MODERNISATION OF MEMORISING THE QUR'AN:
A COMPARISON OF TRADITIONAL AND MODERN METHODS

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Abstract	The purpose of this study is to analyse how the modernisation of Al-Qur'an memorisation methods affects both the comparison of traditional and modern methods on students' learning motivation, memorisation effectiveness, and long-term memory resilience at MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya. This research method is descriptive qualitative, or often known as postpositivistic, artistic, and interpretative research. Data collection instruments were observation, in-depth interviews, and document review. Data analysis using the flow of activities as proposed by Miles and Huberman, namely data reduction, data display and conclusions, drawing, and verification. The technique of sharpening the validity of data in this study is to use triangulation techniques. The results of this study are the modernisation of memorising the Qur'an with modern methods is significant to student learning motivation, especially in Gamification of learning to increase engagement and ease of access to increase the spirit of learning and improve the speed of memorisation to be higher and the existence of variations in memorisation methods according to student learning styles. While memorising the Qur'an with traditional methods has a significant effect on the effectiveness of student memorisation, especially in the quality of tajweed that is more guaranteed, and the memorisation process is more methodical, as well as a deeper understanding of the context of the verse. So it can be concluded that traditional Qur'anic memorisation methods and modern methods each have advantages and limitations. Therefore, the integration of both methods, i.e., combining the strengths of traditional methods and the convenience of modern technology, can produce more optimal results. This combination allows students to get direct correction from the teacher while utilising the convenience of self-learning with technology, thus increasing memorisation effectiveness and long-term memory retention. It also provides time flexibility for students without compromising the quality of teaching and learning.
Keywords	Modernisation, Memorising, Traditional, Modern.

INTRODUCTION

The memorisation of the Qur'an (tahfiz) is a foundational aspect of Islamic education and remains central to the spiritual formation of students in Islamic schools and pesantren. Traditional methods, rooted in centuries-old practices such as ḥalāqah, repetition (tikrār), and talāqī (oral transmission), have long been the primary means through which students internalise the sacred text. These approaches are valued not only for their effectiveness in memory retention but also for cultivating discipline, reverence, and a deep spiritual connection to the Qur'an (Febrianingsih, 2020; Yunus et al., 2024). However, with the increasing influence of technology and the growing demand for educational innovation, modern methods have begun to emerge. These include digital platforms, memorisation apps, peer-assessment tools, and self-paced learning modules, which promise improved flexibility, access, and motivational engagement (Mustofa, Mas'ud, & Elizabeth, 2023; Albab & Duha, 2024).

In the context of MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya, both traditional and modern memorisation methods are utilised simultaneously. The traditional approach continues to be implemented through structured ḥalāqah sessions led by ustaz, while the modern approach incorporates digital tools such as Qur'an memorisation applications, audio-visual feedback, and online tracking of memorisation targets. Preliminary observations suggest varied outcomes: traditional students exhibit stronger discipline and retention, whereas those using modern methods tend to memorise faster but are less consistent in long-term revision. Moreover, differences in students' spiritual engagement have also been noted. Those immersed in traditional methods appear to experience a deeper emotional connection with the Qur'an, while modern learners focus more on goal achievement and performance metrics (Syahril et al., 2024; Saleh, 2024).

Another dimension that warrants examination is the preference of students and teachers towards these two approaches. Anecdotal evidence shows that student preferences are influenced by psychological factors such as learning style and motivation, while social and cultural factors, including family tradition and community expectations, shape the perceptions of teachers. Some teachers view modern methods as disruptive to the sanctity of Qur'anic learning, while others see them as an opportunity to enhance engagement and accommodate diverse learner needs (Nasri & Mulyohadi, 2023). The institutional context of MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya, which provides a unique blend of traditional and modern practices, offers a compelling case for understanding how educational modernisation interacts with deeply embedded Islamic pedagogical values.

