Difficulties in Learning the Quran: Causal Factors and Treatment Strategies

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Abstract

Learning difficulties are a challenge faced by many students in the world of education, including in learning the Qur'an, the factors that cause learning difficulties can come from within students. This research aims to find out the difficulties of students in learning the Koran, as well as how to overcome them so that students are easy and happy to learn the Koran without feeling bored. This research uses Quantitative method with descriptive analysis approach. The results showed that the use of interactive methods, consistent assistance, and a conducive learning environment play an important role in helping students overcome learning difficulties, especially in understanding and reading the Qur'an properly. In the context of learning the Qur'an, some of the obstacles that often arise include difficulties in recognizing hijaiyah letters, understanding tajweed, and reciting verses correctly. If not handled properly, these difficulties can hinder the development of students' understanding and love of the Qur'an. Therefore, effective strategies are needed to overcome these obstacles, such as the use of innovative learning methods, technology-based approaches, and increased involvement of teachers and parents. The implication is mainly the encouragement of Islamic institutions to formulate teacher training, provision of learning facilities and collaborative policies between school and home on an ongoing basis.

INTRODUCTION

Learning is a process that allows organisms to change behavior quickly and permanently so that similar changes do not need to occur repeatedly every time they face a new situation (Iskandar, 2021; Yogi Fernando et al., 2024). A student not only needs general knowledge, but a student also really needs religious-based education, in Islam itself Islamic education is a good development effort through aspects of reason, emotion, and psychology based on scientific principles to achieve maximum development of individual abilities In Islamic teaching activities must be delivered using learning strategies that are in accordance with procedures and can be easily accepted by students. The current condition of Islamic Education shows that educators are required to have a concept and have overall competence, not only have the ability to convey knowledge to students. Referring to the nature of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, that an educator should have the characteristics of sidiq, amanah, tabhligh, and fathana.

Every student comes to school or a place to learn the Qur'an with the main purpose of gaining knowledge in order to have useful knowledge in the future, education not only takes place at school, but also at home, where students must continue to make time to learn, including in understanding and learning the Qur'an. This learning process requires seriousness and support from various parties, including teachers, parents, and the surrounding environment (Aisyah Achmad et al., 2022; Anggita et al., 2023; Ruswandi & Juliawati, 2023; Zaeni, 2023). However, on the way, not all students can learn easily. Learning difficulties are a challenge faced in various types of educational institutions, both in modern schools in urban areas with more complete facilities and in traditional schools in rural areas that have limited facilities and infrastructure. These difficulties appear in various forms, such as difficulty understanding the material, limited teaching methods, or lack of motivation to learn.

The difference between modern and traditional schools lies in the nature, type and contributing factors of learning difficulties. In modern schools, challenges may have more to do with rapidly changing learning methods or high academic demands. While in traditional schools, limited facilities and resources are the main obstacles. Therefore, an approach that suits each condition is needed so that each student can obtain optimal education and achieve the expected achievements.

The difficulty of learning the Qur'an in students can be overcome, but it often reappears with different cases, almost every week or month, there are students who experience difficulties in learning the Qur'an, this problem is certainly not liked by the teacher or the students themselves, but learning difficulties still occur, whether they are realized or not, therefore, various strategies and approaches need to be done so that students can overcome their difficulties, otherwise they can fail to achieve good achievements, there is a mistaken assumption that learning difficulties in students are caused by low intelligence, whereas, in reality, many children with high intelligence but have low learning outcomes and not as expected. Conversely, many children with average intelligence are actually able to achieve high achievements, even exceeding those with higher intelligence (Nofi Maria Krisnawati & Sita Husnul Khotimah, 2021).

But it is also undeniable that high intelligence provides a great opportunity for students to achieve high learning achievement. Therefore, in addition to intelligence factors, it is also recognized that it can be the cause of learning difficulties for students in learning. A student is suspected of having learning difficulties when he/she does not succeed in achieving a certain level of learning outcome qualifications. In learning outcomes, it certainly includes substantial-material, functional-structural, and behavioral aspects or which include cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Learning difficulty is a condition where students cannot learn optimally due to obstacles, obstacles or disturbances in their learning.

