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PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL IN THE PRACTICE OF QURANIC RECITATION AND MEMORIZATION

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the dimensions of *purification of the soul* in the practice of recitation and *memorization* of the Qur'an as part of spiritual development and Muslim character building. *Purication of the soul* refers to the Islamic concept of self-purification, focusing on cleansing the heart from negative traits and cultivating noble character. Using a qualitative library research approach, this study analyzes primary and secondary sources related to *purication of the soul*, Qur'anic education, and Islamic education. The findings reveal that *recitation* and *memorization* practices embody key dimensions of *perication of the soul*, including sincerity, patience, discipline, (self-struggle), humility, (awareness of Allah), and steadfastness. Continuous recitation, memorization, and revision of the Qur'an strengthen spiritual awareness, deepen one's relationship with Allah SWT, and foster positive character. Therefore, *recitation* and *memorization* serve not only as Qur'anic learning activities but also as effective means of self-purification and moral development.

INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an serves as the fundamental reference for all Islamic teachings. It acts as a compass for navigating life a criterion distinguishing truth from falsehood and a guide for humanity in living both this worldly life and the Hereafter. It is a revelation entrusted to the Prophet Muhammad. Beyond containing guidance on law and acts of worship, it embodies educational, moral, social, and spiritual values designed to ensure that human beings remain faithful, God-fearing, and of noble character. Consequently, a Muslim's relationship with the

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Qur'an must extend beyond mere reading and comprehension; it requires the internalization and practical application of its values in daily life. In the tradition of Islamic education, engagement with the Qur'an manifests through various activities, including recitation the refinement of recitation memorization understanding its meaning and practicing its teachings. Among these forms of engagement, and have become particularly popular and widespread within Muslim communities. Various Islamic educational institutions—ranging from Qur'an education centers, and Islamic boarding schools to Islamic universities—have incorporated recitation and memorization as vital components of their curricula. Furthermore, the recent emergence of dedicated memorization houses, memorization boarding schools, and memorization programs across various institutions reflects a growing awareness among Muslims regarding the importance of preserving the Qur'an through precise recitation and robust memorization. recitation of the Qur'an is a progressive practice aimed at refining and beautifying one's recitation of the Qur'an. This activity seeks to ensure that the recitation aligns with the rules of (proper recitation), (points of articulation), and the characteristics of the letters as established by scholars of (recitation styles). The primary objective of recitation is to preserve the purity of Quranic recitation, thereby avoiding errors that could alter the meaning of the verses. Meanwhile, memorization Al-Qur'an is the process of memorization. its verses systematically so that they are retained in memory and can be recited even without a physical copy of the Quran. The practice of (Quranic memorization) has been a tradition passed down since the time of the Prophet (PBUH) and his Companions as a means of preserving the authenticity of the Quran from the past into the future.

Although (refining recitation) and memorization are often understood merely as activities focused on the ability to read and memorize the Quran, in reality, both activities possess far broader dimensions. The process of improving recitation and memorizing the Quran involves more than just cognitive aspects; it also touches upon a person's affective and spiritual dimensions. In practice, those who engage in recitation and memorization are required to cultivate patience, perseverance, discipline, sincerity, and self-control. These values are crucial to the process of soul cultivation known in Islam as purification of the soul.

Purification of the soul is a fundamental and vital concept in Islamic teachings, as it is closely linked to the effort of purifying the soul from various spiritual ailments and negative traits. Etymologically, the word purification derives from the root which signifies purity, cleanliness, growth, and development. From an Islamic perspective, purification of the soul is not merely about cleansing the soul of common human vices such as ostentation, envy, arrogance, self-admiration, and an excessive love for worldly life but also about cultivating praiseworthy qualities such as sincerity, patience, gratitude, reliance on God, humility, and steadfastness. Thus, purification of the soul constitutes a process of spiritual education aimed at shaping individuals who possess a balance between their physical, intellectual, and spiritual aspects.

