

Contents and Methods of al-Hadith Memorization: Perceptions of Religious Teachers in *Tahfiz* Schools Around Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya

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Abstract

This research attempts to gather arguments from the literature to explain the importance of memorizing al-Hadith as a complement to the curriculum of *tahfiz* students. The argument is further strengthened by the findings on the suitable contents and methods for students to practise from the point of view of religious teachers in *tahfiz* schools in Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya. A quantitative survey was conducted to gather the opinions of 210 respondents using a questionnaire instrument. Respondents mostly agreed that al-Hadith should be memorized in the form of perfect *sanad* and *matan*. The book *al-Arba'in an-Nawawiyyah* has been chosen as the most ideal content among some of the proposed al-Hadith books. The *tasmi'* method is considered to be the most suitable to be practised in memorizing al-Hadith. The role of nutritious food and drinks is also an added value emphasized in the things that can help students' memorization. The findings and discussion of this study conclude that al-Hadith memorization is a thoughtful proposal in complementing the curriculum of *tahfiz* students. The input from this article is targeted to be a pioneer of more discussions and studies within the scope of Islamic education in our country.

Keywords: *Al-Hadith Memorization, Tahfiz Education, Tahfiz Students, Islamic Education.*

A. Introduction

The initiative by the Malaysian government to develop the National *Tahfiz* Education Policy (DPTN) is vital to further strengthen the current *tahfiz* education system. The current *tahfiz* education can be divided into four types of curriculums, namely *Turath Tahfiz*, *Science Tahfiz*, *Dini Tahfiz*, and *Skills Tahfiz*¹. *Turath Tahfiz* refers to the combination of the *tahfiz* education and the study of religious knowledge through the books of *turath*, which are still inherited by the Muslims today. *Science Tahfiz*, on the other hand, requires students to memorize 30 *juzu*’ of al-Quran and at the same time, to learn pure science subjects. Meanwhile, *Dini Tahfiz* is an amalgamation of Integrated Dini Curriculum (KBD), which contains religious subjects, and Integrated *Tahfiz* Curriculum (KBT), which contains the *tahfiz* subjects and the *maharat* knowledge. Finally, *Skills Tahfiz* denotes the *tahfiz* course combined with skills courses, such as pastry, catering, and sewing. The formation of a systematic curriculum through DPTN illustrates that the Islamic education system has moved one step further in shaping the human capital in our country. This effort would also lead to a better *tahfiz* education recognition and monitoring system in the future. Thus, the next generation of *huffaz* can be expected to be of better quality to compete with other professional education students.

Today’s younger generation is the future leaders, educators and catalysts of our society. Our goal in this *tahfiz* stream is to produce high quality *huffaz* generations who are not only able to memorize al-Quran, but also to master the knowledge of al-Quran as a whole. However, the existing *tahfiz* curriculum has been found to be deficient in the aspect of al-Hadith, even though it is a complementary element to al-Quran. Al-Quran and al-Hadith are two inseparable sources of Islamic knowledge. As emphasized by al-Imam Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi’i (died 204 AH), al-Hadith has the role of explaining the general and vague things in al-Quran. Thus, the mastery of al-Quran knowledge can only be achieved with emphasis on both aspects, al-Quran and al-Hadith. Therefore, in addition to the existing *tahfiz* curriculum, al-Hadith is indeed a complementary element

¹ Zulkifli Mohd Yusoff, Noor Naemah Abdul Rahman, Nor ‘Azzah Kamri, Nor Aini Ali, Norhayati, Haji Hamzah, and Naeimah Ramlan, “Trend Masyarakat Terhadap Pendidikan Tahfiz”, *Ke Arah Pengiktirafan Huffaz di Malaysia*, Centre of Quranic Research, Darul Quran Jakim, (2018):p.47-50, [http://www.darulquran.gov.my/xs/dl.php?filename=Ke%20Arah%20Pengiktirafan%20Huffaz%20Di%20Malaysia%201%20\(BM\).pdf](http://www.darulquran.gov.my/xs/dl.php?filename=Ke%20Arah%20Pengiktirafan%20Huffaz%20Di%20Malaysia%201%20(BM).pdf).

In addition, the complementary al-Hadith in the curriculum of *tahfiz* students is incomplete without the memorization element. Learning through memorization plays an imperative role in brain development and is proven to be effective regardless of the age². Moreover, the method of memorization is also recognized as an important practice in Islamic pedagogy³. This method is one of the widely accepted traditional learning approaches by the Arabs as it can help the brain's ability to learn quickly and store information in a short time. The advantages of memorization are also more evident when students seek to understand what is learned through repetition. The concept of repetition in memorization is a way of strengthening knowledge comprehension. Hence, this memory-training approach has been taught to children in Islamic tradition from an early age, even before they are able to read or write⁴. Therefore, al-Hadith lessons should be taught to students through memorization so that the knowledge can be mastered more effectively. The discussion of this article aims to emphasize the needs and importance of memorizing al-Hadith in the curriculum of *tahfiz* students. This idea is detailed in the scope of suitable contents and methods to be practised by *tahfiz* students who will be memorizing al-Quran and al-Hadith simultaneously. In collecting data, a quantitative approach was implemented by surveying the opinions of religious teachers in *tahfiz* schools through a questionnaire. The argument of this study is further strengthened by the findings and analysis of the respondents' perceptions in three aspects: (i) contents of al-Hadith memorization; (ii) methods of memorizing al-Hadith; and (iii) things that help memorization.

