

THE EVALUATION OF KINDERGARTEN'S TAHFIZH QURAN PROGRAMME IN BANDA ACEH, INDONESIA USING CIPP MODEL

Yunita Ningsih¹, Mazlina Che Mustafa², Ibrahim Hasyim³

¹)Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris Malaysia, y.ningsih@gmail.com

²) Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris Malaysia, Mazlina.cm@fpm.upsi.edu.my

³) Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris Malaysia, ibrahim@fsk.upsi.edu.my

Abstract

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation the Teaching Tahfizh Quran programme for kindergarten children using the Stufflebeam's Context, Input, Process and Product (CIPP) Evaluation Model. This qualitative approach study applied an explanatory design analysis of CIPP model in evaluating the two Islamic kindergartens in Aceh, Indonesia. Those kindergartens were selected as they have an intensive Tahfizh Quran Programme for early age children. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation then the data were analysed, interpreted descriptively. A semi-structured interview form and an observation form were used as data collection tools. Data were deployed to two teachers, two principals; two parents. Hence, two groups were observed during the teaching and learning process of Tahfizh Quran Programme. Ten children of the group were selected as the samples using a saturated sampling technique. The thematic analysis was selected, the findings for the context revealed that the physical infrastructure of kindergarten education institutions should be improved. Regarding the input dimension, it was found that the tahfizh curriculum has been well prepared, family factor and the individual differences of the children have been collaborated. Regarding the process dimension, it has emerged that studies the least done were the implementation of qualified home practices, assessment studies and the addition or removal of learning centers as needed. In the product dimension, the kindergarten principals and teachers have committed to develop a good communication with parents and communities either institutionally or non-institutionally. The results of the research supported theories dealing with tahfizh learning programme both theoretically and practically. Practically, children cognitive intelligence has been the newly positive achievement of being a huffazh in early age, memorizing Quran in kindergarten also improved the children ability in memorizing other knowledge, results of this research have given benefits to the tahfizh teachers, especially in guiding students to memorize Quran in an effective way. It encouraged students' awareness of memorizing Quran on Islamic Education development in kindergartens in Aceh province, Indonesia.

Keywords: Tahfizh Quran Learning Programme, CIPP, Islamic Kindergarten

I. INTRODUCTION

In the early days of Islam, the Quran was memorized for oral transmission out of necessity, due to the low levels of literacy. Later on, as Islam spread to non-Arabic societies, individuals not knowing Arabic also had to memorize the Quran for exact recall, and it was here that the potential for a divorce between meaning and form occurred. Yet, if one listens to the non-Arabic memorizers' recitation of the Quran, one might assume them to be competent speakers/users of Arabic: they recite fluently and with ease, following a near-native pronunciation and the lilt of the language. Some memorizers even recite the whole of the Quran within the period of 5 to 6 hours in Ramadan night prayers (1).

Stated that there are many positive impacts of memorizing Quran as Moslims who

have faith in the Quran as a reserve of great assistance and path for manhood with consideration of the ultimate revelation of God. Memorizing the Quran by heart can be said as encoding, storing and retrieving the text of Quran by practicing and reciting it again and again, a process known as Memorizing Quran (2). Memorizing Quran involves first encoding the text of Quran by giving it attention, storing it by maintaining the encoded information and then retrieving the information from memory stores.

One of the positive impacts of being the *huffazh* since early age is that she/he will become the best generation who will not lose the tie with their own trend, but also they are not stupid intellectually. It means the quality of human resources depends on the quality of education. Without having the Quran in the mind, it is believed that people in this era will not be

different from the ancient era, which is left behind, in both quality of life and the processes of its empowerments (3). God has given special privileges to the one who memorises the Quran in a number of ways in this world and hereafter. Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) said: "Whoever reads the Quran, memorise it and acts upon it, on the Day of Judgement he will be clad with a crown of light, its light is like the sunlight and his parents will be clad with two garments better than the whole world and whatever it contains (4).

From the above explanation it can be concluded that the definition of the ability to memorize the Quran in early age means the ability to preserve or preserve the Quran as a revelation of God through the process of absorbing the verses of the Quran in accordance with the rules of reading the Quran in mind so that it can remember and recite it back without seeing the text or text. Quran memorisers consist of native speakers of Arabic, non-native speakers of Arabic and non-Arabic speakers.

