Factors of Interacting with the Quran in Religious Life Appreciation Process among UKM Students

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Abstract

The Quran is indeed has been proven to be used as a therapy to get peace in daily lives, and the Quran is a remedy or an antidote for treating various diseases either physical or spiritual. Miracles revealed to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH are the Muslim holy book that does not have any similarity at all with other scriptures. However, the condition that often occurs particularly among students and raising concerns of many parties when the students less interact with the Quran. Therefore, this study aims to answer the question about what is the extent of students' involvement and the difference between male and female students of UKM themselves in terms of interacting with the Quran? This descriptive quantitative study was conducted using questionnaire form that was designed by the researcher. Analysis of this research applied descriptive method of frequencies and also t-test with the aid of SPSS program. The findings of this study clearly show that the faith interaction and practice subfactors resulted in higher mean scores, while the other six interaction subfactors with the Quran are at the mean scores that tended to be higher. Next, the t-test results clearly show that there are significant differences in terms of interaction with the Quran among male and female UKM students.

Keywords: interaction with the Quran, appreciation, religious life.

1. Introduction

The Quran is the words of Arabic miraculous revealed to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, which also stated that reading the Quran can be regarded as an act of worship and to the Muslims of the mutawatir (Al-Butti 1999). According to Manna 'al-Qattan (1998), the Quran is the words of Allah revealed to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and reading the Quran is considered as an act of worship. Based on these definitions, we can conclude here that the Quran is the words of Allah SWT that are miraculous, revealed through the angel Jibril to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH with mutawatir history, and by reading the Quran is considered as an act of worship.

Revelation to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH is not the will of his own, but is a blessing from Allah SWT. Allah SWT says in Surah al-Qasas, verse 28:86, which means:

And you (O Muhammad) did not hope that the Quran was revealed to you (but have been revealed to) is a mercy from your Lord.

Therefore, do not be a supporter of the unbelievers (Prime Minister's Office, 2001).

The Prophet Muhammad PBUH had received a revelation for 23 years in the Arabic language in stages unlike the Taurat that was revealed to *Musa* a.s. only once (Al-Butti 1999). As Allah SWT says in Surah al-Furqan, verse 25:32, which means:

And those who disbelieve say, "Why did not the Quran was revealed to Muhammad - everything (at a time)?" The Quran was revealed by (gradually), that We may strengthen your heart (O Muhammad) with Quran and We reveal unto you one by one very distinctly.

This is a great miracle as a guide to mankind, as Allah SWT says in Surah al-Isra', verse 17: 9, which means:

Indeed, this Quran guides to the perfect way (which is Islam).

These guidance and instructions cover all aspects of human life, that including societal (*muamalah*), religious, maneuvering (*siasah*), economic, political, and others. Allah SWT has promised that anyone who reads it, follows the prompts, practices the content, executes the commands, and avoiding the prohibitive, then Allah SWT will not mislead you either in the world or in the Hereafter when others lost their way (Al-Qarni 2006).

Tranquillity is important in human life. In Islam, peace has a close relationship between spirit and faith. Without peace, an individual's life cannot be dealt perfectly because tranquillity is the source of happiness. Pure tranquillity will be felt when human is close with his Creator. To achieve peace, the Quran is the best medium for therapy. This statement is consistent with what Allah SWT has said in Surah al-Ra'd, verse 13:28, which means:

(Namely) those who believe and their hearts calm with the praising in remembrance of Allah. Look! By remembrance of Allah, the hearts are satisfied.

Purification of the heart has a close relationship between character and moral. The character of an individual will be maintained if their soul is clean. Pure heart makes individuals obedient and submissive to the instruction set and leaves everything that has been prohibited easily, while bad heart is the heart that always forgets Allah SWT and is always connected with the worldly life that causes the individual to forget the truth belongs to Allah SWT.

Al-Qaradawi (1999) emphasized that learning the Quran should be present in every Muslim that is by starting with care, reading, listening, dominate (*mentadabbur*), practice, inspire, and expect, while according to al-Khalidi (1995), there are three main forms in the context of interact with the Quran, namely reading the Quran with manners, memorize and repeat the verse, and dominate and try to understand the content of the Quran. According to Abdullah Atu (2009), every Muslim has five obligations of the Quran, namely faith, read fluently, understand the content, practice, and spread to other individuals.