The Study of al-Hadith in Malaysia

The general review of al-Hadith courses in Malaysia indicates that the development of this knowledge is very positive since Islam arrived in Malaya⁵. Five main institutions offering al-Hadith studies have been introduced, namely Madrasah Miftahul Ulum Sri Petaling, Pusat Pengajian al-Quran Darul Kautsar (PPADK), Pusat Khidmat Sosial Islam (PAKSI), Madrasah al-Quran Kubang Bujuk, and Dar al-Ulum Li Ihya' Ulum ad-Din in Langgar. Moreover, the knowledge of al-Hadith was also found to be imparted through *pondok* education, at mosques, *musollas*, and at institutes of higher education using different methods and approaches.

The development of al-Hadith studies in Malaysia at the tertiary level is also very encouraging. Al-Hadith courses offered at higher education are implied to be more systematic and organized in terms of syllabus and approach⁶. More comprehensive al-Hadith courses have been offered at leading universities, such as University of Malaya (UM), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), and Universiti Islam Sains Malaysia (USIM). At the college level, several state-funded Islamic colleges, such as Selangor International Islamic University College, Sultan Ismail Petra International Islamic College (KIAS), and Darul Ridzuan Islamic College, also provide al-Hadith courses. Furthermore, al-Hadith courses are also conducted at Darul Quran through al-Hadith *syukbah*⁷.

² Md. Enamul Hoque, "Memorization: A Proven Method of Learning", *International Journal of Applied Research* 22, no. 3: (2018) 2-3, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Md-Hoque-44/publication/330825027_Memorization_A_Proven_Method_of_Learning/links/5c555b4ba6fdccd6b5dbf0b0/Memorization-A-Proven-Method-of-Learning.pdf.

In secondary school, al-Hadith subjects have been offered in Sekolah Menengah Agama Kerajaan (SMKA), Sekolah Menengah Agama (SMA), and Sekolah Agama Rakyat since the 20th century⁸. The establishment of these schools is an initiative of the federal and state governments to spread Islamic knowledge, including al-Hadith. Generally, al-Hadith learning in SMKA is executed through four subjects of Islamic studies, namely Pendidikan Syariah Islamiyyah (PSI), Pendidikan al-Quran dan as-Sunnah (PQS), Syariah, and Usuluddin (Maulana Muhammad Ilyas and Mohd Akil 2017, 11). PSI and PQS are implemented for students at the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) level, while the Syariah and Usuluddin subjects are implemented at the Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia (STPM) level. Additionally, the subjects of al-Hadith and Ulum al-Hadith are also implemented at the Sijil Tinggi Agama Malaysia (STAM) level in selected schools⁹. Al-Hadith teaching through the subjects at secondary schools is a good initiative to introduce this knowledge to students who are interested in learning it.

Al-Hadith teaching is executed through several approaches at the school level. The method of *talaqqi* or teacher-centred method is a traditional method in learning al-Hadith and has been widely practised since a long time ago^{10 11 12}. This method is based on the method of al-Quran revelation from Allah to Prophet Muhammad via the angel Jibril. In this method, Jibril acted as the teacher who taught al-Quran to Prophet Muhammad by reciting each *ayah*. This method is still relevant to this day in the teaching and learning of Islamic knowledge, including al-Hadith.

³ Muhammed Yusuf, 2010, "Memorization as a learning style: A balance approach to academic excellence", *OIDA International Journal of Sustainable Development* 1, no. 6: 51-52, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Muhammed_Yusuf/publication/228322159_Memorization_as_a_Learning_Style_A_Balance_Approach_to_Academic_Excellence/links/56ec135c08ae24f050991453.pdf.

⁴ Sabki, A'ishah Ahmad, and Glenn Hardaker, "The madrasah concept of Islamic pedagogy", *Educational Review* 65, no. 3 (2013): p.347.

⁵ Fauzi Deraman, Ishak Haji Sulaiman, and Faisal Ahmad Shah, *Pengajian hadith di Malaysia: tokoh, karya dan institusi* (Jabatan Al-Quran dan Al-Hadith, Akademi Pengajian Islam: Universiti Malaya, 2010), p. 1-2.

⁶ Nur Syahadah Mohamed, and Mohd Akil Muhamed Ali, "Tahap Pengetahuan dan Persepsi Pelajar terhadap Pengajian Hadith di Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin", *Islamiyyat* 38, no. 2 (2016): 155-156. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/96113679.pdf>.

⁷ Muhammad Arif Yahya, Mohd Khairul Nazin Mohd Nasir, and Ahmad Yunus Mohd Noor, "Pendekatan hafazan hadis di Universiti Islam Madinah: Kajian terhadap pelajar selain kuliah hadis," *Ulum Islamiyyah The Malaysian Journal of Islamic Sciences* no 21 (August 2017): 86, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Muhammad_Yahya16/publication/326648438_THE_APPROACH_OF_MEMORIZING_HADITH_IN_THE_ISLAMIC_UNIVERSITY_OF_MEDINA_STUDY_TOWARDS_STUDENT_OUTSIDE_OF_FACULTY_OF_HADITH/links/5b5ac940aca272a2d66ce4aa/THE-APPROACH-OF-MEMORIZING-HADITH-IN-THE-ISLAMIC-UNIVERSITY-OF-MEDINA-STUDY-TOWARDS-STUDENT-OUTSIDE-OF-FACULTY-OF-HADITH.pdf.

