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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Expert Verification of Items under VARK Dimensions in Smart Quran Model Development Instrument in Teaching and Facilitation of Quran Hifz

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	In parallel with the rapid development of tahfiz, various aspects of tahfiz education should be improved. This includes the process of teaching and facilitating Hifz al-Quran in tahfiz institutions to promote the excellence of tahfiz students in memorization. Therefore, this study aims to gain expert opinion and consensus on items under the dimensions of VARK in an effort to develop the Smart Quran Model for the teaching and facilitation of Hifz al-Quran. In this study, researchers used Fuzzy Delphi Method which involved 10 experts in the field of tahfiz education. A total of 20 questionnaire items were given to experts to be evaluated. The data obtained is analyzed using Microsoft Excel software. Items received must meet all three conditions, i.e. the Threshold value (d) is equal to or less than 0.2, the percentage of expert group agreement exceeds 75%, and Amax exceeds α-cut = 0.5. The results showed that the feedback from experts on items under the VARK dimension in the Smart Quran Model Development Instrument agreed that 17 items were accepted and 3 items rejected.
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INTRODUCTION

In addition to the blessings of faith and the blessings of Islam, the blessing of a strong memory to recite the Quran also belongs to a large group of blessings (Zulkifli Mohamad al-Bakri, 2021). Reciting the Quran is important because it is one of the forms of care of the Quran as in the statement of Allah SWT in Surah al-Hijr the ninth verse which means: Indeed, We have sent down the Quran, and We are the guardians of it." The preservation of the Quran in the form of memorization has been practiced since the time of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. (Ikmal Adnan, Khairulnazrin Nasir, Rohaidi Habil, Rahim Kamarul Zaman & Ismail Abd Halim, 2023). Not only that, Muhammad Syafee Salihin, Ikmal Zaidi Hashim, Nik Mohd Nabil Nik Hanafi, Fatin Nazmin Mansor & Mawaddah Ahmad Mahir (2018) stressed that reciting the Quran is important to understand and learn the contents of Quran since memorization itself is the process of storing information.

In the context of education in Malaysia, memorization education known as tahfiz has become the choice of parents for children in the hope that they will be guided by the upbringing of the Quran and become a commendable person and have a noble personality. As a result, to meet the demand, the tahfiz institution continues to grow every year until it is likened to mushrooms growing after rain (Muhammad Zulazizi Mohd Nawi, Mohd Rashidi Omar & Muhammad Amirul Mohd Nor, 2020). Muhammad Syafee Salihin Hasan, Mohd Izzuddin Mohd Pisol, Mardhiah Yahaya, Muhammad Hafizan

Abd Hamid & Zur'ain Harun (2022) stated that the growing of tahfiz institution rapidly and widely is proof that the Muslim community in this country attaches great importance to tahfiz education.

Based on the Philosophy of Tahfiz Education, tahfiz students are required to be able to recite and memorize the Quran as well as understand the verses that are recited by consolidating the knowledge of naqli and aqli then using it in everyday life (Dasar Pendidikan Tahfiz Negara, 2021). In order to achieve the requirements in the above-mentioned Tahfiz Education Philosophy, the tahfiz teacher plays a role in improving the process of Teaching and Facilitation of Hifz al-Quran in tahfiz institutions so that the process becomes more interesting and able to arouse the interest of tahfiz students to recite the Quran (Mohamad Khairi Haji Othman, Nur Farah Hanim Muhamad Idris, Mat Rahimi Yusof, Mohd Aliff Mohd Nawi, Farah Mohamad Zain, Mohammad Azam Hussain & Azmil Hashim, 2023). Therefore, research to help improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching and facilitation of Hifz al-Quran should be carried out.

Problem statement

Basically, teachers have a huge role in the world of education where they serve as mentors, trainees, educators and value cultivators (Aenullael Mukarromah & Meyyana Andriana, 2022). Similarly, in the context of tahfiz teachers, they also have a similar role in handling the subject of the Quran in tahfiz institutions. In reality, they face many challenges in performing the role well. Siti Nurjanah Mastor Mustafa, Siti Aisyah Johan & Jimaain Safar (2020) stated that tahfiz teachers have difficulty handling teaching and facilitation because they are not provided with any standard teaching guidelines as a guide to carry out the teaching and facilitation process.