The importance of purification of the soul is emphasized in the Quran for instance, in Surah Ash-Shams, verses 9–10. It states therein that those who purify their souls are truly successful, while those who corrupt them are truly at a loss. This verse demonstrates that human

success in life is determined not only by material and intellectual achievements but also by spiritual quality and the purity of the soul. Consequently, education in Islam does not aim solely to foster intellectual intelligence in individuals, but also to cultivate spiritual awareness and good moral character. In the context of Quranic education, (improving recitation) and (memorization) serve as effective means to achieve the goal of (purification of the soul). This is because the process of intense engagement with the Quran significantly impacts an individual's character and behavior. The continuous repetition of Quranic verses fosters inner tranquility, heightens spiritual awareness, and strengthens the bond between the servant and Allah SWT. Furthermore, the process of memorizing the Quran—which demands consistency and perseverance—cultivates self-control and builds a disciplined character.

The proliferation of Quranic recitation) and memorization institutions in Indonesia demonstrates a growing public awareness regarding the importance of Quranic education in nurturing a high-quality generation. However, the primary focus often remains on quantitative aspects—such as the volume of memorization, the number of (parts) completed, and recitation quality—while the spiritual dimensions inherent in the process frequently receive inadequate attention. Consequently, the success of these programs is often gauged solely by academic achievements, overlooking the extent to which the process contributes to character building and the purification of the learners' souls.

Yet, from an Islamic perspective, successful engagement with the Quran is measured not merely by the amount of memorization or the beauty of recitation, but also by the behavioral changes and spiritual qualities that emerge as a result of that engagement. Ideally, a Quran memorizer should not only be capable of reciting verses by heart but should also adopt the Quran as a guiding principle for life, reflected in their attitudes, actions, and moral character. In other words, recitation and memorization should serve as vehicles for personal transformation, leading to the development of individuals who are closer to Allah SWT and who maintain better social relationships with their fellow human beings. Studies regarding (recitation improvement) and (memorization) of the Qur'an are not new. Many researchers have examined these topics, focusing on areas such as learning methods, factors contributing to successful memorization, strategies for enhancing recitation quality, and the impact on students' academic achievement. However, research specifically addressing recitation and memorization from the perspective of (purification of the soul) remains relatively limited. This is significant given that the spiritual aspect is a crucial dimension distinguishing Qur'anic education from other forms of education. Therefore, examining the dimension of purification of the soul within the practice of recitation and memorization is essential; it serves to enrich the body of Islamic scholarship while providing a more comprehensive understanding of the true purpose of Qur'anic education.

In light of the above, this study aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the purification of the soul dimensions inherent in the practice of recitation and memorization. Beyond discussing the technical aspects of Qur'anic instruction, this research highlights how recitation and memorization activities can serve as a means for the purification of the soul, character building, and spiritual development for Muslims. Consequently, the findings are expected to make a theoretical contribution to the advancement of Qur'anic and Islamic education.

Furthermore, they aim to offer valuable insights for Qur'anic educational institutions when designing curricula encouraging them to adopt a holistic approach that balances academic achievement with the cultivation of students' character and spirituality.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach and is conducted as library-based research. Its objective is to gain an in-depth understanding, analysis, and interpretation of the concept of (purification of the soul) within the practices of (Quranic recitation improvement) and (Quranic memorization), drawing upon relevant literature. Library research was selected because the data were gathered from various written references comprising both primary and secondary sources that are pertinent to the research theme. In this study, the primary data consists of the Qur'an, the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and classical as well as contemporary texts discussing (purification of the soul), Islamic education, and Qur'anic education. Key references include Ihya' Ulum al-Din by Imam Al-Ghazali, *Madarij al-Salikin* by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, and *At-Tibyan fi Adabi Hamalatil Qur'an by Imam An-Nawawi, alongside literature regarding (recitation improvement) and (memorization) of the Qur'an. Secondary data was obtained from scholarly books, journal articles, undergraduate theses, master's theses, doctoral dissertations, and previous research findings relevant to the topic.

Data collection was conducted through documentary study, involving the identification, gathering, reading, and analysis of literature concerning the concept of purification of the soul and the practices of recitation and memorization. The collected data was then categorized by theme—such as the concept of purification of the soul, the objectives of Qur'anic education, spiritual values within recitation and memorization, and the character-building dimensions that emerge during the Qur'anic learning process.