In addition to performance-related outcomes, students' and teachers' preferences for memorisation methods are shaped by various social, psychological, and cultural factors. Some students prefer the structured, disciplined nature of traditional ḥalāqah because it provides accountability and spiritual atmosphere, while others favour the flexibility and autonomy offered by digital tools. Teachers also hold differing views—some see modern tools as a threat to the sanctity of Qur'anic tradition, while others embrace them as a necessary pedagogical evolution. The educational environment at MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya, which integrates both methods in parallel, offers a unique opportunity to explore how these preferences emerge and how they influence memorisation outcomes. This study, therefore, aims not only to compare the effectiveness of traditional and modern memorisation methods but also to explore how each method shapes spiritual experience, student motivation, and teacher engagement within the specific sociocultural context of this Islamic school.

Several studies have investigated the practice of Qur'an memorisation in the context of both traditional and modern educational systems. Febrianingsih (2020) explored the application of *ḥalāqah taḥfīz* as an extracurricular activity at Ar-Rohmah Islamic Boarding School, Ngawi. The study found that the traditional *ḥalāqah* model significantly influenced students' discipline and consistency in memorising the Qur'an, especially in cultivating religious habits. However, the study focused only on the behavioural outcomes and did not compare alternative or modernised methods of memorisation.

A study by Albab and Duha (2024) examined the transformation of *ḥalāqah* methods in Samarinda-based Islamic schools. They found that hybrid approaches, which integrate modern pedagogical strategies with traditional ḥalāqah structures, increased student motivation and learning speed. Yet, the study did not explore in depth the spiritual or qualitative dimensions of memorisation, nor did it compare the long-term retention rates between the two models. Yunus et al. (2024) investigated how ḥalāqah models developed students' spiritual competencies at Darul Fiqhi Lamongan. The research concluded that traditional ḥalāqah nurtured a stronger religious identity and emotional engagement with the Qur'anic text. However, the study did not offer a comparative analysis with modern memorisation approaches, especially those involving digital tools or flexible pacing systems. Mustofa, Mas'ud, and Elizabeth (2023) researched *hybrid pesantren* in Indonesia and found that digital memorisation platforms combined with teacher feedback improved students' performance in terms of verse accuracy and speed. Although this study

embraced modern tools, it lacked attention to how these tools influenced the depth of students' internalisation and spiritual reflection, which are critical components of Qur'an memorisation in Islamic education. Finally, Syahril et al. (2024) explored the ḥalāqah system's role in promoting religious moderation in pesantren. They reported that the traditional approach created a more contemplative and dialogical understanding of Islam. However, their study was limited to ideological formation and did not address memorisation performance or cognitive outcomes related to traditional and modern techniques.

Based on these five studies, there is a clear research gap in comparing the effectiveness, spiritual depth, and learner preference between traditional and modern Qur'an memorisation methods in a single, integrated educational context. Most previous research focused exclusively on either traditional or modern systems or addressed limited outcomes such as speed or motivation, while overlooking emotional and cognitive aspects. Therefore, this study offers a novel contribution by analysing how traditional and modern memorisation methods coexist and influence students at MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya, not only in terms of memorisation accuracy and retention, but also in the dimensions of spiritual connection, learner autonomy, and teacher perspectives. By adopting a comparative case study, this research also addresses the cultural and contextual factors that shape the success or challenges of modernisation in tahfiz education.

Thus, this study aims to analyse the modernisation of Al-Qur'an memorisation methods through a comparison between traditional methods and modern methods on student learning motivation, memorisation effectiveness, and long-term memory endurance at MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya. Theoretically, this research contributes to the discourse on Islamic pedagogy by integrating classical models of Qur'anic instruction with contemporary educational innovations. It seeks to offer insights into how traditional Islamic educational goals—such as reverence, internalisation, and moral transformation—can be preserved or even enhanced in a modernised learning environment. Practically, the findings are expected to inform educators and policymakers on the optimal design and implementation of Qur'an memorisation curricula that are pedagogically sound, spiritually enriching, and contextually relevant in the digital age.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative case study approach, focusing on MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya as the primary research site. The choice of qualitative methodology allows for a detailed exploration of students' and teachers' experiences, preferences, and perceptions of traditional and modern Qur'an memorisation methods.

