

# Nurturing Quran Literacy: An Exploration on Proficiency Level of Reading Quran Among UiTM Penang Branch Students

**BITARA**

Volume 7, Issue 4, 2024: 109-122  
© The Author(s) 2024  
e-ISSN: 2600-9080  
http://www.bitarajournal.com  
Received: 27 August 2024  
Accepted: 30 September 2024  
Published: 21 October 2024

Habibah Ayob,<sup>1\*</sup> Siti Shahirah Mat Daud,<sup>2</sup> & Mastura Razali<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup> Department of Quran and Sunnah Studies International Islamic University 53100 Gombak, Selangor MALAYSIA, & Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies (ACIS), Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) Cawangan Pulau Pinang, Kampus Permatang Pauh 13500, Pulau Pinang, MALAYSIA, E-mail: habibah69@uitm.edu.my

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Pharmacy, Universiti Teknologi Mara Cawangan Pulau Pinang, Kampus Bertam 13200, Kepala Batas Pulau Pinang, MALAYSIA, E-mail: shahirah3671@uitm.edu.my

<sup>3</sup> Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies (ACIS), Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM), Shah Alam, 40450, Selangor MALAYSIA, E-mail: mastura458@uitm.edu.my.

\*Corresponding Author: habibah69@uitm.edu.my

## Abstract

This study assesses the Quranic reading proficiency of students at UiTM Pulau Pinang, focusing on seven domains of recitation and examining the relationship between proficiency and demographic factors such as gender, educational background, and prior religious education. A total of 73 students participated in a Quran reading test, and the data was analysed using the *Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22*. The findings reveal that most students demonstrated a very good level of proficiency in recognizing letters, pronouncing them according to *Makhrāj*, and reading connection words fluently. Additionally, students showed good proficiency in reading fluently and adhering to short and long vowel rules. However, their performance was fair in applying Tajwid rules and poor in reading with Tarannum. Correlation analysis indicates a positive relationship between fluency and other domains such as adhering to short and long vowels, reading connection words fluently, and applying Tajwid rules. A negligible link was found between Tarannum and letter recognition. An independent t-test showed no significant differences in proficiency based on gender or prior Quranic recitation experience. However, there were significant differences in proficiency based on educational background and prior religious education, with p-values of 0.039 and 0.031, respectively. Overall, Quranic proficiency among students is influenced by various factors, particularly prior religious education.

**Keywords:** Quran literacy, UiTM Penang Branch, religious education, Quranic pedagogy.

## Cite This Article:

Habibah Ayob, Siti Shahirah Mat Daud, & Mastura Razali. (2024). Nurturing Quran Literacy: An Exploration on Proficiency Level of Reading Quran Among UiTM Penang Branch Students. *BITARA International Journal of Civilizational Studies and Human Sciences* 7(4): 109-122.

## Introduction

Quran literacy, which encompasses the ability to read, understand, and apply the teachings of the Quran, is a fundamental aspect of Islamic education that shapes the spiritual and ethical development of Muslims. In the context of higher education, particularly at UiTM Penang Branch, this literacy is crucial in fostering students' Islamic identity and worldview. However, research on Quran reading proficiency among students, especially at the diploma level in health

sciences, remains limited. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the factors influencing Quran reading proficiency among these students. Recent studies have explored factors influencing Quranic reading proficiency among students in Malaysia and Indonesia. The j-QAF Programme, implemented in Malaysian primary schools, aims to improve Quranic recitation skills, but its effectiveness remains a concern (Zarif, Mohamad, & Bakar, 2014). At the university level, research has shown that students' Quranic reading abilities vary, with some institutions implementing Tahsin Al-Quran programmes to enhance competence (Hakim, 2019). In private universities, Quranic Reading courses have been found to be effective in improving students' skills in reading and understanding *tajweed* rules (Abu Bakar et. al). Action research has demonstrated that collaborative, reflective-critical approaches can significantly improve students' Quranic reading abilities, with success rates of up to 65.08% in transitioning from non-fluent to fluent reading (Supriyadi & Julia, 2019). These studies highlight the importance of targeted interventions and effective teaching methods in nurturing Quran literacy among students in higher education.

The study aims to assess the Quranic reading proficiency of students in UiTM Pulau Pinang by administering a Quran reading test and analysing the results. This study was performed to determine the relationship between proficiency of Al-Quran among UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang students with the demographic factors of gender, education background and prior experience with reciting Al-Quran and prior education in religious school that could affect the students' proficiency in reciting Al-Quran. To the best of our knowledge, no study has investigated regarding level of proficiency in Al-Quran among students in UiTM UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang.