⁸ Mohd Army Bin Yusop, "Pengajian Hadith di Madrasah Miftahul Ulum, Sri Petaling, Kuala Lumpur" (Doctoral thesis, University of Malaya, 2011), p. 20.

⁹ Mohd Army, "Pengajian Hadith di Madrasah Miftahul Ulum, Sri Petaling, Kuala Lumpur," p. 20.

¹⁰ Fauzi et. al., *Pengajian hadith di Malaysia: tokoh, karya dan institusi*, p. 208.

¹¹ Mohd Army, "Pengajian Hadith di Madrasah Miftahul Ulum, Sri Petaling, Kuala Lumpur," p.3.

¹² Qutrennada Rosli, and Ahmad Yunus Mohd Noor, "Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Hadith di Maahad Darul Hadis Alor Setar, Kedah: Tinjauan Awal," *Prosiding Kolokium Antarabangsa Siswazah Pengajian Islam*

The method of memorization is also significant in the study of al-Hadith in Malaysia, although it is less widely practised^{13 14}. One of the institutions that clearly employ the method of memorization in learning al-Hadith is Dar al-Ulum Li Ihya' Ulum ad-Din in Langgar, Kedah where students have to memorize 1,000 al-Hadith after completing several books of *turath*. Memorization was emphasized as a method used by the companions and *tabi' tabi'in* in studying al-Hadith¹⁵. Al-Hadith lessons at the time of Prophet Muhammad, which was 1,400 years ago, involved only a few close companions, such as Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, Ali bin Abi Talib, and Zayd bin Harithah. In those days, the companions were more encouraged to preserve al-Hadith through memorization than writing. This point could be inferred from the prohibition of writing al-Hadith by the Prophet as recorded in al-Hadith¹⁶. One of the reasons for the prohibition is as an encouragement for learners to preserve al-Hadith through memorization, especially for those who have a strong memory. Due to its historical preference over other methods, the memorization method should be used as an example to be followed in learning al-Hadith.

The study of al-Hadith in Malaysia has been growing rapidly through various institutions that offer this course under the surveillance of either the government or private sectors. Each institution has its own justification for each method or approach used in teaching this knowledge. This study which seeks to apply al-Hadith memorization among school-level students finds that al-Hadith is not something that is completely new in the society, but its importance has begun to be realized. However, it is still important for the authorities to find appropriate ways or approaches to further develop this knowledge of al-Hadith among the community.

B. Literature Review: Contents and Methods of al-Hadith Memorization

In the general of practice of al-Hadith memorization by students at the Islamic University of Madinah, teachers oblige their students to memorize al-Hadith at least in the form of *al-rawi al-a'la*, that is the *matan* of al-Hadith and the chain of narrators (*sanad*) traced back to the companions¹⁷. Most teachers do not require students to memorize the perfect chains of *sanad* and comments stated by the scholars (*syarah* al-Hadith). The contents of al-Hadith that need to be memorized are selected from the five parts of *Kutub as-Sittah*, namely *Sahih Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim*, *Sunan Abu Daud*, *Sunan Tirmidhi*, *Sunan an-Nasa'i*, and *Sunan Ibn Majah*, which are divided according to the semesters¹⁸. The teachers practise various methods in teaching al-Hadith to the students¹⁹. The *tasmi'* method or recitation of

(KASPI), (December 2015): 134.
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ahmad_Mohd_Noor4/publication/291336964_Pengajaran_dan_Pembelajaran_Hadith_di_Maahad_Darul_Hadis_Alor_Setar_Kedah_Tinjauan_Awal/links/56a0900c08ae4af5254a31e9/Pengajaran-dan-Pembelajaran-Hadith-di-Maahad-Darul-Hadis-Alor-Setar-Kedah-Tinjauan-Awal.pdf.

¹³ Fauzi et. al., *Pengajian hadith di Malaysia: tokoh, karya dan institusi*, p.208.

¹⁴ Mohd Army, "Pengajian Hadith di Madrasah Miftahul Ulum, Sri Petaling, Kuala Lumpur," p.11-13

¹⁵ Mohd Army, "Pengajian Hadith di Madrasah Miftahul Ulum, Sri Petaling, Kuala Lumpur," p. 17-18

¹⁶ Muhammad Arif et. al., "Pendekatan hafazan hadis di Universiti Islam Madinah: Kajian terhadap pelajar selain kuliah hadis," p.77.

¹⁷ Muhammad Arif et. al., "Pendekatan hafazan hadis di Universiti Islam Madinah," p. 79.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

memorization is one of the main methods used where the teacher revises the students' memorization to check for any mistakes. In addition, teachers also conduct written and oral tests to evaluate students' memorization. Students are also free to choose any compatible methods, such as doing it individually, in groups or through discussion.

