques: when encountering a fathah line, the

¹⁸ *Profil Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an Syakirin.*

hand moves upwards; with a kasrah line, it moves downwards; and when meeting a dhammah line, the hand moves forwards. This process is repeated until the learning session concludes.¹⁹

The practice pattern of this method, by the end of the learning process, can enhance the students' proficiency in mastering the basics of Qur'anic recitation. This was validated in an interview with a teacher at the TPA, mu'allimah Najwa, who stated: "If a child starts at PASTI from the age of 4, God willing, by the age of 6, they should be able to read the Qur'an. (Interview with mu'allimah Hanan Najwa binti Idris (teacher of TPA Syakirin) on March 14, 2023). Mu'allimah Aleena said, "I teach 4-year-old children, so it's essential to diversify the activities and incorporate 'learning through play'. The Nurul Qur'an method is indeed helpful; when the mu'allimah demonstrates hand gestures, they understand immediately. (Interview with Mu'allimah Aleena binti Mohd Tarmizi (teacher of TPA Syakirin) on March 14, 2023.) Mu'allimah Nursyazwani stated: "One of the aspects that facilitates student learning is the colorful books and the structured step-by-step arrangement. (Interview with Mu'allimah Nursyazwani binti Mohd Zaki (Teacher of TPA Syakirin) on March 14, 2023) Mu'allimah Fatimah remarked: "Students enjoy learning through the Nurul Quran method because they engage in activities and experience fun learning. (Interview with Mu'allimah Nur Fatimah binti Darman (Teacher of TPA Syakirin) on March 14, 2023)

From the statements above, it can be understood that, on average, students who start at TPA Syakirin at the age of 4 are already capable of reading the Qur'an by the age of 6. By the fourth volume, they begin to read verses from the Qur'an. A significant attraction for the students is the concept present in the colorful and easily comprehensible Nurul Quran books. When implementing the Nurul Quran method, students feel joyous as they perceive themselves to be playing rather than studying. However, the Nurul Quran method doesn't promise miracles. What's essential is our effort to draw closer to the Qur'an. Whether studying the Qur'an at this age ensures students' understanding or, conversely, doesn't, is beyond the scope of duty and responsibility. Humans are merely tasked with continuing the struggle of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and teaching the Qur'an without considering the backgrounds of those they teach. Learning is the process of interaction between learners and educators, as well as learning resources, within a learning environment.²⁰

5. Learning Techniques Used by TPA Syakirin

a. Repetition Technique

The repetition technique is a commonly employed foundational method in many teaching modalities. Even though it can often seem tedious for the children, revisiting the material serves as an effective approach to enhance the learning outcomes of the students. TPA Syakirin uses this technique in various ways to alleviate the potential monotony for the students. The repetition techniques employed by the instructor, or 'mu'allimah', include repeating in the form of singing, storytelling, using audiovisual materials, and conducting

¹⁹ *Profil Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an Syakirin.*

²⁰ Achjar Chalil dan Hudaya Latuconsina, *Pembelajaran Berbasis Fitrah* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2008).

fine motor movement-based games. According to Mu'allimah Fatimah, "With young children, it's typical to have to repeat the same things daily so that they remember, and it becomes ingrained in their minds. Even though the teacher might feel it's repetitive and tedious, it's important to have the right intention for the sake of Allah (lillahi ta'la). (Interview with Mu'allimah Nur Fatimah binti Darman (teacher of TPA Syakirin) on March 14, 2023).

Additionally, from mu'allimah Aisyah: "Here, we indeed need to repeat the same things, like prayers and short chapters (surahs), until even the mu'allimah remembers them by heart. However, we have aids like videos and audio that can be played, which makes it a bit easier." (Interview with Mu'allimah Aisyah binti Samlun (teacher of TPA Syakirin) on March 14, 2023.) At TPA Syakirin, repetition is conducted every day, and this repetition technique is applied more than five times a day to ensure that the knowledge is retained by the children into adulthood. (Researcher's observation results during the study at TPA Syakirin on March 19, 2023) Though the mu'allimah may also feel the monotony of repeating the same things, going over the learned material is highly beneficial for the child to achieve educational success, especially in memorizing chapters and prayers. In everyday life, humans also repeat the same tasks, such as eating, bathing, and working continuously. Similarly, in any learning context, regardless of who, where, or when, repetition is often practiced in various ways. Learning has a more constructive meaning, which is to ensure that learners are capable of learning, feel the need to learn, are motivated to learn, and are interested in continuing to learn, thereby pressing students to be active in the learning process and ideally providing stimulus to achieve maximum results in the learning process.²¹

b. Hug and Talaqqi Techniques

The hug technique is also one of the methods used by therapists in occupational therapy to modify the behavior of students. Nowadays, more and more young children require attention and affection due to the unrestricted use of gadgets at home. Whereas in other methods, such as the Qira'ati method, it is applied directly with a focus solely on the rules of tajwid science, without recognizing this 'peluk' technique.²² When the mu'allimah of TPA Syakirin was asked about what to do if a child refused to learn, according to mu'allimah Aisyah, "for active children, sometimes they seek attention. Touch or hug them and ask about their worries. This will make the child trust the teacher. However, once their mood stabilizes, they can proceed to learn as usual." (Interview with Mu'allimah Nur Aisyah on March 14, 2023)

