

## Scoping Review on the Benefits of Reciting, Listening and Memorising the Quran

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### Abstract

This scoping review examines the benefits of Quranic engagement, encompassing recitation, listening, and memorisation. From a pool of 1,739 articles, 21 relevant studies were analysed. Recitation of the Quran provides solace and inner peace while listening to it reduces stress and promotes overall well-being. Memorisation enhances cognitive abilities and fosters a deeper understanding of Islamic principles. Quranic engagement also yields social benefits by preserving heritage and fostering Muslim unity. These practices contribute to holistic well-being, personal growth, and community cohesion. Further research is needed to elucidate the underlying mechanisms and explore how Quranic engagement facilitates these benefits.

Keywords: Scoping review; benefits; reciting; memorizing Quran

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21834/e-bpj.v8i25.4826>

### 1.0 Introduction

The practices of reciting, listening to, and memorising the Quran are not mere rituals but hold profound significance and play a pivotal role in the lives of millions of believers around the globe, particularly within the Islamic faith. These practices are deeply embedded in the religious and cultural fabric of societies where Islam thrives, shaping individuals' daily lives, spiritual experiences, and communal bonds (Ahmad, 2017; Al-Mahmood et al., 2015).

The Quran, considered the central religious text of Islam, holds immense significance for Muslims. It is believed to be the word of God as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad through the angel Gabriel. The Quran is composed of 114 chapters or surahs, covering various aspects of life, including moral guidance, legal principles, and spiritual teachings. Muslims view the Quran as a source of divine guidance, a means of seeking closeness to God, and a blueprint for leading a righteous life (Al Salem et al., 2023).

### 2.0 Literature Review

For devout Muslims, the act of reciting the Quran goes beyond the simple reading of words on a page. It is an intimate connection with the divine, a means to engage directly with the word of God, and a source of solace, guidance, and inspiration. Whether recited individually or in congregational settings, the recitation of the Quran carries a profound spiritual weight, stirring the hearts and minds of believers and fostering a deep sense of devotion and reverence (Ahmad, 2017).

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The practice of reciting the Quran involves the oral recitation of its verses, with a particular focus on correct pronunciation, melody, and rhythm. Muslims engage in recitation individually and collectively through personal reflection and congregational prayers. Similarly, the practice of listening to the Quran holds great significance. Muslims often listen to the recitation of the Quran during prayers, religious gatherings, and various occasions to seek solace, inspiration, and a deeper connection with their faith.

Similarly, the practice of listening to the Quran holds immense value and serves as a transformative experience for Muslims. The captivating melodies, mesmerising intonations, and recitations performed by skilled reciters evoke a range of emotions and create a powerful ambience that enables individuals to immerse themselves in the profound beauty of divine revelation. Listening to the Quran, whether during personal contemplation or communal gatherings, is regarded as a means to seek tranquillity, gain spiritual nourishment, and establish a profound connection with the divine (Al-Mahmood et al., 2015). Moreover, the act of memorising the Quran, known as Hifz, represents a deeply revered and highly regarded practice within the Islamic tradition. Memorisation involves committing the entire Quran to memory, word-for-word, and preserving it in one's mind and heart. This ancient practice ensures the accurate preservation of the divine text, passing it down from one generation to another and safeguarding it against any distortion or alteration. It is seen as a sacred endeavour, reflecting unwavering dedication, discipline, and a profound commitment to preserving the Quran's teachings (Ahmad, 2017; Al-Mahmood et al., 2015).

The significance of these Quranic practices extends beyond religious devotion and personal spiritual growth. They are deeply intertwined with the social and cultural fabric of Muslim communities. In countries such as Malaysia, where Islam holds a central position, the practices of reciting, listening to, and memorising the Quran are not only religious acts but also cultural traditions that shape the daily lives and collective identity of individuals. Mosques, Islamic educational institutions, and Quranic study centres are integral parts of the social landscape, serving as spaces for Quranic learning, recitation, and memorisation (Ahmad, 2017; Al-Mahmood et al., 2015).

The benefits associated with Quranic practices are multifaceted. First and foremost, these practices provide individuals with a deep connection with their faith, fostering spiritual growth and a sense of inner peace. The recitation and listening to the Quran have a soothing effect on the soul, offering comfort and solace during challenging times. The memorisation of the Quran instills discipline and focus and strengthens the individual's relationship with the divine text and its teachings (Aziz, 2014; Wahab et al., 2018). Furthermore, Quranic practices contribute to personal development by promoting language proficiency, cognitive skills, and concentration. Memorising the Quran requires individuals to exercise their memory, attention, and learning abilities. The recitation and listening to the Quran enhance language skills and phonetic awareness. Moreover, engaging with the Quranic text through these practices encourages critical thinking, reflection, and the application of moral values in everyday life (Memon et al., 2017; Saqib et al., 2017; Rasdi et al., 2020).