Recently, in Aceh province of Indonesia is not an exception among countries that care for early childhood at a relatively early stage. The efforts of private sector in building Islamic kindergartens showed an interest in kindergartens before the governmental sector. The enthusiasm in the *tahfizh* programme especially for children shows an increasing trend in Padang, a modelling city in developing Islāmic character for children. The purpose of this study was to investigate the *tahfizh* program trends development in early childhood in Padang(5). The *tahfizh* education is among the growing education that has gained attraction among Indonesians nowadays. The establishment of *tahfizh* schools by government and private sector is a clear sign that *tahfizh* education will start to fill mainstream education in Indonesia. The Indonesian Ministry of Education stated that in 2018, there are 305 kindergartens established in Aceh province, and half of the schools population have a special curriculum on *tahfizh* programme(6).

The reason of the parents' interest in memorizing Quran is inspired by the memorizing Quran live show in a television programme where some talented children the memorization of Quran fluently. Since 2013, the people interest in having their children as hafizh Quran were increased as they watched the programme featuring the talented children memorizing Quran without script and scenario. But, having the positive awareness towards memorizing the

Quran is inadequate in teaching the children in memorizing the Quran. Lack of parent's knowledge in how to memorise the holy book has encouraged them to send their children into the *tahfizh* schools(7).

In Banda Aceh municipality of Aceh Province, Indonesia where the researcher come from, Quran memorization has become an established tradition. Apart from individuals who memorize the Quran in their private time, there are those who memorize the Quran as full time *Raudhatul Athfal* (Islamic schools) students since early age in the kindergarten. Every year, hundreds of students 'graduate' as Hafizahullah—a title used for those who memorize a part or the whole chapter of the holy Quran.

Like virtually all other children growing up in Aceh, and inspired by the television *tahfizh* programme, the researcher have also have trained her five-years old son to memorize a few short chapters of the Quran for daily prayers and in aspects of school education and for the purpose of participating in the TV show. Fortunately, the researcher's son was selected to join the TV reality show. The TV programme has amazed the researcher as she saw the other children who memorized the whole chapters of the Quran. Since early childhood, the researcher has been wondered at the amount of text they have memorized and retained for years even when they didn't know the language. The researcher had always been surprised by memorizers' ability in remembering each words of the Quran, uninterrupted and rhythmical recitation of the Quran. The question that has always attracted the researcher attention was how they did it. Have they been born with special talent or had high intelligence for this feat? What has the method been applied behind their wonderful memorization ability?

As the result, the demands of Quran schools since early school age (4 to 6 years old) are getting higher in Aceh province. The tradition of memorising the Quran in the schools continues until today with the establishment of many formal and informal educational institutions, commonly known in Indonesia as *tahfizh* institutes. Various techniques of memorisation have been discovered and all come with the only aim to ensure that the Quran remain intact in the heart of its followers(8). Similarly, a study conducted by Hashim on student achievement of a *tahfizh* school which found student achievement has yet

to achieve the objective of memorizing the Quran smoothly, memorize the Quran and to understand the meaning of the verses(9). It was also found that *tahfizh* learning programme has a significant relationship with the achievement of memorization. This shows the importance of learning manners that apply appropriate and effective technique to ensure the quality of the memorization(10).

Concerning to the raised issues towards the *tahfizh* programmes in kindergarten schools in Aceh province, the focus of this study is on the evaluation of the *tahfizh* on kindergarten's Programme in Aceh, Indonesia related to the context, input, process and product evaluation (CIPP) under the perspectives of kindergarten institutions, students, parents and teachers.

Problems under Context Evaluation

This research began with barriers to the implementation of *tahfizh* Quran programme activities in the kindergartens based in Aceh province, such as the lack of facilities and infrastructure to support the *tahfizh* Quran Programme. Kindergarten's curriculum in Indonesian is developed and implemented from adults' points of view without considering children's interests and views as classroom teachers initiate most of the kindergarten activities. Since this newly *tahfizh* Quran programme has been running for a few years at kindergartens in Aceh province, there has been a need to evaluate the programme implementation in schools especially in kindergartens.