In addition, the system of teaching and learning al-Hadith in Maahad Darul Hadis, Alor Setar, Kedah also exposes students to al-Hadith memorization²⁰. Students in this institution memorize al-Hadith in stages before completing their studies. Maahad Darul Hadis has its own al-Hadith memorization syllabus. For example, the book *al-Arba'in an-Nawawiyyah* by Imam an-Nawawi needs to be memorized within a year. The book *al-Arba'in an-Nawawiyyah* is important for students who are new to the lessons to strengthen their memory in the early stages of learning al-Hadith²¹. Next, the book of *Riyad as-Salihin* needs to be memorized in stages. One of the remarkable achievements is a student who has successfully memorized 300 al-Hadith from *Riyad as-Salihin*. However, the writers emphasize more on the students' perceptions on teaching methods than the implementation of al-Hadith memorization.

A study on the implementation of al-Hadith memorization course by lecturers at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) also provides appropriate input. This study, which focuses on the teaching methods, does not discuss the contents of al-Hadith memorization in its implementation. The methods practised are diverse and can be divided into classic methods and modern methods²². The five classic methods in memorizing al-Hadith are teaching, listening, understanding, writing, and memorizing. The modern methods outlined are audio or listening aids, continuous repetition, and an online application called I-Mind. At the end of the study, Muhammad Arif et al. proposes a model of al-Hadith memorization method that combines classic and modern methods according to the students' needs while emphasizing the importance of memorizing al-Hadith to preserve and master the second source of knowledge after al-Quran²³.

Besides some of these articles, it is very difficult to find specific studies on al-Hadith memorization. Among the institutions that offer al-Hadith courses, a few highlight that memorization is one of the methods used but without details on the contents or methods of implementation. Generally, al-Hadith memorization is still relatively new in the literature and requires further studies in developing a discussion on this topic. Hence, the literature on

²⁰ Qutrennada and Ahmad Yunus, "Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Hadith di Maahad Darul Hadis Alor Setar, Kedah," p. 135.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Muhammad Arif Yahya, Jawiah Dakir, Najah Nadiah Amran, Ahmad Yunus Mohd Noor, Mazlan Ibrahim, and Mohd Arif Nazri, "Application of Hadith Memorization Methods in Teaching and Learning: The National University of Malaysia's Experiences," *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, (October 2017 Special Issue): 370-371. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Najah_Amran/publication/330467074_Application_of_Hadith_Memorization_Methods_in_Teaching_and_Learning_The_National_University_of_Malaysia's_Experiences/links/5c417339a6fdccd6b5b592e6/Application-of-Hadith-Memorization-Methods-in-Teaching-and-Learning-The-National-University-of-Malysias-Experiences.pdf.

²³ Muhammad Arif et. al., "Application of Hadith Memorization Methods in Teaching and Learning," p.372.

the memorization of al-Quran is also examined to obtain relevant input on the focus of this study, especially in the method of memorization.

The most significant method of memorizing al-Quran in the literature is the method of *tasmi*'. This method has been identified as a traditional method practised by Prophet Muhammad who recited al-Quran verses to the angel Jibril for the purpose of memorizing al-Quran²⁴. Azmil Hashim, Abdul Halim and Misnan (2013) have reported that the *tasmi*' method, evaluated with the highest marks, as a method to strengthen memorization and improve recitation²⁵. Azmil Hashim and Abdul Halim (2012) who studied students' perceptions on the various methods of al-Quran memorization in Malaysia have also outlined the method of *tasmi*' as one of the most important methods²⁶. In addition, Abdul Hafiz et al. (2003)²⁷ and Abdul Hafiz et al. (2005)²⁸ who studied the effectiveness of various methods in memorizing al-Quran also conclude that *tasmi*' is the best method, is most often practised by students, and is most effective in helping students to strengthen memorization. The Turkish system of al-Quran memorization also includes *tasmi*' as one of the cores that drives the effectiveness of the unique Turkish system²⁹. The majority of *tahfiz* schools, centres, and institutions practise the *tasmi*' method in their teaching and learning process. Thus, this method has been agreed by the respondents, either among the teachers or the students, as a method that helps to strengthen al-Quran memorization.

There are several other methods mentioned as effective in memorizing al-Quran. Azmil Hashim, Abdul Halim and Misnan (2013), specifically on the methods of teaching and learning al-Quran, emphasize the methods of writing and description for the purpose of

²⁴ Nor Musliza Mustafa, and Mokmin Basri, "Perbandingan kaedah hafazan al-Quran tradisional dan moden: Satu kajian awal", *Proceedings of the Social Sciences Research*, (June 2014): 829-830, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Mokmin_Basri/publication/278383374_PERBANDINGAN_KAEDAH_HAFAZAN_AL-QURAN_TRADISIONAL_DAN_MODEN_SATU_KAJIAN_AWAL/links/557fe2df08aeaa18b7797a78/PERBANDINGAN-KAEDAH-HAFAZAN-AL-QURAN-TRADISIONAL-DAN-MODEN-SATU-KAJIAN-AWAL.pdf.

Azmil Hashim, Ab. Halim Tamuri, and Misnan Jemali. "Latar belakang guru tahfiz dan amalan kaedah pengajaran tahfiz al-Quran di Malaysia", *O-JIE: Online Journal of Islamic Education* 1, no. 1 (January 2013):p.32.

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Azmil_Hashim/publication/272488185_Latar_Belakang_Guru_Tahfiz_Dan_Amalan_Kaedah_Pengajaran_Tahfiz_Al-Quran_Di_Malaysia/links/54e5f204cf277664ff1bd7d.pdf.

