COGNITIVE SCIENCES AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Enhancing Al-Quran Reading Proficiency in Higher Education: The implementation of the Focused Mad & Idgham Technique

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ABSTRACT

The issue of students' weakness in Quranic reading has long been a concern in Islamic education, and it continues to persist. This study aims to innovate Quranic teaching techniques by focusing on Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) rules. The study examines students' motivation and involvement in Quranic reading activities and investigates their learning experiences. Twenty-nine Year 1 students and 22 students from the Islamic Education Programme, performing at medium and low levels, were selected to participate in the intervention. Data were collected and analysed by observing the students' Quranic recitations and reactions. The researcher introduced the Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) technique (FMI) as a solution for improving Quranic reading. The findings revealed that some students in the Islamic education program still read the Quran at a less than satisfactory level. However, it was observed that students could read the Quran more effectively using the FMI technique as an intervention. The findings also indicated that the FMI technique can increase the motivation and involvement of learners in reading the Quran. Additionally, the positive perception of the FMI technique among students suggests its potential to enhance their learning experience in Quranic education, fostering engagement, comprehension, and confidence in Quranic recitation. Overall, the Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) Technique (FMI) not only improves the ability to read the Quran but also boosts students' confidence and involvement in learning the Quran.

Keywords: Quranic reading, mad and idgham rules, Islamic education, teaching techniques, student engagement

1   INTRODUCTION

Al-Quran literacy among Muslim youths in Malaysia reveals a moderate level of Quran reading and mastery (Ismail, 2022). Emphasis on learning Tajwid is significant in improving the quality of students' recitation of the Quran, especially in terms of sound, rhythm, and meaning (Zahroh, 2022). However, challenges persist among Muslim students, spanning oral skills, fluency, Fasohah proficiency, Tajwid recitation, and deep Tartil reading across primary, secondary, and higher education levels. Baharun (2020) emphasises the significance of Arabic knowledge in understanding the Qur'an, suggesting that a lack of proficiency in this language could contribute to the "Al-Quran blind" phenomenon. This issue continues in Islamic education; it is crucial for higher education students, even those in Islamic education programs, to master the principles of Tajwid, including correct pronunciation, rhythm, and melody, as Alagrami (2020) emphasised. Ensuring accurate interpretation of sentences and letter characteristics is essential, as emphasised by Khowarizmi (2020). Moreover, Ruhaya (2023) and Abrar (2023) advocate for improved Arabic language education, with Ruhaya focusing on listening and writing skills and Abrar emphasising the importance of teaching pronunciation and meaning.

Ismail (2020) found that Al-Quran literacy among Muslim youths in Malaysia indicates a moderate level of Quran reading and mastery. However, there are challenges in the learning process, including the lack of individual learning opportunities and post-program support (Ismail, 2022). The effectiveness of the Tahfiz Akhyar method in improving Quran memorisation among deaf youths has been demonstrated (Khamaruddin, 2021). Regarding teaching and learning methods, Quranic Reading teaching and learning methods are effective in private universities (Bakar, 2020). These studies collectively highlight the need for continued efforts to improve al-Quran literacy among Muslim youths in Malaysia.

To effectively learn to read the Qur'an, the traditional method of Talaqqi musyafahah, characterised by direct teacher-pupil interaction, plays a crucial role in enhancing correct pronunciation and understanding, as noted by Abidin (2019) and Kaltsum (2020). Additionally, the mnemonic method, particularly the al-Baghdadiah and al-Nuraniyyah methods, has been traditionally used in Malaysia and Oman to teach the Quran (Hamzah, 2022). However, there is a need for more effective methods to improve students' Quranic literacy, as indicated by the success of the "One Child One Book" method in increasing Islamic literacy among children in Al-Ikhlas Masjid (Oktarina, 2020). Imitating Quranic verses has also been effective in helping students construct Arabic sentence patterns (Zakaria, 2020). Despite these efforts, the practice of reading the Quran among Muslim youths in Malaysia is decreasing, highlighting the need for further research and intervention (Ismail, 2022).