Despite the profound significance of Quranic practices, there remains a research gap in terms of a comprehensive exploration and synthesis of the existing literature on the benefits associated with the practices of reciting, listening to, and memorising the Quran and the types of journals that explore these benefits. While numerous studies have examined specific aspects of Quranic practices, such as their impact on mental health, cognitive development, or linguistic abilities, there is a need for a broader overview that encompasses all dimensions of these practices. Conducting a scoping review on this topic is crucial to map the available evidence, identifying knowledge gaps, and comprehensively understand the benefits of Quranic practices (Kadir et al., 2016; Syukri et al., 2021).

### **3.0 Objectives**

The scope of this scoping review will encompass studies conducted globally. By exploring the diverse range of benefits associated with the practices of reciting, listening to, and memorising the Quran, this review aims to contribute to the existing knowledge base and shed light on the benefits associated with the practices of reciting, listening to, and memorising the Quran. Through this exploration, the review aims to inform future research endeavours, guide educational practices, and potentially influence policy decisions related to the promotion and preservation of Quranic practices

### **4.0 Methodology**

The approach adopted for this scoping review is founded upon the comprehensive framework established by Arksey and O'Malley in 2005. This particular methodology serves as an effective tool to extensively explore and assess the abundance of evidence surrounding the diverse advantages linked to the acts of reciting, listening to, and memorising the Quran. By employing this method, we aim to provide a broad overview and analysis of the available literature pertaining to these practices. The framework comprises five distinct stages: identifying the key research questions, identifying relevant studies, meticulously selecting appropriate literature, systematically organising and analysing the gathered data, and ultimately synthesising and presenting the comprehensive findings obtained from this review. This systematic approach ensures a thorough and coherent examination of the topic.

#### *4.1 Stage 1: Identifying the Research Questions*

This scoping review is guided by the main research question, which was aimed to identify "what are the existing evidence on the benefits associated with the practices of reciting, listening to and memorising the Quran"

#### *4.2 Stage 2: Identifying the Relevant Studies*

The relevant studies related to the research questions were identified through the UiTM and Fatoni University Online Databases and Google Scholar. Six databases were used: SCOPUS, Web of Science (WoS), Willey Library, Cochrane Library, EBSCO-Medline, and Clinical Key. In addition, the grey literature was also identified and reviewed. The relevant studies involve peer-reviewed studies between

the years 2013 to 2023 due to the emerging evidence regarding the benefits of reciting, listening to, and memorising the Quran. This scoping review will highlight the benefits of reciting, listening to, and memorising the Quran and the types of journals that explore these benefits. The search terms were based on Medical Subject Heading (MeSH) guidelines, focusing on the keywords "Quran" AND "recitation" OR "memorisation" OR "listening" OR "reading."

### 4.3 Stage 3: Study Selection

The inclusion criteria of this scoping review are (i) full-text published research articles between 2013 to 2023, (ii) published in English; (iii) benefits for children aged five years old and above to older people. Articles other than the listed inclusion criteria and general articles for information or education purposes were excluded. Searching relevant studies from Google Scholar and the six UiTM and Fatoni University Online Databases resulted in 1739 articles and 1312 duplications. Screening of the title and abstract based on the inclusion criteria yielded 88 articles. The full-text screening was done to ensure eligibility. Sixty-seven articles were excluded from the Scoping Review due to being published in language other than English, no full text or abstract only, not addressing the "benefits", involving children less than five years old, and papers published more than ten years old. (Figure 1). The data was charted and summarised in Table I according to the characteristic of the studies such as author, year of publication, sample of population, technique and result of findings.