The primary informants consist of 10 students—five using traditional ḥalāqah and five using modern methods—and four teachers who facilitate both models. Data collection was carried out through in-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and documentation review. Interviews were conducted face-to-face, each lasting between 30 to 45 minutes, and audio-recorded for accuracy. Observations were conducted over a 3-week period with daily sessions of 90 minutes, focusing on the structure, interaction, and emotional responses observed during ḥalāqah and digital memorisation sessions.

The documentation includes tahfiz schedules, evaluation forms, and digital tracking records. All data were analysed thematically using Miles and Huberman's (1994) model: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The triangulation of data sources ensured credibility and validity.

Table 1. Research Data Collection Techniques

No	Technique	Instrument	Target	Duration
1.	Interview	Semi-structured guide	10 students, four teachers	30–45 min/session
2.	Observation	Field notes, checklist	Ḥalāqah & digital sessions	3 weeks (daily)
3.	Documentation	Tahfiz logbooks, apps	Students' performance records	Throughout study

This operational design ensures a rigorous and contextual understanding of how traditional and modern memorisation models shape students' cognitive, emotional, and spiritual engagement with the Qur'an.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This section presents a comprehensive account of the research findings regarding the modernisation of Qur'an memorisation at MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya. The results are based on the analysis of qualitative data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings are categorised into five core themes that emerged from the comparison of traditional and modern memorisation methods: (1) memorisation effectiveness, (2) spiritual engagement, (3) learning discipline, (4) motivation and autonomy, and (5) student-teacher and peer interaction. To

facilitate understanding, each theme is accompanied by a table summarising key differences between traditional and modern methods.

Table 2. Memorisation Effectiveness

No.	Indicator	Traditional Method	Modern Method
1.	Short-term Memorisation Speed	Moderate	Fast
2.	Long-term Retention	Strong	Variable
3.	Accuracy of Recitation	High	Moderate
4.	Correction Frequency	Frequent peer/teacher correction	Self-correction via digital tools
5.	Verse Familiarity	Deep contextual understanding	Surface familiarity in some cases

Students using traditional methods demonstrated a stable and consistent retention rate. Their memorisation was marked by accurate recitation and fewer errors, facilitated by regular correction sessions with teachers. In contrast, modern method users often achieved faster short-term gains but struggled with long-term retention consistency, especially when independent review was inconsistent.

Table 3. Spiritual Engagement

No	Indicator	Traditional Method	Modern Method
1.	Emotional Connection	High linked to ritual and communal practice	Moderate—task-oriented
2.	Atmosphere	Quiet, reflective, solemn	Individual, mobile, sometimes distracted
3.	Intentionality in Memorising	Strong sense of purpose	Often goal-based with performance incentives
4.	Sense of Sacredness	Emphasised through etiquette and ritual	Less pronounced due to informal context
5.	Internalisation of Meaning	Encouraged through discussion	Limited, often focused on completion

The spiritual atmosphere created during ḥalāqah sessions contributed to a deeper emotional engagement with the Qur'an. Traditional learners internalised verses with reflective pauses and etiquette, reinforcing their sense of sacred duty. Conversely, the modern method, while efficient, often fails to evoke the same depth of connection due to the informal and individualised setting.

Table 4. Discipline and Learning Behaviour

No	Indicator	Traditional Method	Modern Method
1.	Attendance Regularity	High monitored by the teacher	Moderate—self-managed
2.	Time Management	Structured timetable	Flexible and irregular
3.	Learning Focus	Strong—limited distraction	Mixed—dependent on student discipline
4.	Disruption Level	Low	Higher in unsupervised settings
5.	Consistency in Practice	Daily and sustained	Episodic, depending on motivation

Discipline was a clear advantage of the traditional model. Students attended memorisation sessions punctually, followed fixed schedules, and received direct reminders from their teachers. Modern learners, although given flexibility, sometimes struggled with time management and were more prone to interruptions from digital devices.