²⁶ Azmil Hashim and Ab. Halim Tamuri, "Persepsi pelajar terhadap kaedah pembelajaran tahfiz al-Quran di Malaysia". *Journal of Islamic and Arabic Education* 4, no. 2 (2012): p.6-7, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/11494837.pdf>.

²⁷ Abdul Hafiz Bin Abdullah, Ajmain Bin Safar, Mohd Ismail Bin Mustari, Azhar Bin Muhammad, and Idris Bin Ismail, "Keberkesanan kaedah hafazan di Pusat Tahfiz", (Laporan Penyelidikan, Pusat Pengajian Islam & Pembangunan Sosial, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 2003), p.149-150.

²⁸ Abdul Hafiz Bin Abdullah, Hussin Bin Salamon, Azmi Shah Bin Suratman, Sulaiman Shakib Bin Mohd Noor, Kamarul Azmi Bin Jasmi, and Abdul Basit Bin Samat @ Darawi, "Sistem Pembelajaran dan Kaedah Hafazan al-Quran yang Efektif: Satu Kajian di Kuala Lumpur dan Terengganu" (Laporan Penyelidikan, UTM Skudai, Johor, 2005), p.144.

²⁹ Abdul Hafiz Bin Abdullah, and Norhanan Binti Abdul Rahman, "Kaedah Hafazan Al-Quran Sistem Turki: Kajian Di Tahfiz Al-Quran Darul Tuba", *Jurnal Teknologi*, no. 2 (2010): 6, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/11785832.pdf>.

understanding the memorization³⁰. Writing can reinforce memorization, especially for difficult and confusing verses or *ayah*³¹. However, this method is given less attention to by teachers. In fact, the use of multiple senses also helps to improve and retain students' memorization. Furthermore, the teachers need to pay more attention to the description method for the purpose of understanding, which has great potential to aid students³². The implementation of the description method includes the meaning explanation of each *kalimah*, the meaning description of the *ayah*, and the explanation of *asbabul nuzul* for in-depth understanding. Researchers assert that these steps play important roles in strengthening students' memorization, hence are able to produce excellent students who not only master the knowledge of al-Quran, but also understand its meaning. The method of memorization through understanding is also supported in a more recent study by Mohd Jamalil et al. (2017)³³.

Studies on memorizing al-Quran also outline some significant efforts in helping memorization. Abdul Hafiz et al. (2003)³⁴ and Shahrulkarnain (2013)³⁵ state the importance of consuming nutritious food and drinks as one of the alternatives to strengthen memorization. In a study by Abdul Hafiz et al. (2005), the importance of nutritious food and drinks was agreed by 85.3 percent of the respondents³⁶. The importance of this factor is evidently stated where the ability of the brain and memory to function at the maximum level depends on the consumption of nutritious food. Furthermore, Abdul Hafiz et al. (2003) also maintain the importance of examinations or tests to strengthen memorization³⁷. Examination is a form of evaluation of the knowledge that they have learnt. Hence, examinations help students to work harder to memorize al-Quran as a preparatory step to sit for the evaluation. Abdul Hafiz et al. have gathered sufficient responses that agreed with the examination or test as one of the activities that help students strengthen memorization.

In short, there are some differences between al-Quran and al-Hadith whereby not all methods of memorizing al-Quran can be practised in memorizing al-Hadith. The theory of memorizing al-Quran can be used as a reference to identify the best method for memorizing al-Hadith. Teachers, students, and researchers must also be creative to further develop existing methods. In the future, specific studies need to be conducted to contribute to discussions on the topic of al-Hadith memorization.

³⁰ Azmil Hashim et. al., "Latar belakang guru tahfiz dan amalan kaedah pengajaran tahfiz al-Quran di Malaysia," p. 33-34

³¹ Azmil Hashim et. al., "Latar belakang guru tahfiz dan amalan kaedah pengajaran tahfiz al-Quran di Malaysia", p. 36

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Mohd Jamalil Ismail, Sabri Mohamad, Tengku Intan Zarina Tengku Puji, and Nor Hafizi Yusof, "Strategi Kecemerlangan Institusi Pendidikan Tahfiz Al-Quran Di Malaysia: Satu Tinjauan Literatur". *Jurnal Islam dan Masyarakat Kontemporari* 15, no. 1 (July 2017): p. 61.

³⁴ Abdul Hafiz et. al., "Keberkesanan kaedah hafazan di Pusat Tahfiz," p.160.

³⁵ Shahrulkarnain Mohamad Nazir, "Program sijil tahfiz Al-Qur'an Darul Quran JAKIM-Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia: Analisis terhadap pencapaian hafazan dan permasalahannya", (Master dissertation, University of Malaya, 2013), p.102.

³⁶ Abdul Hafiz et. al., "Sistem Pembelajaran dan Kaedah Hafazan al-Quran yang Efektif," p.222.

³⁷ Abdul Hafiz et. al., "Keberkesanan kaedah hafazan di Pusat Tahfiz," p. 151.