Data analysis in this study employed the content analysis method. This technique involves the systematic examination of document content to derive meanings, concepts, and relationships between variables relevant to the research focus. The process comprises data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. During the reduction stage, the researcher selected and focused on information aligned with the research themes. Subsequently, the data was described and analyzed through the perspective of purification of the soul within Islamic education. The final stage involved drawing conclusions regarding the dimensions of purification of the soul inherent in the practices of recitation and memorization. To ensure data validity, a source triangulation technique was employed by comparing various references—specifically the Qur'an, Hadith, scholarly texts, and relevant scientific research. This approach aims to achieve a high level of data credibility, thereby providing a comprehensive representation of the (purification of the soul) dimension within the practices of (improving recitation) and (memorization) of the Qur'an.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Concept of purification of the soul from an Islamic Perspective

This is a fundamental concept in Islam regarding the process of purifying the soul from various reprehensible traits and cultivating praiseworthy character. Etymologically, the term purification derives from the verb to purify-purifies, signifying purification, cleansing, and growth. From an Islamic spiritual perspective, purification of the soul entails more than just the effort to eliminate spiritual ailments; it is also a process of self-cultivation aimed at maintaining closeness to Allah SWT and embodying noble character.

The Qur'an elucidates the importance of purifying the soul in the words of Allah SWT found in Surah Asy-Syams, verses 9–10:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ٩ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ١٠

"Truly fortunate is the one who purifies their soul, and truly the loser is the one who corrupts it."

This verse demonstrates that human success stems not merely from intellectual ability or material achievements but is also shaped by spiritual quality and the purity of the soul. According to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, the purification of the soul is the primary path to attaining happiness in both this world and the Hereafter, as a pure heart is more receptive to the guidance of Allah SWT.

In the realm of Islamic education, purification of the soul stands as a vital objective for every learning process. Education is not simply about transmitting knowledge; it also involves cultivating a student's character, morals, and spirituality. Consequently, any educational activity capable of improving behavior and enhancing the quality of faith can be regarded as a means of achieving purification of the soul

2. Quranic Recitation Improvement and Memorization as a Means of Purifying the Soul

Quran recitation is the process of refining one's recitation of the Quran in accordance with the correct rules of (recitation rules) and (proper articulation points of letters). Meanwhile, quran memorization is the activity of systematically memorizing Quranic verses so that they are retained in one's memory. Both activities serve not only academic purposes such as developing reading and memorization skills but also embody profound spiritual values.

According to Imam An-Nawawi, a student of the Quran must be grounded in sincere intention, observe proper etiquette toward the Holy Book, and view the acts of reading and memorizing as a means to draw closer to the Creator. Thus, recitation and memorization are not merely technical exercises but also a continuous process of spiritual cultivation.

Intense engagement with the Quran through recitation and memorization can positively influence an individual's psychological and spiritual well-being. The Quran serves as both a guide for life and a remedy for a restless heart. Consequently, the more frequently an individual engages with the Quran, the greater the opportunity to cultivate good character and enhance their spiritual quality.

3. The Dimension of Sincerity in recitation and memorization Practices

The first dimension of (purification of the soul) found in the practices of (improving recitation) and (memorization) is sincerity . Sincerity serves as the fundamental basis for all acts of worship. A memorizer of the Qur'an is required to undertake this activity solely for the sake of Allah SWT, rather than for the praise or recognition of others.

Imam Al-Ghazali explains that sincerity is a state in which a person performs a deed without expecting anything other than the pleasure of Allah. In the process of memorization, a sincere intention is a crucial factor that determines the blessedness of the knowledge and the strength of one's memorization. Sincerity is also reflected in the earnestness of a or student in refining their recitation, even when it requires repeating the same mistakes time and again. A willingness to accept correction from the teacher and to keep learning without feeling shame demonstrates a process of purifying the soul from arrogance and ostentation.

4. The Dimension of Patience in the Practice of ricitation and memorization of the Qur'an

Memorizing is no easy task. One must repeat verses numerous times, maintain the memorization already achieved, and contend with various obstacles such as laziness, boredom, and forgetfulness. Consequently, patience constitutes a crucial dimension of *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul) cultivated through the practices of *tahsin* (improving recitation) and *tahfidz* (memorization).