Similarly, mu'allimah Norhayati mentioned, "We treat the children according to their development. Sometimes, these children are scared. We need to frequently converse and ask questions to build a relationship and gain their trust in us. (Interview with Mu'allimah Norhayati binti Samlun on March 14, 2023). From the interviews with 2 mu'allimah representing 8 mu'allimah, it was stated that this technique is more recommended for hyperactive students—those who cannot sit still and remain focused for extended periods, especially in small spaces—and those who have emotional outbursts, or

²¹ Syaiful Sagala, *Konsep Dan Makna Pembelajaran* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2011).

²² Ricka.

what's commonly referred to as tantrums. For such students, more attention and touch are required so that they feel closer to the mu'allimah. However, for children who are hypoactive—those who can sit quietly and focus on the lesson while it's ongoing—the face-to-face talaqqi technique can be used, where they emulate the mu'allimah's reading style. This technique aligns with Islamic teachings, which advise that when one is angry, it's recommended to change one's position and state to feel more calm and comfortable. The depth and breadth of knowledge possessed by a teacher, as well as how the teacher imparts that knowledge to their students, contribute to determining the learning outcomes that will be achieved.²³

c. Listening and Watching

Technique The listening and watching technique, more specifically referred to as BBM (Bahan Bantu Mengajar or Teaching Aids) at TPA Syakirin, assists in every knowledge transfer process, especially transferring Qur'anic letters to the students. (Researcher's observation results during the study at TPA Syakirin on March 19, 2023). The "listening skill" technique is used to gauge the ability of student children to comprehend, record, and respond to every lesson taught by the mu'allimah. At the ages of 4 to 6, children can demonstrate a more refined listening skill and begin to communicate actively. The mu'allimah at TPA Syakirin also frequently shows interest in listening when the children wish to share stories, which is an excellent example for teachers and parents to emulate.

In the learning process, as times evolve, a novel aspect today is the emphasis on visual aids, making it easier to be understood and grasped by the current generation of children (Interview with mu'allimah Nur Fatimah binti Darman (teacher TPA Syakirin) on March 14, 2023). This is what TPA Syakirin practices. Examples of these visual styles include learning from engaging images or videos, using books that are not just plain text but also contain illustrations, and encouraging doodling during learning to maintain focus. Colorful markers are used when taking notes, further enhancing the visual experience. (Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an Syakirin, based on the document provided by the manager of TPA Syakirin on March 13). In human civilization, when discussing the magnificence of the sense of hearing, it is the earliest mentioned sense before the sense of sight, based on verses in the Qur'an. This sequence is particularly intriguing and warrants further exploration in subsequent research.

6. Challenges Faced by TPA Syakirin in the Qur'anic Learning Process

a. Limited number of teaching staff.

Teachers are a crucial element in education to ensure that the teaching and learning process runs smoothly. Frequently, there are concerns about the shortage of teachers, and this is a problem similarly encountered by TPA Syakirin. (Interview with mu'allimah Nur Fatimah binti Darman on 14 March 2023). The mu'allimah are forced to handle numerous students with varying emotions, leading to overwhelming situations for the teachers at TPA.

With almost 130 students being catered to by only 8 mu'allimah, it can affect the mu'allimah's daily enthusiasm and emotional well-being. This is particularly challenging considering that the children are between 4-6 years of age, requiring guidance even for basic

²³ M. Ngalim Purwanto, *Psikologi Pendidikan* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya).

personal care tasks like using the restroom. This problem also places stress on both teachers and administrators when a mu'allimah falls ill or unexpectedly takes a day off, inevitably increasing the workload for the mu'allimah present that day. Based on an interview with a donor, Atikah, at TPA Syakirin regarding the mu'allimah issue, she stated:

"It's challenging to find teachers who are truly dedicated and not just working for the money. Even more so, those willing to devote their energy to the children of the Jamaah. Historically, PASTI had committed teachers, but many left due to various reasons such as getting married, continuing their education, and some received job offers from the government."²⁴

Echoing the sentiments, donor Izzati stated: "Alhamdulillah, as of now, the teachers at PASTI are just enough. However, it becomes an issue when a teacher suddenly takes leave, especially given the number of children. It's unfortunate for the replacement teacher. Moreover, these PASTI teachers are not referred to as employees but volunteers, which is why they are given allowances instead of salaries." (Interview with Puan Zatul Izzati Farahiyah donor to TPA Syakirin on March 13, 2023). During an interview, mu'allimah Fatimah mentioned: "For me, if a teacher resigns due to issues among the teachers themselves..." (Interview with mu'allimah Nur Fatimah binti Darman (teacher TPA Syakirin) on March 14, 2023.) Not too differently, mu'allimah Najwa remarked: "The factors are commitment, perhaps due to a sick child, getting married, and following their husband. For those who are single, there might not be an issue since accommodations are provided" (Interview with Mu'allimah Najwa (teacher TPA Syakirin) on March 14, 2023).