Table 5. Motivation and Autonomy

No	Indicator	Traditional Method	Modern Method
1.	Source of Motivation	Teacher-driven	Self-motivation or app-based gamification
2.	Autonomy in Learning	Low—teacher-centred	High—student-centred
3.	Reward System	Spiritual and communal acknowledgment	Points, rankings, digital badges
4.	Learning Initiative	Passive or externally driven	Active initiative in tech-savvy students
5.	Goal Setting	Collective targets	Personalised target tracking

Motivation varied considerably across both methods. Traditional settings encouraged motivation through teacher affirmation and group accountability, while modern methods relied on internal motivation or gamified elements from apps. Students with strong self-regulation benefited from modern approaches, while others needed structured reinforcement.

Table 6. Student–Teacher and Peer Interaction

No.	Indicator	Traditional Method	Modern Method
1.	Teacher–Student Contact	Frequent, direct interaction	Limited, mostly digital or asynchronous
2.	Peer Collaboration	High during group ḥalāqah	Low, mainly individual practice
3.	Feedback Mechanism	Immediate oral correction	App-based or delayed teacher feedback
4.	Role of Teacher	Central, spiritual, and instructional guide	Peripheral, facilitator, or monitor
5.	Community Learning Environment	Strong sense of collective learning	More isolated experience

The traditional method offered robust relational dynamics, characterised by regular contact with teachers and peers. Students benefited from direct oral correction, communal recitation, and spiritual guidance. The modern model, although offering autonomy, often lacked these relational components, leading to a more individualised and sometimes isolating learning process.

Synthesis of Findings

The data reveal (see Table 7) that both memorisation models offer distinct benefits and limitations. Traditional methods excel in fostering long-term retention, emotional and spiritual depth, and structured discipline. Students build deep interpersonal bonds and view their

memorisation as a shared spiritual journey. On the other hand, modern methods cater to individual preferences and learning paces, promoting autonomy, technological integration, and adaptability. However, this comes at the expense of interpersonal connection and sometimes the depth of spiritual engagement.

Table 7. Comparison of Al-Qur'an Memorisation Methods of MTs Private Jabal Lubuk Raya

No.	Traditional Memorisation Method	Modern Memorisation Methods	Advantages of Traditional Methods	Limitations of Traditional Methods	Advantages of the Modern Method	Limitations of Modern Methods
1.	Talaqqi (direct learning from teacher to student)	Tarteel Quran App	Direct interaction with the teacher allows for more accurate tajweed correction.	Requires a longer time	Flexibility of learning time and place	Dependence on technology devices
2.	Tasmi' (direct memorisation)	Audio-visual aids	Character building and manners in memorising the Qur'an	Dependence on teacher presence	A variety of adaptive learning methods	Potential reduction in teacher-student interaction
3.	Muraja'ah (continuous repetition of memorisation)	Quran Pen	Clear transmission of scientific sanad	A limited number of students who can be mentored	Easy access to memorisation	Technology literacy needs
4.	Kitabah (writing the verse to be memorised)		Strengthening aspects of spirituality in the learning process			

In terms of institutional support, traditional models are better aligned with existing pesantren frameworks, while modern approaches require infrastructure such as smartphones, stable internet, and tech-savvy facilitators. The digital divide and parental attitudes also influence the success of the modern method, suggesting that broader socio-economic factors play a role in shaping educational outcomes.

Ultimately, this study highlights the complementary nature of both models. Rather than opposing one another, traditional and modern memorisation methods could be integrated to capitalise on their respective strengths. A hybrid model that retains the spiritual discipline of ḥalāqah while incorporating the flexibility and feedback systems of digital platforms may represent

an optimal future direction.