According to Yusuf Al-Qaradhawi, patience is a fundamental asset in maintaining one's connection with the Qur'an, as the learning process demands a significant amount of time and a high level of consistency.

Practicing patience consistently within the context of memorization fosters a more mature and resilient personality, enabling one to persevere when facing the challenges of daily life.

5. The Dimensions of Discipline and Steadfastness

The practice of (Quranic memorization) requires a structured and consistent schedule. Those memorizing the Quran must allocate their time between acquiring new memorization and reviewing previously memorized portions. This routine indirectly fosters an attitude of discipline and steadfastness.

From an Islamic educational perspective, discipline is a crucial character trait, as it relates to an individual's ability to manage themselves. Meanwhile, signifies consistency in doing good, even when facing various challenges.

Through the memorization process, students learn that success cannot be achieved instantly; rather, it demands sustained effort and strong commitment.

6. Implications of (Religious Self-Reflection) on the Character Formation of Quran Memorizers

Based on the results of the study, the practice of recitation and memorization of the Quran significantly contributes to the formation of Muslim character. Values such as sincerity, Qualities such as patience, discipline, steadfastness, humility, and self-restraint cultivated during the learning process impact not only reading or memorization skills but also influence daily behavior.

This aligns with the goal of Islamic education, which emphasizes a balance between the mastery of knowledge and the cultivation of character. According to Al-Attas, the primary objective of Islamic education is to foster a "good man" an individual who possesses both knowledge and noble character.

Thus, recitation and memorization of the Qur'an can be understood as effective means of spiritual education for shaping a Muslim personality characterized by faith, good morals, and a profound awareness of one's responsibilities as a servant of Allah SWT.

DISCUSSION

Research findings indicate that the practices of (correcting Quranic recitation) and (Quranic memorization) are closely linked to the Islamic concept of (purification of the soul). These findings demonstrate that the activities of reading and memorizing the Quran are not merely oriented toward achieving technical proficiency; rather, they serve as a means for spiritual cultivation and character building. In other words, recitation and memorization constitute an educational process that addresses not only cognitive aspects but also affective and psychomotor dimensions related to an individual's behavior, morals, and spiritual quality.

From the perspective of Islamic education, the primary goal of education is not simply the transfer of knowledge, but also the shaping of character and the purification of the soul (the transfer of values). This aligns with the view of Al-Attas, who stated that Islamic education seeks to cultivate a "good human being" one who embodies a balance between knowledge, action, and character. Consequently, the success of recitation and memorization programs cannot be measured solely by the volume of memorization or the quality of recitation; it must also be assessed through changes in the learners' behavior and the enhancement of their spiritual quality. An analysis of the dimension of sincerity reveals that (improving recitation) and (memorization) serve as effective means for cultivating purity of intention. A Quranic memorizer must constantly renew their intention to ensure that the activity does not devolve into a pursuit of popularity or social recognition. In practice, maintaining sincerity is a challenging task, particularly when a memorized receives accolades or praise from the community. Consequently, the memorization process indirectly trains individuals to engage in continuous self-evaluation, ensuring they remain focused on the true objective: seeking the pleasure of Allah SWT. Furthermore, the dimension of patience inherent in recitation and memorization demonstrates that learning the Quran differs from conventional educational experiences. Memorization

requires intensive repetition, a significant investment of time, and a high level of consistency. Memorizers often encounter difficulties such as struggling to recall verses, maintaining previously memorized material, or balancing academic commitments with memorization activities. Such situations make patience a virtue that is continuously honed throughout the learning process. Thus, memorization not only results in strong memorization but also shapes a resilient character capable of navigating life's various challenges. The dimensions of discipline and steadfastness evident in recitation and memorization also have significant implications for character development. Routine review sessions demand effective time management, personal responsibility, and a high level of commitment. These habits foster an organized and productive lifestyle. In the context of character education, discipline serves as a key indicator of successful personality development, as it reflects an individual's ability to exercise self-control and adhere to established guidelines. Furthermore, the practices of tahsin and tahfidz can also be analyzed through the concept of (self-control). In the theory of purification of the soul (self-control), is a sincere effort to resist the urges of the desires that lead to evil. A Quran memorizer often struggles with laziness, the desire to procrastinate, technological distractions, and various factors that can reduce concentration on learning. The ability to overcome these obstacles demonstrates the process of self-control that is at the heart of purification of the soul. According to Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah, a person will not reach a high spiritual level without undergoing a continuous process of self control.