From the aspect of the context of the Quran memorization programme in the Integrated Islamic kindergarten in Banda Aceh among the problems, researcher observed the low level of memorization curriculum. School seemed not fully responsible for the memorization targeted curriculum of students entirely. A good learning curriculum for the *tahfizh* Quran programme should be achieved by all students. In this context, several factors certainly affected the presence of these problems, including the undetermined goals, the lack of adequate assets, the unclear mission and vision of the *tahfizh* Quran programme that have to be evaluated in this study. The Integrated Islamic kindergartens in Aceh mostly are having the *tahfizh* learning programme as preferred by the parents. The *tahfizh* learning programme activity require consistency, free times, teachers, a clear learning system, and must be carried out based on a clear programme.

Problems under Input Evaluation

The problems related to the input evaluation of *tahfizh* learning programme related in the decision-making of how facilities, infrastructures, human resources, and budget being determined and constituted to achieve the goal of the *tahfizh* learning programme education. *Tahfizh* teachers are the subjects of the learning programme. The teacher must be a person who is competent in the field of the *tahfizh* Quran but in fact, many teachers do not have linier competencies. While, the *tahfizh* Quran is part of religious knowledge, and therefore it should be noted to whom this responsibility is given. If the Integrated Islamic kindergarten is not supported by adequate human resources, the *tahfizh* Quran learning programme will be taught by the teacher who does not have competence in the field of *tahfizh* Quran. Thus, the researcher is interested to study how the method of *tahfizh* Quran carried out at some Islamic schools in Aceh, Indonesia. It involves the effort of teachers in improving the ability by using the method, supporting and inhibiting factors of the success of the *tahfizh* Quran process in early childhood. This is the initial cause of the emergence of the problems such as the lack of professional teachers with perfect teaching methods, so that results in research achievement of memorization are reached as targets. The achievement of the target itself can be evaluated in examinations or monthly, mid-semester and end-semester evaluations(11).

Problems under Input Evaluation

The problems related to the process evaluation examines the extent to which a programme is operating as intended by assessing on-going programme operations and determining whether the target population is being served. Unfortunately, the teaching and learning from home processes are not working as it is supposed to be. Many learners did not abide by the regulations to study from home. Family is everything for everyone, including children. Family is the first and the main part where the children are raised and grew up with. Family is a place to educate, nurture, socialize, and develop function of the family members so they can run their roles in society, also to give satisfaction and a healthy environment to achieve a prosperous family. A family must be able to empower each family member in achieving a common goal, which in this case is the on-going activity of

teaching and learning during quarantine at home. The learning process of many schools is not effective due to the absence of children from class. Some of the students are still difficult to wake up early in the morning which often affects their mood to join the class.

The parents should be aware that the effective learning process does not only depend on the teachers and teaching methods alone. Instead, the aspects of student's readiness and personality are the key element to the success and effectiveness of this education programme(12). The limitations of parental monitoring, parents' bustle and the lack of time for their children to gather with their parents, non-formal education is handed over to the trusted institution to guide their religious learning and memorizing Quran for children in early childhood. It is difficult to embed or teach children to memorise al- Quran.

Problems under Product Evaluation

In term of the evaluation product of the *tahfizh* learning programme, some problems have been observed related to the expected achievements of students. It was found that still many students were missing some words in memorizing the Quran (when memorizing independently), it will be very difficult to be straightened and corrected, because it is already memorized. Supposedly, problems of student's skills in memorizing Quran by constantly being accompanied by repeated memorization greatly affects the short-term and long-term memory of students.

Furthermore, another problem that related the attitude of students was the lack of interest of kindergarten's students who enrolled in the *tahfizh* programme. While having the students' interest is essential to ensure the effective learning of the *tahfizh* programme. A research on how to increase the interest of *tahfizh* students in joining the *tahfizh* programme could indirectly give recommendations to the Islamic kindergartens to develop their curriculum entrance evaluation to be more comprehensive. Questions about service and programmes quality are now even more plausible, considering that most of the policy texts produced since 2003 confidently quotes and emphasizes the benefits of kindergarten's *tahfizh* programmes for both children's individual development and their future life (Ministry of National Education, 2005).

In addition, another problem that influences the achievement of the kindergarten students in memorising the Quran is due to the limitations of parental monitoring on their children's education. Parents' bustle and lack of time for their children caused many parents have to hand over their children's education to trusted institutions to guide their religious learning and memorizing Quran for children in early childhood. Thus, it is important to evaluate the parents' role of the *Tahfizh* Quran programme carried out at kindergartens in Aceh province, Indonesia as the parents' participation is necessary in order to make their children ready in their future trip(13).