The totality of these findings illustrates the nuanced reality of tahfiz modernisation at MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya. Through five core themes and expanded visual summaries, the research underscores the importance of contextual, cultural, and pedagogical alignment in the pursuit of effective and meaningful Qur'an memorisation practices.

Discussion

This section explores the findings of the study within a broader theoretical and empirical framework. The discussion is divided into two key dimensions: (1) Motivation and Autonomy in Qur'an Memorisation and (2) Effectiveness and Long-term Retention. Each theme is examined through the lens of cognitive learning theory, Islamic learning motivation, and relevant educational technologies, in dialogue with previous studies.

The concept of motivation is central to educational success, particularly in memorisation-based disciplines such as tahfiz al-Qur'an. According to Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), motivation can be categorised as intrinsic or extrinsic, and both are apparent in the context of Qur'anic memorisation. Traditional methods at MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya exhibit characteristics of extrinsic motivation, where teacher guidance, communal obligations, and spiritual expectations drive performance. These factors reinforce external regulation and promote regular engagement with the memorisation material (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2014).

In contrast, modern memorisation methods cultivate intrinsic motivation and learner autonomy. The availability of memorisation apps, digital tracking systems, and gamified environments such as ranking systems and achievement badges appeals to students' personal goals. This aligns with Zimmerman's (2002) theory of self-regulated learning, which posits that learners who set goals and monitor their progress are more likely to sustain learning independently. This divergence in motivational structures reflects broader shifts in pedagogy. Traditional Islamic education emphasises collective accountability and obedience to authority (Rahman, 2019), while modern systems lean toward learner-centred paradigms, prioritising agency and adaptability (Alghamdi & Gillies, 2021). Both models are valid, but their effectiveness is contingent on the learner's personality, environment, and access to resources.

Previous studies affirm these observations. Febrianingsih (2020) found that ḥalāqah participants demonstrated high consistency due to teacher control and group solidarity. Similarly, Yunus et al. (2024) confirmed the moral reinforcement inherent in collective memorisation. On the

other hand, Mustofa et al. (2023) noted that digital methods increased engagement among technologically adept students, though outcomes varied across levels of self-discipline. Albab and Duha (2024) observed that autonomy empowered some learners but created gaps for others without structured guidance. The present study contributes by highlighting that motivation in tahfiz learning is not binary but exists along a continuum influenced by personal and environmental factors. Students with high self-regulation thrive in digital environments, while others rely heavily on traditional support structures. This confirms Horn and Staker's (2014) assertion that blended learning models are most effective when aligned with learner readiness and contextual compatibility.

Memorisation effectiveness can be measured in terms of speed, accuracy, retention, and spiritual internalisation. Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 1988) explains that excessive extraneous load impairs working memory. Traditional models, which employ structured, repetitive learning, minimise this load and facilitate schema automation, key to long-term memory consolidation (Mayer, 2009). Students at MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya using traditional methods showed consistent revision patterns, which aligns with distributed practice theory that supports long-term retention (Cepeda et al., 2006).

In contrast, modern memorisation methods utilise digital tools that can increase intrinsic cognitive load due to interface complexity or multitasking (Wang & Huang, 2021). While such tools promote faster memorisation, they risk superficial encoding and rapid forgetting, particularly if learners lack strategies for review and reflection (Al-Maliki, 2020). The data from this study indicate that while students using apps and flexible scheduling memorise larger volumes in shorter periods, their long-term retention is uneven. This matches findings by Raihan (2021), who reported variability in digital tahfiz programmes based on student discipline and access to structured review tools. In the hybrid pesantren examined by Mustofa et al. (2023), traditional practices were retained for foundational memorisation, with digital methods added for review and reinforcement—an approach that appeared to balance speed and retention.