Teachers at higher education institutions often encounter challenges with students' Quranic recitation fluency, particularly in applying Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) rules, as highlighted by Surul Shahbudin bin Hassan & Muhammad Azhar Bin Zailaini (2017). Their analysis revealed that nasal and non-nasal (ghunnah) pronunciation errors constitute a sizeable portion of overall Quranic reading errors. Specifically, long, and short pronunciation errors (mad) rank among the most common errors, underscoring areas often overlooked by students during recitation. Observations during assessments suggest that students struggle with fluency due to difficulties recalling words associated with the Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) rules. According to Mahadi Dahlan Al-Hafiz (2003), Mad Asli is elongating the sound of letters mad and lin with a rate of 2 to 6 harakat where the letters mad are three, namely alif, waw, and

ya'. Idgham is a technique in reciting the Quran where when the letter nun sukun or tanwin meets one of the letters idgham (ي ,ن ,م ,و ,ل ,ر,) both are combined or merged in the recitation. The letters share similar pronunciations and characteristics (Mahadi Dahlan Al Hafiz, 2003). However, to perform idgham, certain conditions must be met. These conditions involve two words: the first word contains nun sukun or tanwin at the end, and the idgham letter is located at the beginning of the second word. Idgham is categorised into two types, namely Idgham bi Ghunnah (with nasal sound), where the letters are ي ,ن ,م ,و and Idgham bi la Ghunnah (without nasal sound), where the letters are ل and ر (Mahadi Dahlan al-Hafiz, 2003).

Based on the established rules of Mad and Idgham, the researcher identified a need for motivation to ensure consistent recall and understanding of these rules. Memory retention is a critical aspect of skill acquisition in teaching and learning (Johnson, 2020; Tandon, 2022; Zhang, 2020).

Based on this issue, the researcher has taken an approach to help students at the higher education institution level in mastering Quran reading skills in addition to encouraging students to be actively involved in the learning process. One of the strategies to deal with this issue is to modify pedagogical practices that can improve student motivation and desire. The motivation of students at the higher education institution level affects self-involvement and involvement in the classroom, which leads to the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process. Teachers play a crucial role in meeting learning objectives and creating relevant learning experiences for students, with Bagaskara (2022) emphasising the need for teachers to understand and address the motives behind students' lack of motivation. Grant (2020) further underscores the importance of culturally empathic practices in motivating diverse students, while Diyanni (2020) highlights the need for teachers to engage and inspire students in the learning process actively. Therefore, the researcher feels the need to address this issue by applying a technique called the Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) Technique (FMI). This technique is modified by combining the Talaqqi musyafahah method with mnemonic techniques.

The present study aimed to achieve two main objectives. First, it examined students' motivation and involvement in Quranic reading activities, recognising that students learn more effectively when engaged and interested in the material. To this end, the study explored the potential of modified techniques such as the Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) Technique (FMI), which integrates Talaqqi musyafahah and mnemonic techniques to encourage students to enhance their reading skills. Second, the study investigated students' learning experiences to understand how they contribute to developing literacy skills and fostering an interest in Quranic reading. By implementing alternative techniques, the study sought to facilitate the development of students' phonemic awareness and reading abilities. Using FMI techniques provided opportunities for interactive and enjoyable reading sessions to bolster students' confidence and cultivate a more profound interest in Quranic reading.

Based on observations, the researcher conducted a literature review on various teaching methods of the Quran and mnemonic techniques. Talaqqi musyafahah, a traditional Quranic learning method characterised by direct teacher-student interaction, has been highlighted for strengthening accurate Quranic pronunciation and comprehension (Yusof, 2018; Abidin, 2019; Kaltsum, 2020). For instance, a qualitative study conducted by Syed Bidin et al. (2018) titled "Methods of Teaching and Learning the Quran: A Study at Unisza Mosque" aimed to explore

the evolution of Quranic education in Malaysia. Through document analysis and interviews, the study revealed the continued practice of the Talaqqi Musyafahah method, albeit with variations in instructional approaches employed for Quranic recitation training. A conceptual investigation by Jaafar and Mat Said (2020) also delves into the "Yadun E-Tajwid Application: Innovation in Tajwid Learning." The study suggests that the E-tajwid Yadun application encourages an immersive and interactive learning environment while reinforcing students' retention of tajwid principles. It presents a prototype design under development and will be used for future user presentations.