## Research Objective

1. To determine the level of performance in proficiency in Al-Quran among UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang students.
2. To assess the correlation between seven domains in proficiency in Al-Quran among UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang students.
3. To identify the relationship between proficiency in Al-Quran between demographic factors of gender, education background and prior experience with reciting Al-Quran and prior education in religious school among UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang students.

## Null Hypothesis

H<sub>01</sub> : There are no significant differences in the proficiency in Al-Quran between male and female students of UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang.

H<sub>02</sub> : There are no significant differences in the proficiency in Al-Quran between education background of students of UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang.

H<sub>03</sub> : There are no significant differences in the proficiency in Al-Quran between prior experience with reciting Al-Quran of students of UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang.

H<sub>04</sub> : There are no significant differences in the proficiency in Al-Quran between prior education in religious school of students.

## Literature Review

Qur'an literacy is a fundamental concept in Islamic education, encompassing the ability to read, write, and understand the Qur'an (Dewi Mulyani et al., 2018). Research suggests a strong positive correlation between Qur'an literacy and scientific literacy, indicating that those who study the Qur'an may develop better scientific literacy skills (Sukarno Ahmad Zainuri, 2020). The Qur'an itself promotes literacy through various verses that encourage reading, observation, research, and critical thinking (Thoriq Aziz Jayana, 2021). In the modern context, technological literacy has become crucial for Islamic preachers (*da'i*), with the Qur'an providing guidance on information retrieval and communication ethics (Cecep Castrawijaya, 2023). Effective methods for teaching Qur'an literacy to children include storytelling techniques, which have shown positive results in early childhood education (Dewi Mulyani et al., 2018). Overall, Qur'an literacy is seen as essential for developing well-rounded, knowledgeable individuals with strong character and scientific understanding.

Research on Quranic literacy in Malaysian higher education institutions reveals varied approaches and challenges. Ulum al-Quran courses are offered in several public universities, covering topics like Quranic revelation, compilation, and interpretation (Mohamed Akhiruddin Ibrahim, 2016). At the primary school level, the j-QAF Programme aims to improve basic religious skills, including Quranic recitation, though its effectiveness requires further evaluation (Muhammad Mustaqim Mohd Zarif et al., 2014). Among university students, Quranic reading frequency and mastery are reported to be at moderate levels, with a need for improved tajwid knowledge (F. Ismail et al., 2022). The importance of effective teaching practices in Quranic education is emphasized, with recommendations for increased teacher training and courses in both Malaysia and the United Kingdom (M. Noh et al., 2013). These studies highlight the ongoing efforts and challenges in promoting Quranic literacy across different educational levels in Malaysia.

Despite the significant body of research, there remains a gap in studies specifically focusing on the Quran literacy of university students at UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang. Most of the existing research focuses on primary and secondary education or specialized Tahfiz programs. By examining the proficiency levels and identifying the influencing factors, this study seeks to provide insights that can help enhance Quran literacy programs at UiTM and similar institutions. This could inform policy decisions, curriculum development, and teaching methods that better cater to the needs of university students in mastering Quran literacy.

## Methodology

### Sample Collection

This study was conducted to determine the relationship between proficiency of reading Al-Quran with the seven domains in reading Al-Quran. Therefore, 73 students comprising of 21 males and 52 females were chosen from UiTM Pulau Pinang.

## Data Collection Method

This study was conducted to determine the relationship between proficiency of reading Al-Quran with the domains in reading Al-Quran. Therefore, 73 students comprising of 21 males and 52 females were chosen from UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang. In this study, the data were collected through a Quran reading test administered to the respondents. The proficiency of reading Al-Quran was measured by the marks collected by seven areas in reading test. There are seven areas of Quranic reading proficiencies assessed by the test that carry a total of 35 marks, which include i) Fluent in reading Al-Quran ii) Know the letter in Al-Quran iii) Pronounce letter according *makhraj* iv) Adhere to short and length correctly v) Read the connection words fluently vi) Read Al-Quran with the rule of Tajwid vii) Read Al-Quran with the *tarannum*.