C. Research Methodology

This article is further strengthened by a quantitative survey. An evaluation on the contents and methods of memorizing al-Hadith was collected from religious teachers in *tahfiz* schools. The questionnaire was evaluated through five degrees of agreement: strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. The 31-item questionnaire used was fully developed by the author through literature reviews and interviews. The instrument development had also gone through appropriate steps and processes to ensure its accuracy and usability in collecting data. This questionnaire was referred to two research methodology experts from the University of Malaya as well as two al-Hadith experts to ensure the validity of the instrument. A pilot study of 30 respondents was also conducted to determine the level of reliability of the questionnaire through Cronbach's Alpha values. The Cronbach's Alpha values obtained for the 31 items of the three constructs were all above .8, which is categorized as good and acceptable³⁸. The details of Cronbach's Alpha values for each construct are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Values for each Construct

Construct	No. of Item	Cronbach's Alpha Value
Content	14	.874
Method	9	.849
Things that help memorization	8	.801
Total	31	

After going through the process of validity and reliability, the questionnaire was distributed to 210 respondents who comprised the entire population of religious teachers from 26 private *tahfiz* schools in Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya. All participating *tahfiz* schools are registered under the Department of Federal Territory Religious Affairs (JAWI). The questionnaires that were successfully re-collected were 131 units or 62 percent. 60 percent is an adequate collection rate for analysis purposes³⁹. The raw data was descriptively analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 25.0 software by finding the mean value. The results are presented in the form of levels of agreement and interpretation for further analysis and discussion.

³⁸ Fraenkel, Jack R. and Wallen, Norman E, *How to design and evaluate research in education*, 7th ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), p.299.

³⁹ Chua, Yan Piaw, *Kaedah dan statistik penyelidikan: Asas statistik penyelidikan*, (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: McGraw Hill, 2006), p.191.

D. Findings and Discussion

From the three constructs, the findings of this study can be divided into four main points. The first construct, content of al-Hadith memorization, is divided into two parts. The first part gives options to the respondents to evaluate the appropriate form of al-Hadith to be memorized. In Table 2, the four items representing the forms of al-Hadith are outlined as well as the findings for each item.

Table 2: Findings on the First Part of Contents of al-Hadith Memorization

No.	Item	Mean	Level of Agreement
1	<i>Matan</i> and perfect <i>sanad</i> of al-Hadith	4.24	High
2	Only <i>matan</i> of al-Hadith initially, then add <i>sanad</i> at a higher level	3.99	Moderate
3	<i>Matan</i> of al-Hadith and <i>sanad</i> up until companions (<i>al-rawi al-a'la</i> /الراوي الأعلى)	3.69	Moderate
4	<i>Matan</i> of al-Hadith only without <i>sanad</i>	2.89	Very Low

One of the importance of students memorizing al-Hadith at the Islamic University of Madinah is the preservation of this second source of Islamic knowledge⁴⁰. Therefore, memorizing *matan* and the perfect *sanad* is a proper effort to achieve that goal. Previous scholars strived to preserve this knowledge by memorizing al-Hadith in the form they were received. Hence, it is agreeable that this tradition should be maintained and implemented by students in memorizing al-Hadith today.

Memorizing “only *matan* of al-Hadith initially, then adding *sanad* at a higher level” can be used as an alternative way if the complete *sanad* of al-Hadith is too difficult for students. It is also effective if the perfect memorization of *sanad* is executed in stages to ensure students are more enthusiastic to complete the memorization and to prevent them from giving up quickly. The item “*matan* of al-Hadith and *sanad* up until companions (*al-rawi al-a'la*/الراوي الأعلى)” which was moderately agreed on is also acceptable as an option if students are unable to memorize the perfect *matan* and al-Hadith. Al-Hadith in the form of *al-rawi al-a'la* is an approach used by students at the Islamic University of Madinah for al-Hadith memorization⁴¹. However, the study was in the context of university students, hence the application might be different at the school level. This different context has made this item to be rated only at a moderate level. This *al-rawi al-a'la* approach,

⁴⁰ Muhammad Arif et. al., “Pendekatan hafazan hadis di Universiti Islam Madinah, p.76.

⁴¹ Muhammad Arif et. al.,...p.79.

nevertheless, is applicable to the context of *tahfiz* school students as this item was not completely rejected by religious teachers in *tahfiz* schools in al-Hadith memorization.

Furthermore, memorizing “*matan* of al-Hadith only without *sanad*” was evaluated as very least agreed by the respondents. The goal of producing students who master the knowledge of al-Hadith through formal learning and teaching is more appropriate if the syllabus includes *matan* and *sanad*, even if not perfectly from the beginning, or if applied in stages. The knowledge of al-Hadith at the *matan* level is only suitable to be known as general knowledge by the general public, not by *tahfiz* students who want to memorize, understand, and master this knowledge. This *sanad* is important for *tahfiz* students to know the origin of al-Hadith and to avoid the spread of false al-Hadith.

In general, the form of *matan* and *sanad* of al-Hadith that needs to be memorized is subjected to several aspects: (i) the goals to be achieved; (ii) the time available; and (iii) the ability of students who memorize it. Memorizing *matan* and perfect *sanad* can be quite difficult to implement at the school level but it is also not impossible to be achieved by *tahfiz* students. The *matan* and perfect *sanad* may be the best form but the form chosen should be based on the most significant effect that can be given to the students.

In the second part of the questionnaire’s first construct, eight items representing the books of al-Hadith to be suggested as the contents of al-Hadith memorization were listed for evaluation. Results of the findings are tabulated in Table 3.