2. Problem Statement and Objectives of the Study

The Quran is the primary source and guide to lead Muslims in the stream of life. Claims against the Quran should be seriously considered by all Muslims because they are already available in the manual to understand the teachings of true Islam. As a hadith narrated by Imam Ahmad from Zayd ibn Thabit, he said the Messenger of Allah said, "I leave it to you two inheritance, namely the Book of Allah (Quran) and my *sunnah* and the second, will not part until both met me in *haud* (wells)" (hadith narrated by Zaid bin Thabit of Prophet Muhammad PBUH, no. 22067).

The Quran is connected with the formation of the character and personality of Muslims, even morality is seen as a key to the spiritual development of Muslims. Aisyah had been asked about the character of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, then she replied, "That the Prophet's character was the Quran" (Al-Qaradawi 1999). When Muslims are holding tightly to the words of Allah SWT, then they will not get lost and strayed from the substrate that has been outlined by *syarak*.

Interaction with the Quran that have many levels or stages must be understood and appreciated by those Muslims. These interactions include levels or stages comprising believe, read, memorize, listen, learn, dominate, inspire, and retain the Quran from any form of abuse. Abdullah Ahmad Badawi had stated that reading and understanding the contents of the Quran periodically would prevent individuals from things that are contrary to the teachings of Islam.

However, the level of awareness of Muslims towards the importance of the Quran in life is still at a moderate level. Monitoring efforts have been made by the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the results clearly indicate that some Muslims in this country did not even have a copy of the Quran in their homes (Johan Afendi 2004). A large number of teenagers today do not know or are found to be less adept at reading the Quran as their attitudes are not mindful of the importance of the Quran, as well as the attitude of not caring by parents and the surrounding community. This problem also arises

from the attitude of society who are looking to rank and more concerned about materialistic (Ahmad Haji Abdul Ghani 1997).

Walijah Ahmad Jamburi (2010) stated that only 10% of Muslims read the Quran every day, while 63.1% of Muslims are found rarely read the Quran. Among the reasons given by those who rarely read the Quran is lazy, there is no time, and also did not know how to read the Quran. Previous studies conducted by Ramlah Ahmad (2000) in Negeri Sembilan associated with the Quran reading skills found that from a total of 164 respondents, 80 persons (48.8%) completed reading the Quran (*khatam*) when they were in standard four until standard six, while the remaining 56 respondents (34.1%) consisted of those who have not finished reading the whole Quran. The percentage of respondents who completed reading the Quran before entering the boarding school was found to increase slightly to 65.9%. In fact, although most respondents had completed reading the Quran, but the level of fluency was still at a moderate level. According to Madihah Haji Muhammad (1992), the problems faced by the respondents are that they are substandard in reading the Quran, weak in terms of letters articulation (*makhraj huruf*), and mastering the law of recitation (*hukum tajwid*). They were also unable to master reading the Quran since at primary school level.

Basically, although most Muslims read the Quran, but in fact they do not understand and appreciate the verses of the Quran that are being read. According to Suraya Abu Hassan in Sani Kamarudzman (2011), the ignorance of some Muslims who do not understand the meaning behind the verses of the Quran makes the goal to read the Quran becomes incomplete. This situation clearly shows that an individual recites the verses of the holy Quran in liting, but in reality, the verses being read or recite actually emphasize the commands of Allah SWT. This situation indeed occurs frequently and often caused confusion.

According to Abdul Shukor Husin in Muhd. Amirul Faiz Ahmad (2011), at present, primary and secondary school students are faced with the problem in lack of appreciation of religious knowledge, which causes them to quickly get bored and thus fail to practice what they have learned. Previous studies conducted by Madihah Haji Mohamad (1992) found that 32.5% form two and form three students faced problems or difficulties to understand the meaning of the verses of the Quran studied in class, whereas 35% form four students also faced the same problems. There is also a previous study conducted by Sheikh Haji Othman Abdul Wahab in Rosnawati Umar (1992) who found that as many as 72% of the students only understand a small part of verses of the Quran that they read. This situation clearly shows that the level of their understanding was at an unsatisfactory level, while as many as 28% of the students did not understand completely the verses of the Quran that they read. Ironically, despite they learn Arabic subjects formally but the knowledge did not help them to understand the verses of the Quran that they read.