As a result, Siti Rashidah Abd Razak (2020) stated that tahfiz teachers teach only based on the skills they already possess. The tahfiz teachers also do not have the opportunity to improve the quality of their teaching and facilitation as they are not exposed to any involvement in training or courses for the purpose of teaching specialization. As a result of the problem, (Muhammad Amirullah Jasni & Mohd Isa Hamzah, 2023) found that tahfiz teachers still maintain the use of conventional memorization methods in the teaching and facilitation of Quran memorization which is known as *talaqqi musyafaah*.

There is no doubt that *talaqqi musyafahah* is important in the memorization of the Quran as it has been practiced since the time of the Prophet PBUH. However, this method need to be improved with new elements such as paying attention to learning methods that coincide with the needs of tahfiz students. This is supported by Fathiyah Mohd Fakhruddin, Sharini Che Ishak, Asmawati Suhid, Ahmad Fauzi Mohd Ayub, Norlizah Che Hassan, Lukman Abd Mutalib & Wan Marzuki Wan Jaafar (2020) which insists that tahfiz students should know the right learning methods for themselves as the right learning methods will help them to recite the Quran better while supporting their memorization retention process.

There are various learning methods that can be used to achieve learning objectives. However, the learning method seen as the most appropriate by the researchers is the method of learning style tendencies by Neil Fleming (1995) which is the VARK Learning Style. This is because, according to Nor Musliza Mustafa, Zulkifly Mohd Zaki, Khairul Anuar Mohamad, Mokmin Basri & Sedek Ariffin (2018), the tahfiz students have their own Quran recitation techniques and when researched, the techniques used by them are in line with the VARK Learning Style.

In setting the appropriate and accurate items to be placed under each VARK dimension, several important steps must be taken so that each selected item coincides with the concept of memorization and truly represents each dimension of the VARK. Therefore, the researchers suggest that the Fuzzy Deplhi Method be used to obtain expert consensus for each item used in this research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Memorization concept

Memorization comes from Arabic, that is *hifz* which means preserving and caring. In the context of the Quran, the memorization of the Quran is the preservation and care of the Quran in the form of memorization by the reciters of the Quran. (al-Qattan, 2000; Abd Rahman Abd Ghani, 2009, Mohd Nazri Jamaluddin, 2010). The statute of reciting the Quran is *fardhu kifayah* while, the statute of forgetting the Quran due to laziness, negligence or being too busy with worldly matters is sinful (Pejabat Mufti Wilayah Persekutuan, 2018).

However, Muslims have continued to race to recite the Quran since the time it was revealed. This scenario occurs due to the benefits promised by Allah SWT for the recitation of the Quran. Among the advantages are that the reciters of the Quran are considereed a noble group in the sight of Allah SWT (Al-Munajjid, 2009), the reciters of the Quran are more preferred to be an imam during congregational prayer and the reciters of the Quran are called Ahlullah which means as kins of Allah SWT because they are members of the Quran (Ahmad Faqihuddin, 2015).

The practice of Quran memorization was started by the Prophet PBUH and continues until now. Today, Quran memorization has evolved into a very important educational stream in society and is referred to as tahfiz education (Murihah Abdullah & Mohd Faeez Ilias, 2015). In tahfiz education, tahfiz teachers emphasize the practice of *tasmik, talaqqi musyafahah, murajaah, tahdir, takrar* and *tahriri* widely without diversifying the teaching practices (Sri Andayani Mahdi Yusuf, Mohd. Aderi Che Noh & Khadijah Abdul Razak, 2019).

Memorization based on VARK learning style approach

The VARK Learning Style Model has been developed by Neil Fleming since 1987 which classifies students based on one's sensory inclinations in processing information. VARK is an acronym representing the 4 main dimensions of the quoted model: Visual, Auditory, Reading and Kinesthetic (Fleming, 1992).