## Data Analysis

The results obtained were then analysed quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistical methods to indicate the level of the students' ability and proficiency in reading the Quran. The data for all variables were recorded and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. The demographic data in terms of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were performed using descriptive statistics. Apart from that, inferential statistics was employed to determine the relationship between the demographic factors and the proficiency in Al-Quran, as well as inter-correlation between all the seven domains in the study. An independent t-test was chosen to determine the relationship between proficiency in Al-Quran and demographic factor of gender, education background and prior experience with reciting Al-Quran for the normally distributed data while a Mann-whitney test employed for the prior education in religious school with the proficiency in Al-Quran for the non-normal data distribution. A mean score interpretation scale system was used to evaluate the level of proficiency in reading Al-Quran among UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang students. This system categorizes scores into five distinct levels: Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good, and Excellent based on research done by Pahuriray & Algara (2021). Table 1 represents an interpretation scale used to evaluate level of proficiency in reading Al-Quran among IPTA students.

Table 1 Interpretation scale level of proficiency in reading Al-Quran

Mean Score Interpretation
1.00-1.80 Poor
1.81-2.60 Fair
2.61-3.40 Good
3.41-4.20 Very Good
4.21-5.00 Excellent

Source: Pahuriray & Algara (2021)

Additionally, correlation analysis was conducted to identify and interpret how strong the relationship between the seven domains of proficiency in reading Al-Quran. The following table represents the *r*-value interpretation.

Table 2: *r*-value interpretation

<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
0.90-1.00	Very Strong
0.70-0.90	Strong
0.50-0.70	Moderate
0.30-0.90	Weak
0.00-0.30	Very Weak

Source: Asni et al., 2024)

## Result And Discussion

### Respondents' Demographic Profile

Table 3: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Item	Information	Frequency	Percentage %
Age	18	1	0.94
	19	1	0.94
	20	5	4.71
	21	91	85.84
	22	5	4.72
	23	2	1.88
	26	1	0.94
Gender	male	21	28.8
	female	52	71.20
Prior education in religious school	Yes	10	13.70
	No	63	86.30
Education	Diploma	58	79.50
	Pra-diploma	15	20.50
Prior experience with reciting Al-Quran	Yes	62	84.90
	No	11	15.10

### Respondents' Demographic Profile

The sample's demographic analysis, which included 91 participants, showed that a significant proportion of people are young, particularly those who are close to 21. Five participants aged

twenty (4.71%), and five individuals, aged twenty-two (4.72%), made up the additional age groups. Other age groups included are 26 years old with only one participant (0.94%), 19 years old (0.94%) and 18 years old (0.94%) respectively while two respondents, aged 23 years old (1.88%).

In terms of gender, the outcome revealed that female participants represented 71.20% (52 students) while male participants accounted for 28.80% (21 students) with a significant female majority. Regarding the educational background from religious schools, a total of 10 participants (13.70%) reported having attended a religious school. In contrast, the majority (86.30%, 63 participants) indicated they had not attended a religious school. In addition, majority of participants were enrolled in Diploma (79.50%, 58 participants). A smaller group was enrolled in a Pra-diploma course (20.50%, 15 participants). With respect to the prior experience with Al-Quran, a significant majority (84.90%, 62 participants) reported that they had learned to recite the Al-Quran. Conversely, 15.10% (11 participants) indicated they had not learned to recite the Al-Quran prior to their enrolment. Most participants are enrolled in diploma courses and have never attended a religious school. Furthermore, the vast majority have already recited the Al-Quran.

## Overall performance in proficiency in reciting Quran

Table 4: Performance in proficiency in reciting Quran

Domain	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Fluent	3.34	0.820	Good
Know the letter	3.86	0.902	Very Good
Pronounce letter according <i>makhraj</i>	3.84	0.747	Very Good
Adhere to short length correctly	3.30	0.938	Good
Read the connection words fluently in Al-Quran	3.45	0.943	Very Good
Read Al-Quran with the rule of Tajwid	2.58	1.301	Fair
Read Al-Quran with the <i>tarannum</i>	1.66	0.961	Poor

Table 4 demonstrates the overall performance in the proficiency in reciting Al-Quran among students with the highest mean score at 3.86 and standard deviation at 0.902 was “know the letters in Al-Quran”. The domain of the “read Al-Quran with *tarannum*” has the lowest mean at 1.66 with the standard deviation of 0.961. Apart from that, students' proficiency in the domain of “know the letters in Al-Quran” was slightly higher with the mean score at 3.86 and standard deviation at 0.902 than their proficiency in the domain of “pronounce of letters in according to *makhraj*” with the mean score (3.84) and standard deviation (0.747). Following the domain of “pronounce of letters according to *makhraj*”, “read the connection words fluently in Al-Quran” ranks the third highest with a mean score of 3.45 and standard deviation of 0.943. For the area of “reading Al-Quran fluently” ranks fourth with a mean score of 3.34 and standard deviation of 0.820. Apart from that, the mean score for “adhere to the short length correctly in