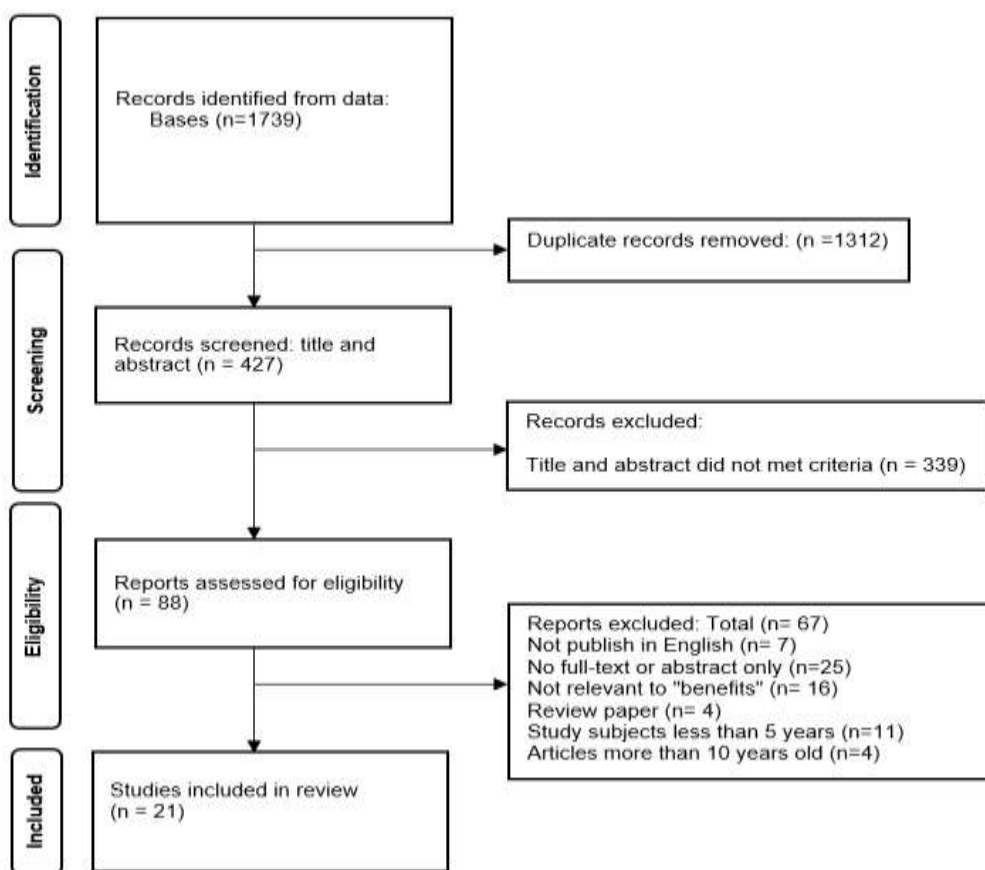


Fig. 1: PRISMA Flow Diagram for selecting studies

## 5.0 Results

Table 1. Summarised of included articles.

Author	Sample	Technique	Results
(Al-Galal, Alshaikhli, Rahman, & Dzulkifli, 2016)	University students(n=13)	EEC tracing; LQ versus LM	Listening to Quran produces positive valence in both groups
(MBA Al-Jubouri, Isam, SM hussein, 2021)	Cancer patients (n=159)	; LQ versus LM, STAI for Anxiety	LQ, LM reduced chemotherapy anxiety
(Astuti, Nursalam, & Hidayati, 2017)	Orthopaedic PSP (n=8)	LQ, perceived experience	The majority felt calm and comfort
(Babaii A & Dehghani, 2015)	Pre CC patients (n=60)	LQ, Control, STAI	LQ significantly improve patients' anxiety before CC
(Bechir et al., 2017)	HD patients (n=54)	LQ versus Control, (BDI-11)	LQ reduced depressive symptoms in HD patients

(Black, Mushtaq, Baddeley, & Kapur, 2020)(Black et al., 2020) (Bechir et al., 2017)	H (n=10), NH (n=12), NM (n=10) Elderly HD (n=53)	Tests on QK, VL, VSL LQ + ERT test for PC, FC, anxiety (TUG, 6MWT, SF36, HADS) LQ versus Control, test for anxiety	H outperformed NH and NM on QK. No difference in VL, VSL in all groups LQ+ ERT improved PC, QoL and reduced anxiety in HD patients LQ significantly decreased anxiety in these women
(Hamidiyanti BYF & Pratiwi, 2019)	Pregnant women (n= 32)	LQ versus Control, test for VS and PO <sub>2</sub>	LQ improved BP and PO <sub>2</sub>
(Masoumeh Alidosti et al, 2017)	Unconscious patients in ICU (n=20)	LQ, LM, Control, test for STAI	LQ had a greater effect than LM and control in reducing anxiety
(Mohammadpoor et.al, 2020)	Adults, ACS patients (n=96)	EG versus control, test for PSQI	LQ improve the sleep quality of the elderly
(Hossini A, Azimian J, Motalebi SA, 2019)	Elderly (n=65)	LQ versus control, test for anxiety	Reduced anxiety of pregnant women facing the labour process.
(Irmawati null et al. 2020)	Pregnant women (n=40)	QM group test for QoL, IQ and serotonin	QM improves QoL, IQ and serotonin level
(Ismarul et. al. 2016)	Adolescents (n=159)	QR versus BR test with EEG	QR leads to resting and calming minds
(N.Kamal et al.2013)	Adults (n=10)	LQ versus Control test for pain and anxiety	LQ reduced anxiety and pain score
(Maarof SR et al, 2023)	Post Cholecystectomy (n= 112)	LQT versus LQWT versus Control	LQT, LQWT are effective in reducing stress, anxiety and depression during pregnancy, more in LQT
(M Mirghafourvand et.al. 2016)	Pregnant women (n= 168)	LQ versus LM	Anxiety level reduced, but more effective in LQ group
(Mohammadpoor et al. 2022)	ACS patients (n= 96)	QM test for academic performance (AP)	A positive relationship between QM and AP
(Tarmuji et al. (2022)	Adolescent Tahfiz (n=83)	LQ test for handgrip and BP reactivity	LQ reduced BP reactivity
(Trisnawati, Al Azizah, & Jenie, 2021)	Elderly (n= 60)	LQ versus Control test for weaning of ventilation	No negative effect of LQ to weaning of ventilation
(Yadak M & Farooqi, 2019)	ICU patients (n=55)	LQ before and after Yoga	LQ improved psychological and physical variables
(El-Saleh, Mostafa, & Shaheen, 2021)	University students (n=80)	QM test for HPT, DM, depression	More QM less likely to have these diseases
(Saqib et al., 2017)	Elderly (n=20)		