According to Fleming (1995), visual learners are faster at capturing information through vision. They are sensitive to colors, diagrams, pictures and shapes. Auditory students, on the other hand, are more likely to receive information through hearing. They are especially interested in speech and recording. Next, reading students prefer information in printed form. They tend to read reading materials such as books and articles and they often try to understand the context of what is being learned rather than just memorizing it. Lastly, kinesthetic students learn faster through movement as well as behavior. They often choose to do something that involves training and activities to digest things.

VARK Learning Style is suitable to be applied in the classroom environment including Hifz al-Quran classes as it is simple and very clear. This is in line with the opinion (Nurul Huda Mohammad & Noor Syahidah Mohamad Akhir, 2023) that tahfiz teachers should always be aware of the needs and interests of tahfiz students in order for learning to be more effective. Therefore, the researchers have developed an instrument that holds 5 items for each VARK dimension based on the VARK Learning Style concept that has been adapted to the context of Quran memorization.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data collection process

Researchers identified and appointed suitable experts to provide feedback on items in the instruments that had been built. Then, experts were contacted through calls, emails or just face-to-face interaction before receiving a formal letter of appointment with the study instrument.

Research instrument

Experts were given an instrument consisting a list of items. The number of items involved was 20 items (5 items per VARK dimension). Each item was represented by a 7-point Likert scale with a consent level as per Table 1 and a blank column for any comments or suggestions from experts for improvement purposes.

**Table 1: 7-Point likert scale and consent level**

Likert Scale	Consent Level
1	Very strongly disagree
2	Strongly disagree
3	Disagree
4	Moderately agree
5	Agree
6	Strongly agree
7	Very strongly agree

Experts information

In the Delphi method, the most important step is the selection of experts as it will affect the quality of the study findings (Jacobs, 1996). The experts appointed have been involved in tahfiz education for 7 to 30 years. This is in line with the opinion of Akbari & Yazdanmehr (2014) which says that the selected experts should have at least 5 years of experience in the field of study. As for the number of experts involved, the researchers selected 10 experts based on the opinion of Linstone & Turoff (2002) who suggested a number of experts of 5 to 10.

Data analysis process

When analyzing the data using the Fuzzy Delphi Method, there are three conditions that need to be observed for an item to be accepted. The first condition is that the Threshold value (d) must be less than or equal to 0.2 (d ≤ 0.2) and the second condition is to reach at least 75% expert agreement. Both of these conditions fall under Triangular Fuzzy Number aspect which determines the expert consensus on the item only. The third condition is the value of Amax is equal to or more than α-cut = 0.5 (Amax ≥ 0.5). This condition is under the Defuzzification Process which determines the expert consensus and ranking of the items.
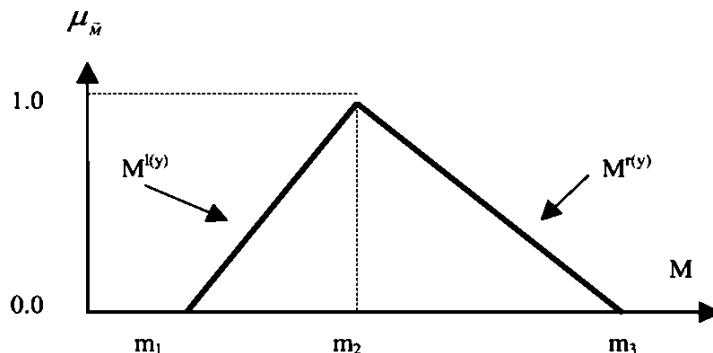
Figure 1: Graph of the triangle mean against the triangular value

Source: Mohd Ridhuan Mohd Jamil & Nurulrabihah Mat Noh (2021)

Triangular Fuzzy Number is used to produce the Fuzzy scale as in Table 2 for the purpose of translating linguistic variables into Fuzzy numbers. The higher the Fuzzy scale means the more accurate the data obtained (Mohd Ridhuan Mohd Jamil & Nurulrabihah Mat Noh, 2021).