The findings of this study are expected to provide insight for Qur'an educators, and for still learning to read the Qur'an policy makers in designing solutions that are more adaptive and effective in maintaining children's religious education, especially in exploring the Qur'an in the midst of busy work.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive analysis approach, namely research that describes events or events that occur in the field and is accompanied by analysis (object of research) with this approach, descriptive data will be produced in the form of written words, spoken words or observed human behavior (Akmal et al., 2024; Engkizar et al., 2021; Fitriani et al., 2023; Guspita, 2025; Rambe et al., 2025; Wati et al., 2025). This type of research is field research using a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is research that describes an event or situation. According to experts, qualitative research is a certain tradition in social science that fundamentally relies on observations of humans both in their areas and

in their relationships. So leatherative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data research in the form of spoken or written words about people's observable behavior so as to find truths that can be accepted by human common sense (Ath-Thukhi et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2018, Engkizar et al., 2025; Ikhlas et al., 2025; Istiqamah et al., 2024; Mahira et al., 2024; Mustafa et al., 2025; Wulandari et al., 2024).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following researchers will explain about the learning difficulties experienced by children in reading the Qur'an starting from the factors that cause learning difficulties and handling strategies for students who have difficulty in learning the Qur'an, reading the Qur'an is one of the important skills for Muslims that need to be taught from an early age. This ability not only helps children in understanding the teachings of Islam, but also becomes part of the formation of their religious character, however, not all children can easily learn the Qur'an. Some of them face various obstacles that hinder the learning process. Difficulties in learning the Qur'an can be caused by various factors, both from within the child and from the surrounding environment (Engkizar et al., 2022; C. T. Putri et al., 2021; Rasdiany et al., 2022; Sabrina et al., 2022; Wangi et al., 2022) Some children have difficulty recognizing hijaiyah letters, applying tajweed rules, or memorizing certain verses, on the other hand, inappropriate teaching methods, lack of guidance from parents, and an unsupportive environment can also slow down their development in reading the Qur'an.

Understanding the causes of these difficulties is the first step to finding the right solution. With a more effective approach and optimal support from families and the environment, children can more easily learn and love the Qur'an. Therefore, the study of the causal factors and strategies for handling difficulties in learning the Qur'an is very important to discuss.

Factors Causing Learning Difficulties in Children

Many experts have suggested factors that cause learning difficulties with their respective perspectives. There are those who review it from the internal and external point of view of students (Irsyad et al., 2023). The phenomenon of learning difficulties for a student is usually evident from the decline in academic performance or learning achievement. However, learning difficulties can also be evidenced by the emergence of student behavioral abnormalities such as shouting in class, disturbing friends, fighting and often missing school. there are two factors that cause learning difficulties, namely internal factors and external factors. Internal factors are physiological factors (students' physical condition) and psychological factors (students' psychological condition). External factors come from outside the student, namely family, school, and community factors (Fitria & Fitriani, 2023)It can be formulated that the factors that cause learning difficulties consist of two types, namely:

Internal Student Factors

Internal student factors include student psycho-physical disorders or deficiencies, namely: i.) Those that are cognitive (creative domain), such as the low intellectual capacity / intelligence of students. ii.) Those that are affective (feeling domain), such as unstable emotions and attitudes. iii.) those that are psychomotor (feeling domain), such as disruption of the sensory organs of the viewer and listener (eyes and ears) (Ummah et al., 2025).

External Student Factors

External student factors include all situations and conditions of the surrounding environment that do not support student learning activities. These environmental factors include: i.) Family environment, for example: disharmonious relationship between mother and father, and low family economic life. ii.) The

neighborhood/community environment, for example: slum areas, and mischievous friends. iii.) The school environment, for example: poor condition and location of school buildings such as near markets, poor quality teachers and learning tools.