In Surul Shahbudin bin Hassan & Muhammad Azhar Bin Zailaini's study (2017), titled "Types of Quranic Reading Errors among Students at a Public University," the research methodology involved analysing oral tests through observation using a checklist instrument. This instrument referenced the Tajwid theories Ahmad Khalid Shukri et al. (2008) outlined. The Tajwid theories, compiled in the book Al-Munir by 8 Tajwid experts from Jordan, offer comprehensive guidelines on Quranic recitation rules. The book is structured to help individuals navigate the stages of Quranic learning, from fundamental to advanced levels. Ahmad Khalid Shukri et al. (2008) underscore that accurate Quranic recitation entails expressing the authentic pronunciation of each letter, which includes correctly articulating letters with the appropriate makhraj, executing their characteristics (sifat) accurately, modulating pronunciation (tarqiq wa tafkhim), elongating (mad) or shortening, strengthening (ghunnah) or articulating (izhar), and adhering to the agreed-upon laws by the qurra'.

A study by Jaafar and Mat Said (2019) investigated the efficacy of the Yadun approach in teaching nun sakinah and tanwin. Conducted as a quantitative experiment, the research involved administering pre-tests and post-tests to 58 randomly selected students. The findings demonstrated that the Yadun method accelerated and simplified the instruction and learning processes associated with nun sakinah and tanwin (the law of five). Similarly, Hussin and Ismail (2018) conducted a quantitative study with 30 participants to evaluate the effectiveness of the al-Matien Method in Quranic recitation instruction. Their results indicated a significant disparity between the experimental group utilising the al-Matien Method and the control group, thus recommending incorporating this method into Quranic teaching modules.

Yuliansyah (2018) study, titled "The Use of Finger Alphabet, Body Language, and Learning Media in Islamic Education Learning for Deaf Children at SLB State Musi Rawas," investigates the efficacy of employing finger alphabet, body language, and media in teaching Islam to deaf students. Utilising qualitative methods, including observations, interviews, and document analysis, the research underscores the suitability of the finger alphabet method and body language in catering to the Islamic education needs of deaf learners. Additionally, media use is acknowledged as an effective tool for engaging students' interest in learning.

The latest research in the teaching methods for the Quran has been explored, and Kholila (2023) emphasises the effectiveness of integrating Quranic verses into science learning materials. Akhmar (2020) identifies various methods used in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, including the Fahmul Mahfudz, Tikrarul Mahfudz, and Kitabul Mahfudz methods. Aflisia (2022) discusses modern linguistic approaches to teaching Balaghah, focusing on syntax, semantics, stylistics, pragmatics, and semiotics. Rifa'i (2020) highlights the method of the Prophet Muhammad in teaching the Quran, emphasising the importance of replicating, and applying this method in

modern education. These studies underscore the importance of diverse and effective teaching methods in Quranic education.

Numerous studies have explored mnemonic methods' effectiveness in various contexts. Ciaramella (2022) highlights the potential of these techniques, with the former focusing on the "keyword method" in language learning and the latter developing a taxonomy for clinical handover mnemonic devices. Fincher et al. (2020) provide a broader perspective, discussing the use of notional machines in computing education, which can be seen as a mnemonic device. Abrahan et al. (2021) adds to this by discussing the potential of music as a tool for memory modulation, suggesting a link between mnemonic methods and music. In contemporary usage, "modern mnemonics" refers to memory-enhancing techniques designed to facilitate the recall of facts by associating them with more straightforward and more accessible existing information and data (Lee, 2019). Amiryousefi and Ketabi (2011) asserted that mnemonic methods offer valuable assistance to students across different educational levels, including preschool, primary school, secondary school, and higher education, enabling them to rapidly memorise frequently used or immediately necessary information. Remembering effectively is a crucial aspect of learning skills within the teaching and learning process. Students engage in diverse learning ways involving observation, listening, reflection, logical thinking, memorisation, retention, and description (Abu et al., 2007). The mnemonic methods encompass various techniques, including loci, keywords, conjunctions, acronyms, and acrostic methods. In this study, the acronym method is employed, which involves forming a word from the initial letters of a sequence of words.