Thus, the research objectives for this study are mainly to answer the question of what is the extent of students' involvement and the difference between male and female UKM students in the context of interact with the Quran? The question is able to influence the appreciation of everyday religious life. The objective of this study is in line with the goals and objectives set by the Ministry of Education (MOE) towards the Islamic Studies through teaching recitation of the Quran, which is aimed at strengthening the skills of reading, understanding, memorizing, and appreciating the contents of the Quran that are taught at the primary level and subsequently reading, understanding, and appreciating the contents of the Quran, as well as memorizing verses that are related to the practice of daily life (Mohd. Aderi Che Noh 2009).

Based on these objectives, this situation clearly shows the importance of interaction with the Quran that has done since the primary school level. However, the question here is, whether the interaction has been successfully done, and what is the level of practice and appreciation of religions among UKM students?

3. Research Methodology

This is a quantitative study involving t-test analysis and both male and female respondents. The sample consisted of 463 students (191 male and 272 female) who are still studying in UKM in various majors. Based on the guidelines presented by Krejcie & Morgan (1970), the researcher found that a sample size of 403 turned out to be adequate to the size of the population of about 5000 students. A set of questionnaires developed and produced by the researcher was distributed to each respondent, which was made of Part A that contains demographic information of students, including age, gender, place of residence, and faculty. Meanwhile, Part B contains questions related to the interaction with the Quran as well as other subfactors, namely the interaction of faith - 6 questions; reading interactions - 38 questions; hearing interaction - 3 questions; memorizing interaction - 21 questions; studying interaction - 7 questions; dominating interaction - 14 questions; practicing interaction - 4 questions; and maintaining interaction - 6 questions. Questionnaires were formed using Likert scale of (1 = strongly disagree (SD), 2 = disagree (D), 3 = not sure (NS), 4 = agree (A), and 5 = strongly agree (SA)).

The results of the alpha value (α) for each subfactor are as follows: interaction of faith = .68, reading interaction =

.92, listening interaction = .61, memorizing interaction = .88, studying interaction = .88, dominating interaction = .92, practicing interaction = .90, and maintaining interaction = .86. The coefficient of reliability that is considered satisfactory is between 0.60 and 0.90 (Kaplan & Saccuzzo 2001). However, the reliability coefficient of 0.60 can still be regarded as good for research purposes (Kerlinger 1973).

4. Research Findings

4.1 Descriptive Results based on Eight Subfactors of Interaction with the Quran

The mean results for each subfactor for the interaction with the Quran can be seen from Table 1, which show that the interaction of faith of 29.73 (s.d .911), reading interaction of 1.351 (s.d 17.48), listening interaction of 12.82 (s.d 1.612), memorizing interaction of 78.13 (s.d 10.79), studying interaction of 27.37 (s.d 4.400), dominating interaction of 57.57 (s.d 7.368), practicing interaction of 16.32 (s.d 2.473), and maintaining interaction of 23.50 (s.d 3.927). These eight subfactors contributed to the significant value because the subfactors are at the position that mostly tends to be high. However, subfactors of faith and practicing subfactors are ranked at high values. This means that students, male or female, have excellent faith and practicing interaction with the Quran.

4.2 Analysis Results of Different Interaction with the Quran based on Gender Factor (T-test)

T-test analysis results can be seen from Table 2. It clearly shows that independent samples are used to compare the mean scores of interaction with the Quran among male and female students in UKM. The t-test results clearly show that the value of $t(461) = -3.57$, $p = .000$ is significant. Indeed, the results of this test clearly show that there are significant differences for mean score of interaction with the Quran among males ($m = 3.05$, $s.p = .479$) and females ($m = 3.20$, $s.p = .432$).

Although descriptively, it was found that almost all subfactors are at high tendency, but the t-test results clearly show that there are significant differences in the interaction with the Quran between male and female students for the studied data. This means that there is continuity in terms of the findings between the results of descriptive and t-test results for the interaction with the Quran among UKM students.