II. Methodology

The data presented in this paper were based on the research observation in the two most favourable Islamic kindergartens in Banda Aceh municipality of Aceh Province. A purposive proportionate stratified random sampling involving a total of 8 respondents were involved in this study whereas two teachers, two principals, two parents were interviewed and two students were observed as the population of the study. All the respondents were from the two selected Islamic kindergartens situated in Banda Aceh, Aceh Province.

The data were collected by observation worksheet. The observation sheet was developed based on the review of literature from previous studies and was validated by a group of early childhood experts and practitioners. As the study was based on *tahfizh* evaluation programme at kindergarten level using CIPP model, the design of the study was qualitative in nature and it was basically a case study. The researchers, via document analysis, examined the context of the kindergarten system, including objectives, missions and goals of the school for the context evaluation model.

Furthermore, for exploring the processes and inputs, the researchers did two class observations. In addition, to assess the product value and to compare it with the inputs and process, the researchers developed a set of observation checklist to conduct document analysis. A semi structured interviews was also conducted for teachers, heads and principal. In accordance with research ethics, the researchers obtained permission from the heads of the institutions to conduct

research. For maintaining authenticity of data, interviews were audio recorded for better interpretation and analysis.

III. Result and Recommendations

Results from the CIPP evaluation tools found that the objectives of the *Tahfizh* Quran curriculum for kindergartens are consistent with its context to the ability in memorizing Quran in kindergarten level, as expected by the parents. The teachers' views were more detailed and specifically related to the needs of the Indonesian society. Moreover, the participants' responses differed on the contribution of the *Tahfizh* Quran teaching methods for kindergartens in meeting the educational needs of the children and the developmental needs of the parents, which was moderate. The results also uncovered the lack of interest in the application of kindergarten specifications of *tahfizh* programme activities. The results also revealed that the curriculum processes contribute in meeting the needs of the children in easily memorizing the Quran. The analysis revealed the absence of the role of the family in the curriculum, where it was limited to the message that informs the parents about the weekly plan or announcement of a trip only.

The study aims to find out how the *tahfizh* curricula in Indonesian kindergarten are correlated with the CIPP model. With regard to the first research question that asks to what extent the objectives of the kindergarten *tahfizh* curriculum are correlated to the Stufflebeam's context, the results of the two tools (content analysis of interview and class observation) are moderately correlated with the objectives of the syllabus context. The researcher attributes this result to the failure of any educational curriculum that was not built on a learning matrix as described by Al-Amir (2011), who states that the educational matrix is shaped in the form of rows or columns in directly related formats to measure the achievement of quality standards, to link the message and goals to learning outcomes. The matrix includes concepts associated with learning vocabulary and curriculum elements and performance indicators for learning outcomes. The curriculum did not take into account the different needs of children and the needs of society completely.

This finding is in line with the findings of Lin and Ching (2012), which used the Stufflebeam model to evaluate the kindergarten curriculum and discovered that the goals of

kindergarten curricula in Taiwan researcher not consistent with the context. This indicates that it is important for curriculum designers to be aware of the context criteria (determining the principles to be taken into account when designing and building the curriculum; understanding the environment surrounding the curriculum; determining the cultural, political, economic, and educational conditions of the surrounding environment; and identifying the needs of children) in the objectives of the curriculum.

Concerning the second question seeks to answer whether inputs of the *tahfizh* programme approach to kindergartens could contribute in achieving the educational needs of kindergarten children and the developmental needs of Indonesian society using the Stufflebeam model. Results demonstrate that participant' perceptions toward this issue researcher moderate. Their responses varied between the poor, good, and satisfied grades. Furthermore, the results of the interview coincide with the results of the classroom observation, related to the lack of teaching competencies and the professional development of kindergarten teachers. The curriculum fails to address the characteristics of children and their problems, and this is consistent with the findings of previous studies that affirmed the need to provide inputs to build rich content curricula that matches the recent trends of learning in satisfying children's physical, emotional, and social needs, which require a climate conducive to better interaction between children through the provision of all material and technological tools.