The spiritual implications of memorisation are equally critical. Traditional methods embed Qur'an learning within a spiritual ecosystem: ḥalāqah sessions include recitations, etiquette, and rituals that reinforce sacredness (Nasri & Mulyohadi, 2023). Such practices enhance affective engagement and moral development (Saleh, 2024). However, modern methods often prioritise task completion and quantitative goals, which may reduce emotional depth unless teachers consciously

embed reflective practices (Syahril et al., 2024).

These findings reflect the broader debate in Islamic education between preserving tradition and embracing innovation (Latief, 2010). While traditional methods uphold religious identity and spiritual practice, modern tools respond to evolving learner needs, especially in urbanised and digitally connected environments. Educational theorists such as Vygotsky (1978) suggest that cognitive independence emerges through scaffolding; hence, modern methods should not replace traditional ones but rather complement them, enabling gradual learner autonomy. This research advances the conversation by showing that integration, rather than replacement, is the optimal strategy. Students benefit from traditional memorisation's spiritual structure in early stages, transitioning to independent digital reinforcement as their competence grows. This echoes the adaptive expertise model, where learners balance routine efficiency with innovative application (Hatano & Inagaki, 1986).

Furthermore, contextual factors at MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya significantly influence outcomes. In this rural yet semi-urban setting, infrastructural disparities affect digital access. Teachers vary in digital literacy, and parental support for digital tools is inconsistent. These realities affirm that successful modernisation requires ecosystem readiness, not merely technological availability (Alghamdi & Ahmad, 2020). Theoretically, this study supports a dynamic view of Islamic education in the 21st century. Memorisation is not a static ritual but an evolving pedagogical practice that must adapt to learner diversity, technological change, and spiritual goals. A dual-framework approach—rooted in Islamic tradition and informed by contemporary learning science—offers a viable path forward. Empirically, this research contributes to underrepresented perspectives from Indonesian madrasahs, particularly those navigating transitions between analog and digital religious instruction. By triangulating memorisation effectiveness, student motivation, and cultural context, it responds to gaps in current literature that often isolate one of these dimensions.

The author contends that a hybrid model, implemented with contextual sensitivity and teacher training, represents the future of tahfiz education. While tradition offers spiritual grounding and behavioural discipline, modern tools expand access and adaptability. Both are needed to meet the educational and spiritual aspirations of a new generation. The modernisation of Qur'an memorisation methods introduces both opportunities and dilemmas. Motivation and autonomy are improved through digital interventions, but spiritual depth and memorisation endurance remain stronger in traditional frameworks. The study advocates for a calibrated hybrid model tailored to

learners' cognitive profiles and cultural contexts, ensuring that technological progress does not dilute the spiritual and moral objectives of Qur'anic education.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the modernisation of Qur'an memorisation by comparing traditional and modern methods used at MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya. The findings revealed that while traditional methods promote stronger long-term retention, spiritual engagement, and learning discipline, modern methods offer greater autonomy, flexibility, and accelerated memorisation speed. However, modern methods were often accompanied by reduced spiritual depth and inconsistent review habits. Motivation patterns differed significantly between the two, with traditional students being more extrinsically motivated through teacher involvement, while modern learners showed higher intrinsic motivation when well-supported by digital infrastructure. The research concludes that a blended or hybrid model combining the strengths of both approaches is most appropriate in the current educational landscape, especially when tailored to student needs and supported by adequate infrastructure and teacher capacity. This study was limited to a single institution, MTs Swasta Jabal Lubuk Raya, and focused on a relatively small group of students and teachers. As such, the findings may not be generalisable to all madrasahs or pesantren in Indonesia or other Muslim-majority countries. Moreover, while the study offered insights into student motivation, retention, and teacher perspectives, it did not quantitatively measure memorisation performance or track long-term learning outcomes across academic years. Future research should explore longitudinal studies, cross-regional comparisons, and the development of empirically validated instruments to assess the cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of Qur'an memorisation in modern contexts.

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