Table 2: Seven points fuzzy scale table

Linguistic Variables	Fuzzy Scale (n1, n2, n3)
Very strongly disagree	(0.0, 0.0, 0.1)
Strongly disagree	(0.0, 0.1, 0.3)
Disagree	(0.1, 0.3, 0.5)
Moderately agree	(0.3, 0.5, 0.7)
Agree	(0.5, 0.7, 0.9)
Strongly agree	(0.7, 0.9, 1.0)
Very strongly agree	(0.9, 1.0, 1.0)

After the researcher obtained the feedback from all experts, the data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel software.

For the first condition, the value of the Fuzzy scale (n1, n2, n3) and the mean value of Fuzzy (m1, m2, m3) was to obtain the Threshold value (d) by using the formula in Figure 2. If a value of d ≤ 0.2, it meant that all experts have reached a consensus on the item and if otherwise, the item was rejected (Cheng & Lin, 2002).

$$d = \widetilde{m}, \tilde{n} \sqrt{\frac{1}{3}[(m_1 - n_1)^2 + (m_2 - n_2)^2 + (m_3 - n_3)^2]}$$

Figure 2: *Formula for obtaining threshold value (d)*

For the second condition, the percentage of expert agreement must be equal to 75% or more for an item to be accepted (Chu & Hwang, 2008). If there is an item that does not reach the level of expert agreement, the second round of Fuzzy Delphi can be done until a consensus for the item is reached.

Then, the process of analyzing the data continues to meet the third requirement. The Amax value is calculated using the formula in Figure 3. If the Amax value is equal to or more than the value of α-cut = 0.5 then the consensus of experts is successfully reached. Furthermore, the Amax value also determines the ranking of each item. Items that get the highest Amax value will be at the top of the rankings.

$$A_{max} = \tfrac{1}{4}(m_1 + 2m_2 + m_3)$$

Figure 3: Formula for obtaining the amax value

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Item validity under VARK dimensions

20 items i.e. 5 items under the Visual dimension, 5 items under the Auditory dimension, 5 items under the Reading dimension and 5 items under the Kinesthetic dimension have been analyzed through all three conditions as stated in the previous section. However, only 17 items were accepted and 3 items were rejected. The rejected items are 1 item from the Visual dimension which was "I draw a picture of the Quranic verse which I will recite", 1 item from the Auditory dimension which was "I listen to the recitation of friends first before starting to recite the Quranic verse" and 1 item from the Reading dimension which was "I need to know the meaning of the Quranic verse before reciting it". Finally, the ranking of each item by dimensions was determined. The entire analysis is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Data analysis by dimensions

Visual								
Items	**Triangular Fuzzy Number**		**Defuzzification Process**				**Expert Consensus**	**Ranking**
	Threshold value,d	**Percentage of Group Agreement**	**m1**	**m2**	**m3**	**Fuzzy Score (Amax)**		
1	0.508	0%	0.620	0.730	0.790	0.713	REJECTED	
2	0.183	90%	0.800	0.920	0.950	0.890	ACCEPTED	2
3	0.087	90%	0.840	0.960	0.990	0.930	ACCEPTED	1
4	0.183	90%	0.800	0.920	0.950	0.890	ACCEPTED	2
5	0.183	90%	0.800	0.920	0.950	0.890	ACCEPTED	2

Auditory								
Items	**Triangular Fuzzy Number**		**Defuzzification Process**				**Expert Consensus**	**Ranking**
	Threshold value,d	**Percentage of Group Agreement**	**m1**	**m2**	**m3**	**Fuzzy Score (Amax)**		

1	0.027	100%	0.880	0.990	1.000	0.957	ACCEPTED	1
2	0.232	90%	0.770	0.890	0.930	0.863	REJECTED	
3	0.073	100%	0.820	0.960	1.000	0.927	ACCEPTED	4
4	0.027	100%	0.880	0.990	1.000	0.957	ACCEPTED	1
5	0.064	100%	0.840	0.970	1.000	0.937	ACCEPTED	3