Al-Quran” is 3.30 and the standard deviation is 0.938. From all the seven domains in Quranic reading, it is found that the “Read Al-Quran according to rule of Tajwid” demonstrates the second lowest rank with the mean value of 2.58 and standard deviation of 1.301.

Table 5: Inter-correlation among domains in proficiency in Al-Quran.

<b>Domain</b>	Fluent	Know the letter	Pronounce letter according <i>makhraj</i>	Adhere to short and length correctly	Read the connection words fluently	Read Al-Quran with the rule of Tajwid	Read Al-Quran with the <i>tarannum</i>
Fluent	1.0	0.448	0.723	0.867	0.893	0.729	0.329
Know the letter	0.448	1.0	0.692	0.434	0.513	0.048	-0.395
Pronounce letter according <i>makhraj</i>	0.723	0.692	1.0	0.738	0.749	0.474	0.630
Adhere to short length correctly	0.867	0.434	0.738	1.0	0.925	0.672	0.233
Read the connection words fluently	0.893	0.513	0.749	0.925	1.0	0.645	0.158
Read Al-Quran with the rule of Tajwid	0.729	0.048	0.474	0.672	0.645	1.0	0.630
Read Al-Quran with the <i>tarannum</i>	0.329	-0.395	0.630	0.233	0.158	0.630	1.0

Table 5 represents inter-correlation among seven domains in proficiency in Al-Quran. The purpose of this analysis was to examine the relationships between various domains of Quranic fluency and specific skills such as letter recognition, pronunciation according to *makhraj*, adherence to short and long vowel rules, fluency in reading connection words, application of Tajwid rules, and performance in *tarannum*. The correlation indicates varying degrees of relationship among different domains. As a result, fluency represent a strong positive correlation with Adhere to short and length correctly ( $r=0.867$ ) and read the connection words fluently ( $r=0.893$ ). These high correlation coefficients suggest that proficiency in reading the connection words fluently and adhering to vowel rules are closely related to overall fluency in reading. The results indicate that as proficiency in specific skills increases, so does overall fluency. For instance, the strong correlation between fluency and reading connection words fluently ( $r = 0.893$ ) implies that students who master these rules are likely to read more fluently. Additionally, fluent exhibits strongly correlated regarding both *Makhraj's* ( $r=0.723$ ) and Read

Al-Quran according to tajwid rule ( $r=0.723$ ). It also implies that fluency depends on a strong foundation in letter recognition and pronunciation. While pronounce letter according to *Makhrāj* has a moderately positive connection ( $r=0.474$ ) with reading the Qur'an using Tajwid's technique. This implies that following Tajwid regulations requires accurate pronunciation. However, there was a negligible link between the tarannum ( $r=-0.395$ ) and knowing the letter and reading the Quran. This suggests that mastering the melodic elements of recitation of Al-Quran can need more than just an understanding of letters.

## Disparities between demographic factors

Table 6: Disparities between gender

Demographics	Factor	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Significant
	Male	21	20.00	4.764	71	-1.871	0.065
	Female	52	22.34	4.88			

An independent t-test revealed a non-significant result in the test scores between male ( $M=20.00$ ,  $SD=4.764$ ) and female ( $M=22.34$ ,  $SD=4.88$ ), with the conditions  $t(71) = -1.871$ ,  $p = .065$ . Since  $p$ -values more  $> 0.05$ , this means that the difference in means between males and females is not statistically significant at a typical alpha level of 0.05. The outcome revealed that female students ( $M=22.34$ ) have a higher proficiency in reading Al-Quran compared to male students ( $M=20.00$ ). Although the outcome not statistically significant, we can still describe the observed difference, suggesting a trend towards higher proficiency in Quranic reading.