In conclusion, the extensive literature review on Quranic education and mnemonic techniques has revealed a notable gap in integrating traditional teaching methods, such as Talaqqi Musyafahah, with mnemonic strategies. While traditional methods like Talaqqi Musyafahah have been recognised for their efficacy in enhancing accurate Quranic recitation and comprehension, innovative approaches like the Yadun E-Tajwid Application signify efforts towards creating immersive and interactive learning environments. Studies have also identified errors in Quranic recitation among students, emphasising their challenges. Moreover, research exploring techniques such as "Jari Tajwid" and the alphabetic method has shown promise in enhancing comprehension and engagement in Quranic education.

Furthermore, incorporating mnemonic techniques into education presents significant potential for enhancing learning across various educational levels. The acronym method offers a structured approach to aid memory and can be effectively utilised in Quranic education. However, the literature lacks exploration regarding integrating mnemonic techniques with traditional Quranic teaching methods like Talaqqi Musyafahah.
Despite separate investigations into mnemonic approaches and traditional teaching methods, limited research exists on their combined application in Quranic education.

Hence, researchers have a compelling opportunity to bridge this gap by developing innovative techniques such as the Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) Technique (FMI), which integrate Talaqqi Musyafahah with mnemonic strategies. Such endeavours hold the potential to enhance Quranic reading skills and foster a more effective and engaging learning experience for students. By exploring this intersection, researchers can contribute significantly to advancing Quranic education and addressing the evolving needs of learners in contemporary educational settings.

2   METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a qualitative methodology with a descriptive analysis approach. The research methodology followed the Kemmis and McTaggart Model (1988) for action research, comprising four systematic phases: observation, reflection, planning, and implementation. Figure 2 illustrates this model delineated a cycle or loop consisting of four phases: reflection, planning actions, implementing actions, and making observations. This cyclical process allowed for repetition if the implemented actions failed to achieve the desired objectives. The researcher conducted the observation phase, followed by a preliminary survey administered through a Google Form to complement the researcher's observations. Subsequently, the researcher administered a test to the students and solicited questions for feedback. The acquired data underwent descriptive analysis for interpretation.

Sample

The sampling technique utilised in this research is convenience sampling, also called nonprobability sampling. Convenience sampling involves selecting respondents based on their availability and convenience, and the sample size should be determined by the researcher's analysis plan (Creswell et al., 2011). Consequently, the sample group for this study comprised 29 students enrolled in the Islamic Education program in years 1 and 2 at a higher education institution in Sarawak affiliated with an IPTA.

Techniques Design

The Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) Technique (FMI) amalgamated the Talaqqi Musyafahah method with mnemonic techniques, facilitating proficient Quranic reading among students. Through this method, students engaged in Quran recitation under the supervision of a teacher or educator, who corrected any errors in Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) recitations, a practice known as Talaqqi Musyafahah. Simultaneously, students recorded encountered Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) principles using the M (for Mad) and I (for Idgham) acronyms, employing mnemonic techniques. This integrated approach was perceived as student-friendly, as it assisted them in distinguishing between Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) principles, thereby facilitating adherence to recitation guidelines outlined in their notes.

Implementation Action Planning

In the Kemmis and McTaggart Model (1988) for action research, Implementation Action Planning falls within the "planning actions" phase. This study incorporates a strategic planning process divided into three phases over 14 weeks to ensure the effectiveness of the intervention.