From the interview results, the primary reasons gleaned from both the management and the mu'allimah regarding a teacher's short tenure at a TPA include factors like relocating after marriage to accompany their husband, pursuing overseas studies, receiving job offers from the government, and internal issues related to the mu'allimah themselves. Another aspect is the disparity in salary payment, which does not adhere to the standards in Malaysia. This is because those working at TPA are not considered employees but rather volunteers, leading to a payment structure that doesn't align with the standard salary of a worker in Malaysia.

b. Limited Learning Time

The available time is very limited due to the extensive curriculum that needs to be covered and several activities to be conducted. Teaching young children requires a lot of time to make them feel comfortable and happy, encouraging them to return to school in high spirits, especially considering their tender age. This is further challenged by the fact that only 5 hours a day are allocated for the mu'allimah to be with their students, but within a day, they have to teach more than five topics.

Lack of Facilities and Visual Media: There's a deficiency in adequate school facilities, like limited classroom spaces, which sometimes require sharing with other facility areas. For instance, a prayer room might be repurposed as a classroom for 4-year-olds, and a small playground can restrict students' movement during physical activities. (Researcher's observation results during the study at TPA Syakirin on March 19, 2023) The lack of visual

media or teaching aids can hinder the improvement of the students' proficiency in their studies at TPA Syakirin, especially in Qur'anic learning.

Internal Factors of the Students: a. Students not attending TPA: The interest and enthusiasm for learning among students can fluctuate. This sometimes results in students not wanting to attend, and often, parents tend to accommodate such wishes. This is detrimental for the students, as the vast curriculum cannot possibly be paused or adjusted for those not attending school (Interview with Mu'allimah Nursyazwani binti Mohd Zaki on March 14, 2023). Additionally, there are times when the students come to TPA emotionally distressed from home issues, resulting in their outright refusal to learn as they are frequently in tears. This makes it difficult for the students to understand and feel the importance of Qur'anic learning.

c. Lack of Parental Support

Insufficient communication between parents and students can have a negative impact on the child.²⁵ This is a significant challenge faced by all teachers at TPA Syakirin. In an interview with a donor of TPA Syakirin, they mentioned: "There are challenges dealing with the 'gen xyz', the TikTok generation, and so on. When they constantly use mobile phones, there's a lack of communication between parents and children, leading to various problems, especially in the aftermath of COVID. There has been a significant rise in the number of problematic children. (Interview with Puan Atikah binti Mohad Ariffin donor to TPA Syakirin on March 13, 2023.) Additionally, mu'allimah Aleena commented: "Children who lack attention and affection at home tend to face problems when they come to school." (Interview with Mu'allimah Aleena binti Mohd Tarmizi, donor to TPA Syakirin on March 14, 2023).

Based on the interview results, the donor stated that as the world progresses with the proliferation of gadgets, a gap has emerged between parents and students. The consequence is apparent: children tend to be less inclined to socialize with their peers and start perceiving gadgets as their primary companions. These gadgets can also induce laziness in children due to their addiction to games and similar activities. What's more concerning is that young children are beginning to face various health issues, such as eye disorders, difficulty focusing on studies, weakened muscles, dyslexia, hyperactivity, and autism. On average, every class at TPA Syakirin has at least one student facing one of the aforementioned problems. This situation is largely attributed to busy parents using gadgets as tools to keep their children occupied and quiet without interrupting them.

C. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion, several key conclusions can be drawn from this study: Firstly, the implementation of early childhood learning at TPA Syakirin demonstrates commendable progress. The methods employed in their learning activities, specifically the Nurul Quran method, are supported by various techniques such as repetition, the hug and talaqqi technique, and the listening and watching technique. These techniques are

²⁵ Kayla J Nicholas and others, 'Relationships Effecting College Students' Perception of Family Influence Impacting Their Health and Lifestyle', *TEACH Journal of Christian Education*, 12.2 (2018) <<https://doi.org/10.55254/1835-1492.1395>>.

thoughtfully tailored to the material being presented, adapting to the diverse behavioral and intellectual needs of the students. Secondly, TPA Syakirin stands out due to its distinctive methodology, a unique feature not found in other TPAs across Malaysia. This uniqueness stems from the proprietary teaching approach developed by TPA Syakirin, which draws on their extensive experience spanning over half a century in the Malaysian educational landscape.

However, amidst these successes, TPA Syakirin faces several challenges in enhancing their students' abilities. Foremost among these challenges is the shortage of teachers and limited learning time, hindering the comprehensive development of the students. Additionally, the lack of adequate facilities and visual media further complicates the learning process. Internally, the situation is exacerbated by the frequent absence of students from TPA sessions and the insufficient support they receive from parents, both of which significantly impact the overall learning experience.

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