Meanwhile, according to Djamarah, the factors that cause learning difficulties are divided into four, namely: i.) The student factor, the student is the subject who learns. It is he who feels directly the suffering caused by learning difficulties. Because he is the one who learns, not the teacher who learns. Teachers only teach and educate by teaching students to study hard. Learning difficulties suffered by students are not only permanent, but also those that can be eliminated with certain efforts. The intelligence factor is an example of a persistent student difficulty factor. Meanwhile, poor health or illness, bad study habits and so on are non-intellectual factors that can be eliminated. ii.) School factors, as an educational institution that students come to every day, of course, have a big impact on students. The comfort and tranquility of students in learning will be determined to what extent the conditions and social systems in schools provide a conducive and creative environment. Facilities and infrastructure have been able to build and provide satisfactory services for students who interact and live in it. If not, then the school is involved in causing learning difficulties for students. Then it is natural that students with learning difficulties appear.

Third, Family Factors, Family is an informal educational institution (outside of school) that is recognized in the world of education. Its role is no less important than formal and non-formal institutions. Even before students enter a school, students have received education in the family which is natural. When parents do not pay attention to children's education, when parents do not provide a cool and pleasant atmosphere for children's learning, when family harmony is not created, when the kinship system is tenuous and when children's learning needs are not met, then that is when the family atmosphere does not create and provide a condition with a creative environment for children's learning. Therefore, such a family environment is involved in causing learning difficulties for children. Iv.) Factors of the surrounding community Learning difficulties for students are not only sourced from illegal drugs and a bad community environment, but can also be sourced from print media and electronic media. Based on this description, the factors that underlie problems in students come from internal and external factors. Internal factors can include intellectual aspects such as intelligence, talent, and motivation. External factors include students' social conditions such as the environment, family economy and school conditions.

For more detail, difficulties in learning the Qur'an in children can be influenced by various factors that are not much different from the theory of learning difficulties above, both from within the child and from the surrounding environment. Here are some of the main causes that can hinder the learning process of the Qur'an (Engkizar et al., 2023; Oktavia et al., 2024; Sari et al., 2024). Internal factors that play a role in children's difficulty learning the Qur'an are divided into several aspects. First, cognitive limitations: the ability to recognize hijaiyah letters, understand tajweed rules, or memorize verses is different for each child, so some students have difficulty understanding the reading. Secondly, developmental and health disorders such as dyslexia or hearing or vision impairment also hinder the process of reading and understanding the Qur'an. In addition, lack of motivation and interest is a significant obstacle for children who are not interested or not used to reading the Qur'an at home tend to get bored easily and lack focus in learning. Lastly, difficulties in pronunciation of letters (makhraj and tajweed) because the pronunciation of hijaiyah is different from everyday language is also a serious obstacle that slows down the fluency of reading the Qur'an.

External factors from the environment around the child play a significant role in complicating the Qur'an learning process. First, inappropriate teaching methods such as uninteresting approaches or not tailored to children's needs can make it difficult for students to understand the material (school factors). Secondly, lack of support from parents, including absence in accompanying learning or providing motivation, has been shown to significantly affect low Qur'an reading ability in quantitative research (parental support affects motivation and reading ability by 79%). Thirdly, an unsupportive social environment such as a lack of peers who are actively learning the Qur'an or a non-conducive home atmosphere tends to reduce children's motivation to read the Qur'an. Finally, limited facilities and infrastructure, such as the absence of mushafs suitable for children or a shortage of competent teachers, are also real obstacles to effective learning.

Social and emotional factors play an important role in the Qur'an learning process. First, lack of self-confidence: many children feel afraid or embarrassed to read in front of others for fear of getting it wrong, and so are reluctant to practice further. Secondly, excessive pressure from parents or teachers such as forcing them to master the reading in a short time without considering the child's readiness can cause severe stress, mental exhaustion and even trauma. This situation not only reduces interest in learning but also risks causing depression or feelings of helplessness.