Phase 1, occurring in Week 5, sets the foundation for introducing the FMI technique. The session aims to familiarise students with the technique's principles and its application in Quranic reading, with the teacher or educator taking the lead in elucidating its intricacies.

Transitioning into Phase 2, from Weeks 6 to 12, the focus intensifies as the teacher or educator dedicates time to strengthening students' grasp of the FMI technique. Guided sessions and individual meetings with students are utilised to delve deeper into the nuances of using this method effectively, particularly in the recitation of surah al-Baqarah.

Phase 3 unfolds in Weeks 13-14, marking a crucial juncture in assessing student proficiency and evaluating the efficacy of the FMI technique. A fluency test is administered, wherein students are tasked with reading aloud from page 3 of surah al-Baqarah. Each student's performance is meticulously evaluated to identify errors or challenges encountered during the recitation.

Additionally, student feedback plays a vital role in shaping the instructional approach. A survey is distributed to capture diverse perspectives and insights, allowing students to share their reflections and opinions on the FMI technique. Through insightful questions, students articulate their experiences and offer constructive feedback, fostering a collaborative learning environment focused on continual improvement and refinement. This planning and implementation process aligns closely with the Implementation Action Planning phase of the action research model, as it involves detailed planning, execution, and evaluation of interventions to achieve desired outcomes.

3   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Objective 1: Students' Motivation and Involvement in Quranic Reading

In this study, the researchers aimed to examine students' motivation and involvement in Quranic reading by implementing the Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) Technique (FMI). Before the implementation of the Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) Technique (FMI), a questionnaire was administered to 72 students to assess their proficiency levels in Quranic reading. The findings revealed that two people were at a low level, 27 were at a medium level, 37 were at a reasonable level, and six were at an outstanding level. This initial assessment sets the stage for understanding the baseline capabilities of students before introducing the intervention. Therefore, based on this result, the researcher selected 29 people, two at a low level and 27 at a moderate level, as the sample in this study. The students' proficiency levels in Quranic reading are presented in Figure 1 below.
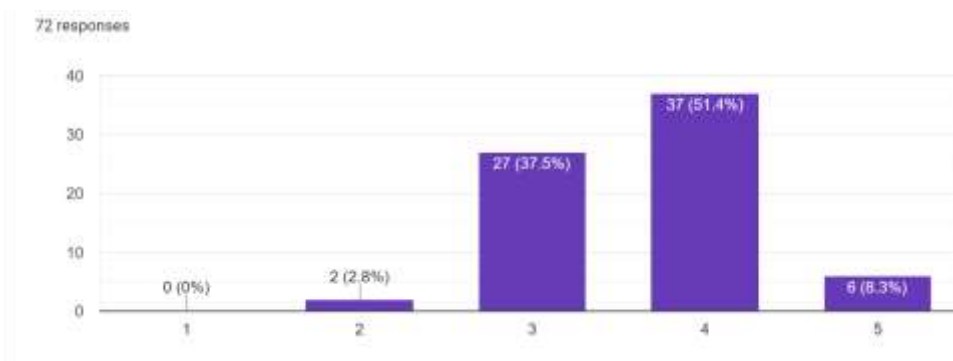
Figure 1. Proficiency levels in Quranic reading.

The following findings show that there are students in the Islamic education program who are still at a less than satisfactory level in reading the Quran. This is in line with the statement made by Ismail (2022) that al-Quran literacy among Muslim youths in Malaysia reveals a moderate level of Quran reading and mastery. The authors feel that action needs to be taken immediately to solve students' problems and help them increase their motivation to read the Qur'an. Diyanni (2020) also highlights the need for teachers to actively engage and inspire students in the learning process. Moreover, they are students of Islamic education, and this matter is crucial to them in Islamic education programs to master the principles of Tajwid, including correct pronunciation, rhythm, and melody, as Alagrami (2020) emphasised.