The findings of this study also indicate that intense interaction with the Quran can foster attitudes of humility and sufi meditation (respect for oneself). Respect for the Quran arises because someone who studies the Quran becomes increasingly aware of the vastness of Allah SWT's knowledge and their own limitations. This awareness fosters humility and distances oneself from intellectual and spiritual arrogance. Meanwhile, mintfulness develops through the appreciation of the verses of the Quran, which constantly remind humans of Allah SWT's supervision of every action they undertake. This condition has a positive impact on social behavior because individuals who practice mintfulness tend to be more careful in their actions and more responsible for every decision they make.

From an Islamic psychological perspective, recitation and memorization of the Quran also influence mental health and peace of mind. Continuously reading and repeating verses of the Quran can provide a relaxing effect, improve concentration, and reduce anxiety levels. This demonstrates that the Quran serves not only as a source of guidance for life but also as a means of spiritual therapy that helps humans achieve emotional and psychological balance. Therefore, Thus, the processes of (improving recitation) and (memorization) can be viewed as forms of spiritual education that have a multidimensional impact on individual development.

In the context of Qur'anic education in Indonesia, the findings of this study offer significant implications for recitation and memorization institutions. To date, the majority of Qur'anic education programs have focused primarily on meeting memorization targets and reading proficiency, even though spiritual aspects and character building are equally important objectives. Therefore, Qur'anic educational institutions need to integrate the values of (purification of the soul) into the entire learning process whether through character guidance, the strengthening of spiritual motivation, or the exemplary conduct of teachers and mentors.

Consequently, it is evident that the practices of recitation and memorization play a highly strategic role in realizing the holistic goals of Islamic education. Through these processes, learners not only acquire the ability to read and memorize the Qur'an but also undergo a process of spiritual purification. This is reflected in the development of a character defined by sincerity, patience, discipline, steadfastness, humility, and a constant awareness of being under the watchful gaze of Allah SWT.

Ultimately, these values serve as the fundamental basis for shaping Muslim individuals who possess integrity and noble character, and who are capable of making positive contributions to society.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and analysis, it can be concluded that the practices of (improving Quranic recitation) and (Quranic memorization) are closely linked to the Islamic concept of (purification of the soul). recitation and memorization serve not only as means to enhance one's ability to recite and memorize the Quran but also as vehicles for spiritual cultivation, playing a vital role in the purification of the soul and the character building of a Muslim. Intensive engagement with the Quran—through continuous recitation, memorization, and review—can positively influence an individual's personality development and spiritual quality.

Research findings indicate that the practices of (improving recitation) and (memorization) of the Qur'an embody several dimensions of (purification of the soul): sincerity, patience, discipline, steadfastness, striving against the self , humility, and spiritual vigilance. These dimensions are cultivated through a learning process that demands earnestness, self-control, consistency, and closeness to Allah SWT. These values not only support success in reading and memorizing the Qur'an but also contribute to the formation of noble character and behavior aligned with Islamic teachings.

Furthermore, the practices of recitation and memorization have significant implications for the character development and spiritual well-being of learners. This continuous process fosters religious awareness, enhances inner peace, strengthens the relationship with Allah SWT, and shapes individuals who are more responsible and possess greater integrity. Consequently, recitation and memorization should be understood as integral parts of a holistic Islamic educational process—one that is not merely oriented toward cognitive aspects but also encompasses affective and spiritual dimensions.

Thus, Qur'anic educational institutions are expected to look beyond the mere achievement of memorization targets and recitation quality; they should also place greater emphasis on internalizing the values of purification of the soul throughout the entire learning process. Through this approach, Qur'anic education can optimally contribute to producing a Muslim generation that is not only proficient in the Qur'an but also possesses noble character and strong spirituality, and is capable of embodying Qur'anic values in both personal and social life.

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