Table 3: Findings on the Second Part of Contents of al-Hadith Memorization

No.	Item	Mean	Level of Agreement
5	<i>Kitab al-Arba‘in an-Nawawiyah</i> (كتاب الأربعين النووي)	4.41	High
6	<i>Kitab Riyad as-Salihin</i> (كتاب رياض الصالحين)	4.35	High
7	<i>Kitab Sahih Bukhari</i> (كتاب صحيح البخاري)	4.34	High
8	<i>Kitab Sahih Muslim</i> (كتاب صحيح مسلم)	4.33	High
9	<i>Kitab Mishkat al-Masabih</i> (كتاب مشكاة المصابيح)	4.21	High

10	<i>Kitab Bulugh al-Maram</i> (كتاب بلوغ المرام)	4.13	High
11	<i>Kutub as-Sunan al-Arba'ah</i> (كتب السنن الأربعة)	4.11	High
12	<i>Kitab 'Umdat al-Ahkam</i> (كتاب عمدة الأحكام)	4.09	High
13	Selected al-Hadith according to the circumstances of students	4.00	High
14	Al-Hadith chosen by students themselves to memorize	2.90	Very Low

Al-Arba'in an-Nawawiyyah is a prominent work worthy of the special attention it receives from Islamic scholars especially in the field of al-Hadith (Jannatul Husna and Fauzi 2011, 161). The institutions that offer al-Hadith courses have been using this work extensively as a source of reference⁴². Maahad Darul Hadis, Alor Setar, Kedah which offers al-Hadith memorization courses has also made this book a content that needs to be memorized within a year⁴³. Indeed, *al-Arba'in an-Nawawiyyah* has a comprehensive al-Hadith arrangement and covers most aspects of life as a Muslim. The moderate number of al-Hadith in it is also very suitable to be memorized and completed within a certain period of time before going for the more advanced books. These special factors contribute to the consensus of most respondents who agreed that *al-Arba'in an-Nawawiyyah* is the most suitable content for al-Hadith memorization by *tahfiz* school students.

The al-Hadith memorization syllabus for students at the Islamic University of Madinah has been selected from the five parts of *Kutub as-Sittah*, namely *Sahih Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim*, *Sunan Abu Daud*, *Sunan Tirmidhi*, *Sunan al-Nasa'i*, and *Sunan Ibn Majah*⁴⁴. These books are divided according to semesters, starting with *Sahih Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim* in the early stages. Supported by the literature, these two books are indeed suitable to be memorized in the initial stage of memorizing al-Hadith. This explains the high rating from the respondents for these items.

The next finding is about the method of memorizing al-Hadith. A total of nine items were outlined for the respondents' evaluation. A significant finding is on the item "*tasmi'* method or recitation of memorization to teachers", the only item with a

⁴² Fauzi et. al., *Pengajian hadith di Malaysia: tokoh, karya dan institusi*, p.73-76.

⁴³ Qutrennada and Ahmad Yunus, "Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Hadith di Maahad Darul Hadis Alor Setar, Kedah," p.135.

⁴⁴ Muhammad Arif et. al., "Pendekatan hafazan hadis di Universiti Islam Madinah," p.79.

“very high” level of agreement among the nine items. See Table 4 for the numerical findings on al-Hadith memorization methods.

Table 4: Findings on Methods of al-Hadith Memorization

No.	Item	Mean	Level of Agreement
1	<i>Tasmi'</i> method	4.53	Very High
2	Method of understanding al-Hadith description before memorizing	4.35	High
3	Any method that suits students' comfort	4.19	High
4	Ordinary repetition method	4.11	High
5	Method of memorizing through writing	4.10	High
6	The chunking method	3.95	Moderate
7	Method of scratching or repetition of 60 times by taking turns opening and closing the eyes while marking the scratch paper	3.89	Moderate
8	Method of photographic memory or repetition of 200 to 600 times by reading and writing as well as focusing on the text until it could be illustrated in the mind	3.56	Moderate
9	Method of memorizing while walking	3.47	Low

The *tasmi'* method is recognized as effective in almost all reported studies on *tahfiz* students. Such studies have clearly proven the effectiveness of this method, hence supporting the findings of this study. Abdul Hafiz et al. (2003) report that the *tasmi'* method is the best and most famous method in memorizing al-Quran as agreed by students who memorize as well as teachers who teach memorization⁴⁵. In the context of al-Hadith memorization, the data shows that the respondents strongly agreed that the same method for memorizing al-Quran can also be implemented for memorizing al-Hadith. Although the content of al-Hadith and the verses of al-Quran

⁴⁵ Abdul Hafiz et. al., “Keberkesanan kaedah hafazan di Pusat Tahfiz,”p.149-150.

are not exactly similar, both are in Arabic which requires the teacher's evaluation on its accuracy and manner of articulation. Apart from that, *tahfiz* school students have also become accustomed to using *tasmi'* in memorizing al-Quran. Hence, they have mastered and know the best way in preparing themselves to recite their memorization before their teachers. Therefore, due to these similarities, the *tasmi'* method is suitable to be implemented in memorizing al-Hadith by *tahfiz* school students and to be used as the main method.

This study also identifies the things that help memorization as an added value in the aspect of memorizing al-Hadith. A total of eight items were listed in this third construct for evaluation. The item "nutritious food and drinks" was the only item to receive a "very high" level of agreement. In addition, the other seven items were all evaluated with a "high" level of agreement (with a mean value exceeding 4.0), demonstrating the teachers' agreement on many things that can help memorization when put into practice.