After the implementation of the Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) Technique (FMI), following the implementation of the intervention, the researcher conducted a review test by reading Surah al-Baqarah from page 3, which contains 86 rules of Mad (lengthening) and 16 rules of Idgham (merging). This study established guidelines for assessing the number of errors made during reading sessions and monitoring students' progress in their reading skills. The students' test scores and error scores in the recitation of the Quran are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Student review test scores and errors in Quranic reading.

Student	Total Mad 86 / Idgham16	Number of Errors in Reading	Overall total
1	86/16	3/0	3
2	86/16	0/0	0
3	86/16	0/0	0
4	86/16	0/0	0
5	86/16	0/0	0
6	86/16	0/0	0
7	86/16	5/0	5
8	86/16	4/0	4
9	86/16	4/1	5
10	86/16	1/1	2
11	86/16	2/1	3
12	86/16	5/1	6
13	86/16	0/0	0
14	86/16	0/0	0
15	86/16	0/0	0
16	86/16	0/0	0
17	86/16	0/0	0
18	86/16	0/0	0

19	86/16	3/0	3
20	86/16	0/0	0
21	86/16	0/0	0
22	86/16	0/0	0
23	86/16	3/0	3
24	86/16	0/0	0
25	86/16	0/0	0
26	86/16	0/0	0
27	86/16	0/0	0
28	86/16	0/0	0
29	86/16	0/0	0

Based on the observation of the researcher while evaluating and supported by the test score and error as in Table 1, it was found that students were able to read the Quran proficiently when using the Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) Technique (FMI) as an intervention. All students demonstrated focus on the aspects of Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging), indicating an improvement in their reading skills despite a slower pace. Nonetheless, they successfully followed Tajwid principles while reciting the Quran. This finding is in line with what Ciaramella (2022) stated, highlighting the potential of these techniques, with the former focusing on the "keyword method".

When the Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) Technique (FMI) was introduced to the students, they initially struggled a bit as they had to pause every time they read the selected surah to write acronyms for Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) like many studies before has also identified errors in Quran recitation among students, highlighting the challenges they face. However, their active participation and complete attention to Quranic recitation were evident. According to Etherington (2011), academic achievement increases when students embrace behavioural changes by integrating specific teaching strategies.

The results in Table 1 show that student performance varies regarding errors made during the reading sessions. While some students demonstrated minimal errors (e.g., Students 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29), others struggled more (e.g., Students 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 23). The FMI technique appears to have been effective for some students, as evidenced by the small number of errors. However, further support and practice may be needed for others to improve their recitation skills. Among the students, Student 12 made the highest number of errors (6), followed by Students 7, 9, and 8 (5 errors each). Most students (18 out of 29) made no errors during the reading sessions, indicating proficiency in applying the FMI technique. Notably, errors related to Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) rules were recorded, suggesting that students may require additional guidance in understanding and applying these rules effectively.

Despite initial challenges observed during the introduction of the FMI technique, students demonstrated active participation and attention during Quranic recitation sessions. This aligns

with previous studies highlighting the significance of traditional Quranic learning methods such as Talaqqi Musyafahah (Yusof, 2018; Abidin, 2019; Kaltsum, 2020). The mixed response observed in student performance during the review test underscores the need for targeted interventions and ongoing support, consistent with findings from Surul Shahbudin bin Hassan and Muhammad Azhar Bin Zailaini's study (2017), which identified errors in Quranic recitation among students. Most students exhibited proficiency in applying the FMI technique, suggesting its potential effectiveness in improving Quranic reading skills. This shows that this FMI technique can further increase the motivation and involvement of learners in reading the Quran.

Objective 2: Students' Learning Experience in Reading the Quran

The study's survey, which examined students' learning experience in reading the Quran, yielded insightful findings regarding students' perceptions of the Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) Technique (FMI). The survey results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Findings from student feedback survey.

Question	YES	NO	NOT SURE
1. Do you understand how to use the FMI technique?	29		
2. Does the FMI Technique help you Read the Quran well in terms of mad and idgham?	29		
3. Is it more confident to read the Quran using the FMI Technique?	29		

Firstly, all 29 students indicated an elevated level of understanding of how to use the FMI technique, highlighting the effectiveness of the instructional methods employed in conveying the necessary knowledge. This coincides with Kholila's (2023) emphasis on the effectiveness of integrating Quranic verses into science learning materials. This suggests that teaching the FMI technique was clear and comprehensible to the students, contributing to their engagement and comprehension.