Reading

| Items | Triangular Fuzzy Number | | Defuzzification Process | | | | Expert Consensus | Ranking |
	Threshold value,d	Percentage of Group Agreement	m1	m2	m3	Fuzzy Score (Amax)		
1	0.087	90%	0.840	0.960	0.990	0.930	ACCEPTED	2
2	0.183	90%	0.800	0.920	0.950	0.890	ACCEPTED	4
3	0.049	100%	0.860	0.980	1.000	0.947	ACCEPTED	1
4	0.281	20%	0.700	0.840	0.910	0.817	REJECTED	
5	0.103	90%	0.800	0.940	0.990	0.910	ACCEPTED	3

Kinesthetic

| Items | Triangular Fuzzy Number | | Defuzzification Process | | | | Expert Consensus | Ranking |
	Threshold value,d	Percentage of Group Agreement	m1	m2	m3	Fuzzy Score (Amax)		
1	0.181	90%	0.740	0.890	0.950	0.860	ACCEPTED	5
2	0.073	100%	0.820	0.960	1.000	0.927	ACCEPTED	3
3	0.186	90%	0.780	0.910	0.950	0.880	ACCEPTED	4
4	0.049	100%	0.860	0.980	1.000	0.947	ACCEPTED	1
5	0.049	100%	0.860	0.980	1.000	0.947	ACCEPTED	1

Based on Table 3, the items accepted by the experts were sorted based on the ranking according to the dimensions of the VARK as presented in Table 4. In conclusion, experts agreed that visual students recite the Quran by imagining the position of sentences in mushaf, producing a map of the verse, marking the opening and closing of the verse and counting the number of words in the verse for difficult sentences. For the auditory students, the experts agreed that they need to listen to the teacher's reading, record their favorite reciter's voice, recite a bit louder and listen to their own recitation repeatedly to recite the Quran well. The experts also agreed that reading students recite the Quran by understanding translation, reciting repeatedly alone, reciting verse interpretations and reading repeatedly with friends. Finally, kinesthetic students recite the Quran by writing verses, opening and closing the Quran intermittently, walking when reciting it, pointing with fingers at the verse to be recited and moving the limbs when reciting the Quran.

Table 4: Ranking of items

Visual	1. I imagine the position of the verse in the mushaf when reciting the verse.
	2. I produce a mind map of the verse I wanted to recite.
	3. I marked (highlight) the opening and closing of the verse to recite the verse.
	4. I count the number of words in a sentence before reciting a difficult sentence.
Auditory	1. I need to listen to the teacher's recitation before I start reciting the Quran.
	2. I listen to the recording of my favorite reciter before I started reciting the Quranic verse.
	3. I recite the Quranic verse a bit louder so that I can quickly memorize it.
	4. I listen to my own recitation repeatedly before I start reciting the Quranic verse.
Reading	1. I must understand the translation before memorizing the verses of the Quran.
	2. I would read the verse over and over again by myself to memorize it.
	3. I read the interpretation of the verse before memorizing it.
	4. I have to read the verse over and over again with friends to memorize it.

Kinestheti c	1. I rewrite the verses of the Quran to memorize them.
	2. I open and close the Quran intermittently when I recite it.
	3. I walk while memorizing the verses of the Quran.
	4. I point with a finger at the Quranic verse when I recite it.
	5. I move my limbs when memorizing verses from the Quran.

SUMMARY

The development of the Smart Quran Model that meets the concept of memorization and the needs of the students in terms of learning style preference is needed by the country's tahfiz education. The Smart Quran Model is expected to make the teaching and facilitation of Hifz al-Quran more interesting and effective thus helping to boost the excellence of students' memorization. After the analysis of the Fuzzy Delphi Method was carried out, the results of the analysis showed that most of the items in each dimension of VARK that had been proposed by the researchers were accepted by the experts involved.

Acknowledgment

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