Table 5: Findings on Things that Help Memorization

No.	Item	Mean	Level of Agreement
1	Nutritious food and drinks	4.56	Very High
2	Test or examination	4.49	High
3	Regular advice and motivation	4.44	High
4	Al-Hadith memorization competition	4.21	High
5	Adequate facilities for memorizing activity	4.18	High
6	Reward or present for students who successfully memorize certain targeted amounts	4.18	High
7	Comfortable place to memorize	4.11	High

8	Different atmosphere or environment to memorize	4.02	High
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The item “nutritious food and drinks” was evaluated as the most significant among things that can help students to memorize, recording a “very high” level of approval. This data coincides with the discussion of previous studies on the growing and extensive relationship between nutrition and memory. Food and drinks are proven to have a significant relationship with memory performance⁴⁶. A child's memory ability is influenced by elements such as iron, vitamins, minerals, proteins, as well as negative elements such as preservatives and excess sugar and salt. Besides inhibiting growth and health, lack of nutrients, vitamins, and certain elements also impairs thinking ability and memory. In addition, intake of nutritious food and drinks is also emphasized as one of the things that improve students’ memory in the context of *tahfiz* students^{47 48}, although not explained as the main findings. The importance of this factor is supported by the majority of respondents, which was almost 90 percent, who agreed with the importance of food nutrition in boosting memory⁴⁹. Hence, as confirmed from a scientific point of view, this factor should be taken seriously in order to maximize students’ achievement in al-Hadith memorization.

E. Conclusion

This study focuses on al-Hadith memorization in the context of the current *tahfiz* education. Al-Hadith memorization is proposed as a complementary element in the *tahfiz* curriculum to the extent that students need to study both al-Quran and al-Hadith to master al-Quran knowledge comprehensively. Al-Quran and al-Hadith are closely related, therefore a deeper understanding in both knowledge will be able to produce a high-quality generation of *huffaz*. This idea is supported with data collected from religious teachers in *tahfiz* schools in Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya regarding the suitable contents and methods of memorizing al-Hadith for *tahfiz* school students.

This study brings up three main points for discussion. Firstly, the idea is to propose an al-Hadith element in the *tahfiz* education system. The current *tahfiz* education in Malaysia is branched into four streams, termed Science *Tahfiz*, Turath *Tahfiz*, Dini *Tahfiz*, and Skills *Tahfiz*. Incorporating al-Hadith is a good alternative to widen opportunities for *tahfiz* students for a brighter future. However, *tahfiz* education should not be limited to al-Hadith element as an additional choice in the system. Indeed, this idea of al-Hadith *Tahfiz* is more essential to strengthen the

⁴⁶ Wan Muhammad Fahmi Bin Wan Yusoff, “Peranan riyādoḥ dalam meningkatkan kualitas hafalan al-Quran (Kajian di kalangan mahasiswa darul quran jakim kuala kubu baru Selangor, Malaysia)” (Doctoral thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, 2017), p. 119-122, <http://repository.uinsu.ac.id/3502/1/PDF.pdf>.

⁴⁷ Abdul Hafiz et. al., “Keberkesanan kaedah hafazan di Pusat Tahfiz,” p.160.

⁴⁸ Shahrulkarnain, “Program sijil tahfiz Al-Qur'an Darul Quran JAKIM-Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia,” p.102.

⁴⁹ Abdul Hafiz et. al., “Sistem Pembelajaran dan Kaedah Hafazan al-Quran yang Efektif,” p.222.

knowledge of al-Quran. Secondly, this study also emphasizes the importance of the memorization method in learning al-Hadith. The beauty of this method is students will attempt to understand what is learned through repetition. This form of memory-training also plays an imperative role in brain development, hence is a very popular method in Islamic pedagogy. Thirdly, the discussion of this research is centred on its findings regarding the contents and methods of al-Hadith memorization, as evaluated by religious teachers from *tahfiz* schools.

Most respondents agreed that al-Hadith is best to be memorized in the form of perfect *sanad* and *matan*. However, al-Hadith memorization also depends on certain aspects, such as the students' ability, the time allocated, and the range of syllabus to finish. The book *al-Arba'in an-Nawawiyyah* has been chosen as the most ideal content among some other proposed al-Hadith books. The *tasmi'* method is deemed the most suitable method to be practised by *tahfiz* students in memorizing al-Hadith as it is also the method mostly utilized in memorizing al-Quran. The role of nutritious food and drinks is also one of the added values highlighted in this research as the things that can be helpful to students for memorization. These core points should be taken into consideration by concerned authorities including teachers, administrators, and policy makers in deciding the best for *tahfiz* students specifically, and for education in general.

The findings and discussion of this study can be regarded as a basis for further studies on al-Hadith memorization for *tahfiz* school students in the reality of the current education. Hopefully, this encouragement will add a new scope of discussion on al-Hadith teaching and learning in the literature. This study focused on Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya as the locations of study based on certain justifications, with the top one being no reports on al-Hadith memorization in the syllabus for *tahfiz* students at these locations. However, other states such as Kelantan and Terengganu also have excellent development in *tahfiz* education. Therefore, this study suggests further research to be conducted in other locations to broaden the findings and discussion in this area as well as to contribute to producing more excellent *huffaz* as the human capital of our country.

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