Table 7: Disparities between education background (pra and diploma)

Demographics	Factor	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Significant
	Diploma	58	22.27	4.66	71	2.108	0.039
	Pradiploma	15	19.33	5.39			

Table 7 reported there was a significant difference in the outcome for proficiency in reading Al-Quran between diploma education ( $M = 22.27$ ,  $SD = 4.66$ ) and pra diploma ( $M = 19.33$ ,  $SD = 5.39$ ), with the conditions  $t(71) = -2.108$ ,  $p = 0.039$ . Since  $p$ -values less 0.05, there was a significant difference in the education background among IPTA students. The result showed that diploma students ( $M=22.27$ ) have a higher proficiency in reading Al-Quran compared to pra diploma student ( $M=19.33$ ).

Table 8: Disparities between Prior experience with reciting Al-Quran

Demographics	Factor	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Significant
Prior experience with reciting Al-Quran	Yes	62	21.96	4.51	71	1.223	0.225



No	11	20.00	6.87
----	----	-------	------

Table 8 also reported that there was no significant difference in the outcome for the proficiency in reading Al-Quran between students that had prior experience with reciting Al-Quran ( $M=21.96$ ) and students that did not have prior experience reciting Al-Quran ( $M=20.00$ ), with the conditions  $t(71)=1.223$ ,  $p=0.225$ ). Since  $p$ -values more  $>0.05$ , we there was no significant difference in the prior experience with reciting Al-Quran among IPTA students. The outcome revealed that students that have prior experience reciting Al-Quran ( $M=21.96$ ) have a higher proficiency in reading Al-Quran compared to students that did not have prior experience reciting Al-Quran ( $M=20.00$ ).

Table 9: Disparities between prior education in religious school.

	Proficiency in Al-Quran
Mann-Whitney U	181.50
Wilcoxon W	2197.500
Z	-2.160
Significant (2-tailed)	0.031

### Grouping variable: prior education in religious school

A Mann-Whitney U test was employed to assess whether there were differences in ranks between two independent groups. The results indicated a significant difference between the students that had prior education in religious school and students that did not have prior education in religious school,  $U = 181.50$ ,  $Z = -2.16$ ,  $p = .031$ . Given that the  $p$ -value (0.031) is less than the significance level of 0.05, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups being compared.

## Discussion

Overall, this study shows that a person's capacity to recite the Al-Quran is influenced by a variety of criteria, including as fluency, letter knowledge, pronunciation, rhythm, Tajwid rules, and *tarannum* aspects. In the areas of "Know the letter," "Pronounce the letter according to *makhraj*," and "Read the connection words fluently in Al-Quran," the majority of respondents were very good. In contrast, they achieved quite poorly in the areas of "Read Al-Quran according to rule of Tajwid" and "Read Al-Quran with *tarannum*." Based on this result, this implies that even though the respondents were able to read the Quran, they struggled with some of the seven components of proficiency in *quranic* reading, particularly with regards to the reading according to the tajwid rules as well as reading Al-Quran with *tarannum*. This finding is in fact consistent with the previous study that proficiency of respondents in reading Al-Quran did not reflect their proficiency in fluency, rules of Tajwid, pronunciation and reading signs especially concerning the rules of tajwid (Mohd Zarif et al. 2014).

Proficiency in reading Al-Quran without understanding of Tajwid will lead to erroneous reading. In this present study, pronounce letter according to *Makhrāj* has a moderately positive connection ( $r=0.474$ ) with reading the Qur'an using Tajwid's technique. This implies that following Tajwid regulations requires accurate pronunciation. Thus, it is impossible to separate the knowledge of the tajwid from the ability to read the Al Quran. At Sriwijaya University, there was a strong positive correlation between the ability to read the Quran and the comprehension of Tajwid. This significant correlation ( $r=0.723$ ) is in line with the results of the current study, which indicate that reading the Quran and having fluency in it are strongly correlated (Safrina & Irfan, 2020). Similarly, a study performed at a Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in first grade discovered a moderately positive and notable link between learning to read the Quran and being able to read it (Handayani & Maulidah, 2019).

Diverse results have been drawn from research on gender-based quranic reading proficiency across Muslim countries as well in Malaysia. The current research showed that when it comes to reading the Al-Quran, female students were more proficient than male students. We can nonetheless characterize the observed difference, pointing to a tendency toward increased Quranic reading proficiency even though the result was not statistically significant. Similar findings to the current study were found in another study, which showed that female students in Quran-oriented mathematics instruction outperformed male students in character development (Anggraini, 2019). A different study, however, contradicted with our findings, indicating that male students reported being more proficient readers of the Quran than female students, and that there was not a significant difference in the reading proficiency of the Quran between male and female students (Faris et al., 2023). Additionally, another study revealed a significant difference in Quranic recitation proficiency between male and female students at the Faculty of Ushuluddin, with an overall moderate proficiency level (Dasrizal, 2020). In line with Fitriani & Rachmah's (2019) study, there were significant variances in the Quranic reading abilities of students who participated in Quranic education programs in comparison with those who did not.