This indicates that inputs alone are not enough to ensure good outputs. In some cases, this depends on the processes that take place in kindergarten and on the qualifications of teachers as we. Researcher, it remains necessary to adhere to national standards in construction, areas, tools, playgrounds, management, organization, and teachers. This is consistent with Danton (2002), who pointed to the development of three criteria for modern kindergartens: qualified teachers, the proportion of teachers for children, and the size of the classroom. In addition, there is a sore need to strengthen *tahfizh* programmes in kindergartens with appropriate material support and the Eckert Scale of Modern Kindergarten Standards. The context, inputs, and processes interact to produce outputs, and any defect in one of them negatively affects the outputs; so, there must be organized processes led by the kindergarten administration and teachers to work

in a team with different people, so that the required outputs can be obtained.

Concerning the domain of “process” and its correlation to the CIPP model, the results revealed that the curriculum focused on the processes through activities, academic teaching, play and evaluation, and the family relationship in kindergarten. The results of the interview revealed the extent to which curricula processes contributed to meeting the needs of *tahfizh* programme. The results of the analysis of principals’ interviews highlighted a significant absence of child’s development assessment activities, limited contact with parents, and lack of interest in gaming activities, and much focus on traditional teaching methods of memorizing Quran. This is in line with Sobha (2011) study, which stated that the curriculum of self-learning was free from the development of creativity to reach the higher levels of thinking.

In general, it is concluded that kindergarten activities are mostly affected by the quality of inputs, especially human inputs such as qualified teachers, experience, and management. This concentrates efforts on developing curriculum inputs to reach desired outcomes through curriculum processes, especially in the development of kindergarten teacher preparation programmes and in-service training programmes.

With regard to the final domain “product” and how did it contribute in achieving the educational needs of kindergarten children and the developmental needs of Indonesian society, results revealed a difference in the degree of contribution of the curriculum outputs in meeting the needs of the children and the needs of the society between high, medium, and low. One of the most striking statements that reached the level of approval among the sample members is the ability of the curriculum to provide children with some values, especially religious, cognitive skills, and the development of readiness to continue to the higher *tahfizh* school; whereas, there researcher some statements that had been approved with medium degree or researcher totally rejected such as statements that dealt with the ability of the curriculum to develop socio-emotional intelligence, observation, experimentation, and research decreased.

In the light of the results of the present study, the researcher has suggested a number of recommendations. First, the teaching learning of the *Tahfizh* Quran for children must be in line with their psychological and the developmental

needs. Second, as the results of the study revealed a nonconformity of the curriculum specifications to the specifications of the curriculum adopted in the governmental kindergartens and to the lack of professional development of the teachers and shortcoming competencies of the teachers, the researcher suggests that the Ministry of Education has to set up standards for kindergartens on which the curricula must be evaluated and developed.

Third, it is recommended to make kindergarten adapt the *tahfizh* curriculum based on learning basic skills based on the requirements of the growth of children and their emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual needs and development. Fourth, the kindergarten should carry out continuous evaluations of the *tahfizh* programme activity related to the child’s growth from kindergarten to school. Fifth, the kindergarten should adapt the *Tahfizh* Quran Curriculum by learning the basic skills and the requirements of the growth of children and their needs for emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual development through the application of strategies and activities. Sixth, kindergarten teachers and principals must take care for assessing children for knowledge, skills, and different directions to create a fun and communicative of the Quran memorization activities.

Still another issue connects memorization and learning styles: In recent years, it has come to the attention of researchers, teachers and even students themselves that memorizing Quran on daily basis can be extremely valuable in helping learners to become aware of their thought processes. As one can see from these suggestions for the content of the memorization activity, the possibilities for the daily practice are nearly endless in terms of its ability to offer the students a long term memory in memorizing Quran. As is we-known, learning styles differ greatly from individual to individual, and it is important for students to become aware of their own type of learning style since this will enable them to become more autonomous, self-directed and responsible for developing their own proficiency. Further, being cognizant of one’s learning strategies in memorizing Quran has been linked to successful performance: the more one is aware of the reasons for his or her behaviour based on the Quranic value, the better the chance that person has of amending that behaviour to suit his or her incoming personal educational goals. Work with various memorization methods

can greatly enhance the student's opportunity to reflect on his or her thoughts about learning style and memorization.