The difficulty of learning the Qur'an in children can be caused by various factors, both from within the child (internal) and from the surrounding environment (external). Internal factors include cognitive limitations, developmental disorders, lack of motivation, and difficulty in pronouncing the Hijaiyah letters. Meanwhile, external factors include inappropriate teaching methods, lack of parental support, unsupportive environment, and limited facilities and infrastructure. In addition, social and emotional factors also play a role in inhibiting Qur'an learning. Lack of confidence and excessive pressure can make children reluctant to learn. Therefore, the right approach and support from various parties are needed so that children can learn the Qur'an more effectively and enjoyably.

An interview with a student guardian named Hasbil who has a child named kahfi, an 8-year-old child, had some difficulties in learning the Qur'an. He is often confused in recognizing hijaiyah letters that have similar shapes, such as 'ب' (ba), 'ت' (ta), and 'ث' (tsa). In addition, he also had difficulty in understanding the rules of tajweed, especially in applying long recitations and ghunnah. Ahmad also faces challenges in the pronunciation of certain letters such as 'ع' (ain) and 'ح' (ha), which makes him feel less confident and easily bored while learning. Pak hasbil hopes for more interactive and fun learning methods at school, the use of visual aids to make it easier for children to recognize hijaiyah letters, and more intense communication between teachers and parents to support the learning process at home. With the right approach and optimal support, Kahfi is expected to be more fluent in reading and understanding the Qur'an.

Strategies for Overcoming Learning Difficulties in Children

The term strategy comes from the Greek "noun" and "verb". As a noun, strategos is a combination of the word stratos (military) with "ego" (to lead). As a verb, stratego means to plan (to plan). Thus, a strategy is a pattern that is planned and set deliberately to carry out activities or actions. The strategy includes seven activities, who is involved in the activity, the content of the activity, the process of the activity, and the means of supporting the activity (Engkizar et al., 2024; M. Iskandar et al., 2025; N. Putri et al., 2025; Rahman et al., 2025).

In simple terms, the term learning (instructions) means an effort to teach a person or group of people through various efforts (effort) and various strategies, methods and approaches towards achieving planned goals. Learning is the main

process organized in school life so that between teachers who teach and students who learn are required for certain provisions.

Learning strategy is a comprehensive approach in a learning system in the form of general guidelines and a framework of activities to achieve general learning objectives, which are elaborated from the view of a particular philosophy or learning theory. The definition of learning strategies according to experts is as follows: Kemp explained that a learning strategy is a learning activity that teachers and students must do so that learning objectives can be achieved effectively and efficiently. Gulo stated that learning strategies are plans and ways of bringing teaching can be achieved effectively. Hamalik, learning strategies are all methods and procedures that emphasize student activities in the teaching and learning process to achieve certain goals. Makmum formulates learning strategies as procedures, methods, and teaching techniques that are considered the most effective and efficient and productive so that they can be used by teachers in carrying out their teaching activities.

Learning to recite the Qur'an is an important part of a Muslim child's education. However, not all children can easily master this skill. Various obstacles can arise, both from the child's own internal factors and from the surrounding environment. Therefore, an appropriate strategy is needed so that children can more easily understand and enjoy the process of learning the Qur'an.

Using Appropriate Learning Methods

Every child has a different way of learning, so choosing the right method is an important first step. Some approaches that can be applied include: i.) Gradual Method, Teaching the Qur'an in stages starting from the introduction of hijaiyah letters, how to combine letters into words, to reading complete verses. This approach helps children understand the basics first before moving on to higher levels. ii.) Use of Interactive Media, Using technology as a tool can increase children's interest. Digital apps, learning videos, and audio murottals can help them learn in a more interesting and understandable way. iii.) Educational Games, Learning combined with games can make children more enthusiastic. For example, using hijaiyah letter cards, tajweed quizzes, or fun reading competitions to gradually improve their skills. iv.) Listening and Imitation Practice, Children tend to learn more effectively by imitating. Listening to the recitation of a reciter who has good pronunciation can help them understand how to read correctly and hone their skills in tajweed and makhraj.