The present study suggests that the prior education in religious school do significantly affect the proficiency in reading Al-Quran in UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang students. It is possible to hypothesize that students from religious schools were proficient in reading the Quran due to early exposure to the correct pronunciation, tajwid rules, and recitation rhythm, compared to those from non-religious institutions. According to present findings, there was a remarkable distinction between the students who had previously attended religious school and the students who had not. Research on Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students corroborated the findings, as they generally showed higher scores in Quranic reading, including proper pronunciation, tajwid rules, and reading rhythm, compared to students from public elementary schools (Ibrahim, 2023; Hasan, 2022). Furthermore, a study conducted by Amelia Agustina (2021) discovered that students graduating from Islamic High Boarding School have significantly higher Quranic reading ability than elementary school graduates. Thus, the findings of another study reported by Hanafi et al., (2022) revealed that there was a relationship between the ability of speaking in Arabic language in terms of reading skills and the level of readability of the Quran for those had attended religious school. This is linked to the experience of attending a Malaysian Islamic school where the primary course of study is Arabic language class, which

helps students become fluent readers of the Quran. Undeniably, however, the present study contradicted with the research conducted in Darussalam Ulujami Jakartawas which reported that there were no significant differences in Quran reading ability between students who graduated from Islamic elementary schools (MI) and those who graduated from public elementary schools (SD) (Abdul Haris & N. Khoirunnisa, 2024). Despite this, students from all educational backgrounds are nonetheless highly motivated to learn the Quran. (Ibrahim, 2023). Even if certain initiatives show potential, it is imperative that their efficacy be continuously evaluated to make sure they achieve their goals of raising Quranic competence across students from a variety of educational backgrounds

Mixed results are found in research on Quranic reading proficiency at various educational levels. Our latest research revealed a notable distinction in Al-Quran reading competency between diploma and pra diploma education. Dasrizal's (2020) study, which found no apparent distinction in competency between Islamic and regular high school graduates, proved contrary to our findings. Furthermore, students from Madrasah Ibtidaiyah backgrounds had better fluency and recitation skills, according to another study conducted in Indonesia. (Ibrahim, 2023). Several studies provide insight at students' ability to recite the Al-Quran with fluency while considering their previous Al-Quran recitation experience. According to our research, there was no statistically significant difference in the reading proficiency of the Qur'an between students who had previously experience with reciting Al-Quran and those who did not had experience. However, contradictory results have been found in studies on Quranic reading proficiency across past Al-Quran recitation experience. A similar outcome has been found in studies done by Fitriani & Imaniah Elfa Rachmag (2019) which revealed that those who take Quranic reading lessons (TPA) were noticeably more proficient than those who do not. Despite of this positive outcome, preliminary findings showed that students' skill in Quranic recitation varies, which highlights the ineffectiveness of national religious literacy programs like Malaysia's j-QAF Programme (Mohd Zarif et al., 2014). These findings emphasize the value of specialized Quranic education in the growth of reading abilities, but they also raise the possibility that variables other than formal education could affect students' competence levels. These studies collectively highlight the need for continued efforts to improve Al-Quran literacy among Muslim students, considering their prior experience and implementing effective teaching strategies to enhance their recitation proficiency.

There are numerous practical and accessible ways for higher education students, such as those at UiTM Cawangan in Pulau Pinang, to improve their Quran proficiency. Among these effective solutions are online platforms such as Azdan, jomalquran.my, and alqori.com. These platforms offer tailored Tajweed lessons taught by qualified instructors. The flexibility of online learning allows people to study at their own pace and on their own schedules. This is especially useful for people who have busy schedules, such as working professionals or students, or who live in remote areas where access to physical classes is limited. These platforms frequently include interactive tools, video lessons, and even one-on-one sessions, making the learning process more personalized and effective.

However, for those who prefer face-to-face interactions, local mosques and Islamic centers are invaluable resources. Many mosques offer structured Tajweed classes led by experienced teachers. These classes not only provide the opportunity for immediate feedback

but also foster a sense of community. Learning in a group setting often creates a supportive environment where learners motivate each other and progress together. The personal connection with a teacher in a mosque setting can also strengthen the learning experience, as students can ask questions, receive guidance, and build a relationship with their instructor.