One further point should be mentioned in connection with learning strategies and memorization of the Holy Quran. Just because an individual may not be consciously aware of his or her style of memorization does not mean that he or she has not developed a personal strategy. In this regard it is highly recommended that students and teachers both make an effort to bring these personal strategies to explicit awareness so that they can be identified, classified, analysed and then made public so that the Muslim world can make use of its own rich tradition of memorization.

Result analysis of this research led to several conclusions, i.e.: The context complies with the standard context on four evaluation aspects: curriculum, financing, learner, and parent role. The result shows that the *Tahfizh* Quran programme has been included in local content curriculum at kindergarten. The goal of this programme is as a part of socialization and instruction from the Ministry of Religion of Indonesia. It is also to improve student competency on reading, writing, reciting, understanding, and practising the Holy Quran. The *Tahfizh* Quran programme implementation has been a part of the curriculum to get students to comprehend, to live, and to practice Quran. Evaluation results conclude that the programme has satisfied predetermined indicators as an evaluation standard. Semester and yearly programme indicators have been achieved. The evaluation results also show the obstacles in the implementation of learning programmes, which are the deficiencies in the number and skill of tutors, capability of the learners, limited capacity at the school to finance the programme, and limited infrastructure. Programme outputs have met the expectation and researcher supported by all stakeholders, showing that most children are able to memorize several surah in juz 30. Meanwhile some others are still under guidance. The *Tahfizh* programme implementation has affected students positively. They acquired specific knowledge on The Holy Quran, good attitude and akhlaq, and good recitation on several surahs.

Based on the results of the study, the researcher suggests that other studies be conducted to make a comparative study between the *Tahfizh* Quran programme in Indonesia and

similar curricula in other provinces or countries, to reveal the relationship of curriculum components with the needs of children and the needs of society. Furthermore, it is suggested to conduct a study to design a proposed *Tahfizh* Quran curriculum for kindergartens that meets the objectives of the various developmental needs of children and the developmental needs of the Indonesian society according to the standards of modern kindergarten. Also, future research is recommended to do comparative studies between the effectiveness of kindergartens that apply *tahfizh* programme on academic achievement, values, and skills of children.

This research reveals recommendations, i. e.: To effectively achieve the intended results of the programme, it is recommended that a teacher guides no more than 10 students. By doing this, a teacher could control the learning progress of each learner. Learner's reading-skill mapping should be done properly to determine the right programme level for each learner, whether in pre- tahsin, tahsin, pre- *tahfizh* or *tahfizh*. Teacher should collaborate with other teachers of other subjects and other parties to form *Tahfizh* Tutor Team at kindergarten. The School principle should conduct monthly mentorings for *Tahfizh* Teaching Team. This mentoring activity is essential to know the students' progress and teachers' competencies progress. Schools must develop conducive communication with parents and community, either institutionally or non-institutionally. The *Tahfizh* teacher must implement clinical method for students who are not fluent in reading The Quran yet.

All of these suggestions for memorizing the Holy Quran require continuous and rigorous research studies, conducted not only on already-established practices but also on the promising ideas to be found in Islamic studies, psychology, educational psychology, applied linguistics, and whatever field that may be relevant. Supporting professional-level regional and international conferences on the memorization of the Quran is perhaps the first step in this direction. It is perhaps premature to come to any firm conclusions as to the particular techniques that are most suitable for the memorization of the Quran without years of application studies on Quran memorization itself. Allah's Book no doubt has, among other characteristics, its own specific characteristics in content, meaning, style, structure, language, and minor spelling differences that accordingly deserve a specific,

we-designed model for reading and memorization. It is truly one of a kind text and should be treated only as such.

This study will be an example for future research studies on the systematic evaluation of quality education at school level. This study was aimed to evaluate the quality of education by implementing CIPP evaluation model. Through this research there are some recommendations for the principal, teachers and administration of the school for improving the quality of education at school level for improving the quality of education, we qualified and trained teachers may be hired. The overall *tahfizh* learning programme implementation in kindergarten may be conducive to learning and the most favourable *tahfizh* teaching method may be provided for effective learning. The result of this research can offer the teachers an alternative way in teaching *Tahfizh* Quran effectively. It can motivate them in providing a communicative learning curriculum of the Quran as expected by the parents and children. For the schools, the *tahfizh* programme can be embedded into the school's curriculum. For the parents, the result can be adopted by them in continuing the learning process at home to gain the maximum education process.

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