Provide Continuous Assistance and Motivation

The Role of Parents and Teachers Guidance from parents and teachers is essential in the process of learning the Qur'an. Creating a habit of reading with children at home and providing positive encouragement will help them be more confident and enthusiastic in learning. i.) Building Children's Confidence Some children feel afraid or embarrassed when reading the Qur'an because they are worried about making mistakes. Therefore, it is important to praise their efforts and avoid reprimanding them too harshly so that they do not lose motivation. ii.) Adjusting to the Child's Ability, Every child has different abilities. Providing material according to their level of understanding and not forcing them to learn at a fast pace will make them more comfortable and not feel burdened. Creating a Conducive Environment and Getting Children Used to Interacting with the Qur'an Introducing the Qur'an from an early age through daily recitation, listening to murottal, and telling stories from the Qur'an will help them become more familiar with this holy book.

Study in a Group or Community Children are often more enthusiastic when they study with their friends. Therefore, joining a study group or a children's tahfidz community can be an effective way to increase their motivation. Provide Adequate Facilities Providing easy-to-read Al-Qur'an copies, tajweed manuals, and other tools can make it easier for children to learn. Be an Example Children tend to imitate the habits of those around them. If parents and teachers are accustomed to reading the

Qur'an well, children will be more encouraged to do the same(Engkizar et al., 2025). Overcoming Emotional and Social Constraints. Reducing Excessive Pressure Setting targets that are too high or pressuring children to hurry can make them feel stressed. Therefore, it is important to adjust expectations to their abilities to make the learning process more enjoyable. Helping Children Manage Frustration If children find it difficult to read or memorize, they need to be given emotional support. Teaching them to stay patient, giving them breaks when needed, and providing words of encouragement can help them stay motivated. Instilling Intention and Spiritual Motivation Teaching children that learning the Qur'an is part of worship and will bring goodness to them will help foster their intrinsic motivation to continue learning (Engkizar, et al., 2025).

Learning the Qur'an for children needs to use methods that suit their learning style. A step-by-step approach starting from the introduction of hijaiyah letters to reading complete verses helps children understand the basics first. The use of interactive media such as digital applications, learning videos, and murottal audio can increase children's interest in learning. In addition, combining learning with educational games, such as hijaiyah letter cards or tajweed quizzes, makes the learning process more fun. Practicing listening and imitating the recitation of a good reciter is also effective in honing children's pronunciation and understanding of tajweed. In addition to the right method, continuous assistance and motivation from parents and teachers play a significant role in the child's learning process. Creating a habit of reading together and giving praise for their efforts can increase children's self-confidence. It is also important to adjust the material to the child's ability so that they do not feel burdened and remain comfortable in learning.

Creating a conducive environment also plays a big role in shaping children's habit of reading the Qur'an. Introducing them to daily recitations, listening to murottal, and telling them Qur'ānic stories from an early age helps to increase their familiarity with this holy book. Learning in a group or community can boost children's enthusiasm, while providing adequate facilities, such as easy-to-read mushaf and tajweed manuals, will support their learning process. Parents and teachers should also set a good example by making reading the Qur'an a habit. In addition, it is important to address the emotional and social constraints that children may face in learning. Excessive pressure can cause stress, so expectations should be matched to their abilities. If children are struggling, they need to be supported emotionally by providing breaks and words of encouragement. Instilling the understanding that learning the Qur'an is part of worship will help foster children's intrinsic motivation to continue learning.

CONCLUSION

Qur'an learning difficulties in children are caused by various factors that can be categorized into internal and external factors. Internal factors include cognitive limitations, developmental disorders, lack of motivation, and difficulty in pronouncing the Hijaiyah letters. External factors include inappropriate teaching methods, lack of parental support, unsupportive environment, and limited facilities and infrastructure. In addition, social and emotional factors such as lack of self-confidence and excessive pressure can also hinder children's learning process. To overcome these difficulties, appropriate strategies are needed, such as the use of appropriate learning methods (gradual, interactive, and game-based), assistance and motivation from parents and teachers, the creation of a conducive learning environment, and approaches that pay attention to the emotional aspects of children. With optimal support from various parties, children are expected to be able to more easily understand and enjoy the process of learning the Qur'an effectively and enjoyably.

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