Islamic educational institutions, such as schools and universities, are also critical in promoting Quranic literacy. These institutions typically offer formal courses in Tajweed as part of their Islamic studies curriculum. By integrating Tajweed lessons into the educational framework, students are given the opportunity to build a solid foundation in Quranic recitation from a young age. Structured programs ensure that learning is consistent and guided, helping students develop their skills over time and enabling them to carry these skills into adulthood.

Another useful strategy for finding trustworthy teachers is through personal recommendations. Often, the best instructors are found not through advertisements but through word-of-mouth. Asking friends, family members, or people in the community for referrals can lead to discovering reliable, knowledgeable teachers who come with the endorsement of those who have learned from them. These recommendations often bring an added layer of confidence, as learners can trust that the teacher is experienced and effective.

In today's digital age, social media and online forums have also become helpful resources for connecting with teachers. Platforms like Facebook groups, WhatsApp, or dedicated forums for Islamic learning can help individuals find Tajweed instructors who offer both private lessons and group classes. These platforms allow for flexibility and customization of the learning experience, making it easy to find lessons that fit various needs, whether it's in-person tutoring, online sessions, or small study circles.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has demonstrated that while most students at UiTM Cawangan Penang possess a good level of proficiency in certain Quranic reading domains, such as recognizing letters and pronouncing them correctly according to *makhraj*, there remains a significant gap in other critical areas. Notably, students struggled with applying the rules of Tajwid and reading with Tarannum. The findings indicate that proficiency in Quranic recitation is strongly linked to early education in religious schools and prior experience in reciting the Quran. There were no major differences in proficiency between education background of students and between male and female students, though female students displayed a slightly higher level of proficiency. To improve Quran literacy, especially in Tajwid and Tarannum, targeted interventions, effective pedagogical strategies, and enhanced Quranic education programs are needed. By addressing these areas, educational institutions like UiTM can better support students in mastering Quranic recitation, ultimately enhancing their spiritual and academic growth.

## References

- Agustina, A., Isnaini, M., & Soraya, N. (2021). Studi Komparasi Kemampuan Membaca al-Qur'an Berdasarkan Latarbelakang Pendidikan Siswa Kelas Viii di Smp Negeri 40 Palembang. *Jurnal PAI Raden Fatah*, 3(1), 80-96.
- Ahmad, Z. (2020). Does Qur'an and Science Literacy Interrelated. *Talent Development & Excellence*, 12(1), 3927-3939.
- Anggraini, F. (2020). Perbedaan Karakter Siswa Pada Pembelajaran Matematika Berorientasi Alquran Berbasis Gender. *Jurnal Anifa: Studi Gender dan Anak*, 1(1), 1-17.
- Asni, F., Ahmad, K. A., Hasbulah, M. H., & Mohammed Noor, A. (2024). Pengetahuan, Sikap dan Amalan (KAP) mengenai Fardu Ain di kalangan Murid Sekolah Menengah Negeri Perlis. *BITARA International Journal of Civilizational Studies and Human Sciences*, 7(2), 90-115.
- Bakar, B. A., binti Ibrahim, A., & binti Ibrahim, A. (2020). The Effectiveness of Quranic Reading Teaching and Learning Methods on Private University Students in Malaysia. *Journal of Management & Science*, 18(1), 11-21.
- Basir, A., Tamjidnor, T., Suraijiah, S., Karoso, S., Saidi, S., & Sholihah, M. (2024). Enhancing Qur'an Reading Proficiency in Madrasahs Through Teaching Strategies. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 7(2), 373-389.
- Castrawijaya, C. (2023). Da'i Technology Literacy in Perspective of the Qur'an. *Ilmu Dakwah: Academic Journal for Homiletic Studies*, 17(1), 19-38
- Dasrizal, D. (2020). Kemampuan Membaca Al-qur'an Mahasiswa Fakultas Ushuluddin Uin Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta Angkatan 2016/2017. *Ushuluna*, 2(2), 338536.
- Faris, A. F., Rahman, S. N. H. A., Jima'ain, M. T., Faisal, M. S., & Mustafa, R. R. (2023). Quranic Reading Proficiency and Factors Affecting Mastery Quran among Public University Students. *BITARA International Journal of Civilizational Studies and Human Sciences (e-ISSN: 2600-9080)*, 6(4), 127-138.
- Fitriani, F., & Rachmah, I. E. (2019). Perbandingan Kemampuan Membaca Al-Qur'an Siswa Yang Mengikuti Tpa Dan Tidak Mengikuti Tpa Di Mi Plus Darul Ilmi Banjarbaru. *Darris: Jurnal Pendidikan Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*, 2(2), 78-97.
- Hanapi, N. F., Wan Shaharuddin, W. Y., See, Y., & Lateh, N. H. M. (2022). Level of Quran Reading Proficiency: A case Study of Arabic Language Students in Malaysia. *International Online Journal of Language, Communication, and Humanities*. 5(I), 100-111.
- Handayani, S., & Maulidah, W. (2022). Pengaruh Baca Tulis Al-Qur'an terhadap Prestasi Belajar pada Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Al-Qur'an Hadis. *As-Syar'i: Jurnal Bimbingan & Konseling Keluarga*, 4(1), 1-8
- Haris, A., & Khoirunnisa, N. (2023). Kemampuan Membaca Al-Qur'an Siswa Berdasarkan Latar Belakang Pendidikan Dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Hasil Belajar Al-Qur'an Hadits. *HAWARI: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama dan Keagamaan Islam*, 4(2), 116-122.
- Hasan, M. S. R. (2022). Komparasi Hasil Belajar Fiqih Qur-any antara Siswa Lulusan SD dengan MI Kelas VII C di MTs Al-Urwatul Wutsqo Jombang. *Al-Idaroh: Jurnal Studi Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 6(2), 206-218.