Table 1. Descriptive Results based on Eight Subfactors of Interaction with the Quran

Factor for the interaction with the Quran	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Interaction of faith	463	24	30	29.73	.911
Reading interaction	463	70	190	1.351	17.48
Listening interaction	463	7	15	12.82	1.612
Memorizing interaction	463	40	105	78.13	10.79
Studying interaction	463	13	35	27.37	4.400
Dominating interaction	463	29	70	57.57	7.368
Practicing interaction	463	7	20	16.32	2.473
Maintaining interaction	463	11	30	23.50	3.927
Valid N (listwise)	463				

Value Evidence				Mean
1 (Low)	2 (Mostly tends to be low)	3 (Mostly tends to be high)	4 (High)	
Interaction of faith			✓	29.73
Reading interaction		✓		1.351
Listening interaction		✓		12.82
Memorizing interaction		✓		78.13
Studying interaction		✓		27.37
Dominating interaction		✓		57.57
Practicing interaction			✓	16.32
Maintaining interaction		✓		23.50

Table 2. Analysis Results of Different Interaction with the Quran based on Gender Factor

Demografy	Factor	N	MIN	SP	Dk	t	Sig
Gender	Male	191	3.05	.479	461	-3.57	.000*
	Female	272	3.20	.432			

5. Discussion

Descriptive results show that the subfactors of faith and practicing are among the highest subfactors compared to the other six subfactors. The first and most important stage of the interaction associated with the Quran is the true faith. From the standpoint of language, faith means (التصديق) or to allow. From the standpoint of faith, the term also means allowing with the heart and confesses with the tongue. The heart that permits is the heart that believes in something and accepts with alacrity. Basically, the nature of faith consists of three elements, namely confidence, acceptance and justification in the heart, and the recognition of the tongue that meets the confidence and justification of the heart (Mohd. Sulaiman Haji Yasin 1987).

True faith is faith that believes in their hearts and proves by deeds. This belief is also an expression of the heart, which is delivered through oral language (Mahmud al-Dosari 2006). Surah al-Baqarah, verse 2: 136 was found to be a signal that the belief in the Quran is imminent or must be maintained in the heart and should always be practiced. Many other verses in the Quran that can be found explain the duty to believe that the Quran is the holy book of Muslims, which proved to be correct in absolute terms.

Applying the Quran is one of the good deeds and favored by Allah SWT. God has promised to His servants who do good deeds with big rewards, either in this life or the next. The best of mankind are those who practice the Quran and apply its practices in everyday life either physically or spiritually. Even the Quran also becomes a symbol of the morality of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. Allah SWT alone absolutely praises and extols morality and manners of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH that are listed in the Quran that can be appreciated in surah al-An'am, verse 6: 155; surah al-Nahl, verse 16:97; surah al-Qalam, verse 68: 4; surah al-Hadid, verse 57:16; and surah al-Kahf, verse 18:57.

Practice becomes the core for Muslims to be able to understand and memorize the Quran properly. The holy book of Quran is absolutely different from the Torah (*Taurat*) as done by the Jews when they read it, but they do not practice any verses. They are likened to a donkey that carries burden because although they know the verses they read, but they do not practice and reap the benefit from these verses.

Students at the highest levels of education should necessarily understand such things, as well as the students in Islamic Studies program. Although this study did not specifically explain about the students of Islamic Studies program, but this study does generally explain about UKM students from various faculties. The t-test results clearly show that there are significant differences between male and female students for interaction level with the Quran.

6. Conclusion

The Quran is the holy book that remains forever and maintained under the care of Allah SWT until the Last Day (Abdullah Nasih Ulwān 2003). Muslims in general and students in specific must return to appreciate the Quran, as was done by the Muslims during the golden age of Islam once upon a time, especially during the reign of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and his companions. Appreciation of the Quran perfectly is believed to be able to change the entire life of a Muslim, thereby enabling the Muslim to lead the world again (Wan Salim Wan Mohd. Nor 1992).

Level of interaction in believing and practicing the Quran is a part of the most important form of interaction in our lives. History has shown that as long as any Muslim was holding to the Quran, the Muslim will always be victorious. Conversely, if a Muslim were to leave the Quran, then he would simply fall to the valley of humiliation. In the 7th century of AH, when practicing the Quran was being ignored, then came the group of al-Rafidah by riding on the strength of the Tartar from Mongols led by Genghis Khan. Within eight days, 800,000 Muslims were killed, mosques were destroyed, *mushaf-mushaf* of the Quran were burned, and Tartar troops killed children and women (Aidh Abdullah al-Qarni 2006).

Students at the university level is a major focus for continuing the process from the interaction of faith towards maintaining interaction, even proving the integrity and truth of the Quran consistently. Students at this level become the benchmark for achieving personality control through the interaction with the Quran. The findings of this study clearly show that UKM students show high and effective mean scores in the context of the interaction of the Quran as the appreciation of the religious life.

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