Secondly, the unanimous agreement among students regarding the efficacy of the Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) Technique (FMI) in improving their Quranic reading skills underscores its perceived effectiveness in enhancing their proficiency. This positive response indicates that students perceive the FMI technique as beneficial for comprehending and applying the rules of Mad and Idgham, contributing to their overall proficiency in Quranic recitation. This finding aligns with Jaafar and Mat Said's (2020) research, highlighting the importance of innovative approaches in creating immersive and interactive learning environments that reinforce students' retention of Tajwid principles. Consequently, the positive

perception of the FMI technique among students suggests its potential to enhance their learning experience in Quranic education, fostering engagement, comprehension, and confidence in Quranic recitation.

Lastly, the survey revealed that the FMI technique enhances students' confidence in reading the Quran, with all 29 students expressing increased confidence when using the technique. This indicates that beyond technical proficiency, the FMI technique also positively impacts students' self-assurance and comfort in reciting Quranic verses, enhancing their overall learning experience.

The survey findings revealed a positive perception of the FMI technique among students, indicating its effectiveness in creating a fun and engaging learning experience. Students reported an elevated understanding of the FMI technique, echoing the clarity and comprehensibility of instructional methods highlighted in previous research (Jaafar & Mat Said, 2020). Moreover, students perceived the FMI technique as beneficial in improving their Quranic reading skills and enhancing their confidence, consistent with Hussin and Ismail's (2018) study on the effectiveness of instructional methods in Quranic recitation. Integrating mnemonic strategies such as the acronym method, as observed in the FMI technique, offers a promising approach to enhancing Quranic education and promoting meaningful student learning experiences. This aligns with Dian et al. (2023) that mnemonic learning strategies can significantly improve the mastery of Tajwid materials, making it easier for students to remember and understand the Quranic teachings, which in turn supports the use of the Talaqqi Musyafahah method in Quranic education. Charles and Ying (2020) state that using teaching aids will cause students to be actively involved during learning. Ciaramella (2022) highlights the potential of these techniques, with the former focusing on the "keyword method" in language learning and the latter developing a taxonomy for clinical handover mnemonic devices.

4   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the implementation of the Focused Mad (elongation) and Idgham (merging) Technique (FMI) in Quranic education has shown promising results in motivating and involving students while creating a fun and engaging learning experience.

Initially, students encountered challenges with the FMI technique, requiring frequent pauses during recitation to write acronyms for Mad and Idgham. However, their active participation and attention to Quranic recitation were notable, indicating a willingness to embrace behavioural changes associated with new teaching strategies. Despite initial difficulties, students improved Quranic reading proficiency, as evidenced by their ability to focus on Mad and Idgham rules and adhere to Tajwid principles correctly.

A review test conducted after the intervention revealed varying levels of student performance, with some displaying minimal errors while others struggled more. Most students exhibited proficiency in applying the FMI technique, highlighting its potential effectiveness in enhancing Quranic reading skills. However, some students may require additional support and practice to

improve their recitation abilities, emphasising the need for targeted interventions and ongoing support.

The survey findings further underscored the positive impact of the FMI technique on students' Quranic reading skills and confidence. Students expressed an important level of understanding of the technique and perceived it as beneficial in enhancing their proficiency and confidence in Quranic recitation. This aligns with previous research emphasising the effectiveness of instructional methods, including mnemonic strategies, in Quranic education.

Incorporating mnemonic techniques such as the acronym method, as observed in the FMI technique, offers a promising approach to enhancing Quranic education and promoting meaningful student learning experiences. The positive perception of the FMI technique among students highlights its potential to foster engagement and proficiency in religious education, paving the way for future research and innovation in Quranic teaching methodologies.

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