- Ibrahim, M. A. (2016). Ulum Al-Quran course in higher education institutions: A comparative study of selected public universities in Malaysia. *IJASOS-International E-journal of Advances in Social Sciences*, 2(6), 685-690.
- Ibrahim, M. (2023). Student Competence in Reading the Al-Qur'an Based on Educational Background. *ETDC: Indonesian Journal of Research and Educational Review*, 3(1), 9-18.
- Ismail, F. B. H., Sabirin, S., Zahari, W. A. M. B. W., Rouzi, K. S., & Kirin, A. B. (2022). The Practice of Reading Al-Qur'an among Islam Youths. *QiST: Journal of Quran and Tafseer Studies*, 1(2), 105-127
- Jayana, T. A. (2021). Pendidikan Literasi Berbasis Alquran dalam Tinjauan Teologis, Historis, dan Sosiologis. *Islamic Review: Jurnal Riset Dan Kajian Keislaman*, 10(2), 205-218.
- Mulyani, D., Pamungkas, I., & Inten, D. N. (2018). Al-Quran Literacy for Early Childhood with Storytelling Techniques. *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 2(2), 202-210.
- Noh, M. A. C., Hussien, A., Ghani, O., & Suhid, A. (2013). The study of Quranic Teaching and learning: A review in Malaysia and United Kingdom. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 15(10), 1338-1344.
- Pahuriray, A. V., & Algara, R. O. (2021). Mobile-based PhilNITS reviewer design: Its functionality, reliability, usability and efficiency. *International Research Journal of Science, Technology, Education, and Management*, 1(2), 184-196.
- Rosniati, Hakim. "The improvement of students' competence in Islamic education programme through Tahsin Al-Quran activities." *Khalifa: Journal of Islamic Education* 3, no. 1 (2019): 35-55.
- Safrina, Sri, and Muhammad Irfan. "Ability To Read Quran And Understanding Of Tajwid for Sriwijaya University Students." *Conciencia* 20, no. 2 (2020): 77-84.
- Sahmat, M, S & Zamri, F, A. (2024). Enhancing Al-Quran Reading Proficiency in Higher Education: The implementation of the Focused Mad & Idgham Technique. *Journal of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development*. 10 (1), 72-86.
- Supriyadi, T., & Julia, J. (2019). The Problem of Students in Reading the Quran: A Reflective-Critical Treatment through Action Research. *International Journal of Instruction*, 12(1), 311-326.
- Tarmuji, N. H., Mohamed, N., Hazudin, S. F., Wan Ahmad, W. A. (2022). Linking study of memorising Quran with academic performance. *Asia Pacific Journal of Educators and Education*, 37(1), 181-191.
- Zarif, M. M. M., Mohamad, N., & Bakar, B. A. (2014). Assessing Quranic Reading Proficiency in the j-QAF Programme. *International Education Studies*, 7(6), 1-15.