EEG= Electroencephalogram, LQ= Listening to Quran, LM= Listening to music, STAI= State-Trait Anxiety Index, PSP= Post- Surgical Patients, CC= Cardiac catheterization, HD=Haemodialysis, BDI-11= Beck Depression Inventory-11, H= Hafiz, NH=Non Hafiz, NM=Non- Muslim, QK=Quranic Knowledge, VL=Verbal Learning, VSL= VisuoSpatial Learning, ERT= Endurance Resistance Training, PC=Physical Condition, FC=Functional Capacity, TUG= Timed Up and Go Test, 6MWT= Six Minutes Walk Test, SF36= Short Form Health Survey, HADS= Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale, QoL= Quality of Life, ICU=Intensive Care Unit, VS= Vital Sign, PO<sub>2</sub>=Arterial Oxygen Pressure, BP= Blood Pressure, ACS= Acute Coronary Syndrome, EG=Experiment Group, PSQI= Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index, QM=Quran Memorization, IQ= Intelligent Quotient, RQ= Reading Quran, RB= Reading Book, PC= Post Cholecystectomy, LQT= Listening to Quran with translation, LQWT= Listening to Quran without translation, FU= Follow up, ACS= Acute Coronary Syndrome, BP= Blood Pressure HPT= Hypertension, DM= Diabetes Mellitus,

Table 2: Benefits of Quran Reciting, Listening and Memorizing (Articles summary)

Method	Benefits	Study
Listening (LQ)	LQ and LM produce positive valence in EEG tracing of university students, more pronounced in LQ	Al-Galal et al. (2016)
	LQ and LM, reduced chemotherapy induced anxiety among cancer patients, effect higher in LQ group	Al-Jubouri et al.( 2021)
	LQ and LM reduced anxiety in ACS, greater effect in LQ	Mohammadpoor et al. (2020)
	LQ significantly improve patients' anxiety prior cardiac catheterization	Babaii et al.(2015)
	LQ+ Endurance Resistant Tr reduced anxiety, improved physical condition and QoL in elderly HD	B Farih et al.. (2017).
	LQ significantly decreased anxiety in primipara pregnant women in third trimester	Hamidiyanti et al.( 2019)
	Reduced anxiety, labour time and cortisol level in primigravida at 1 <sup>st</sup> stage of labour	Irmawati et al.(2020)
	LQ Translation and LQ Without Translation are effective in reducing stress, anxiety and depression during 2 <sup>nd</sup> trimester pregnancy, higher in the LWT	Mirghafourvand et al. (2016)
	LQ reduced anxiety, pain score and length of stay of post op cholecystectomy patients	Maarof SR et al.(2023)
	LQ significantly reduced depressive symptoms in elderly HD patients	Babamohamadi et al.. (2017)
	LQ improved vital signs of unconscious patients in ICU- BP, PR and PAO <sub>2</sub>	Mirzaeian et al (2017)
	LQ improve sleep quality of the elderly residing in nursing homes	Hossini et al (2019)
	LQ improved psychological and physical variables among University students Yoga practioners	MSSaleh et al.(2021)
	LQ reduced BP reactivity to handgrip exercise in hypertensive pre elderly patients	Trisnawati et.al. (2021)
	LQ produce no negative effect to weaning of ventilation(short intervention)	Yadak M et al (2019)
Feeling of calm and comfort in post-surgical orthopedic patients	Astuti et al.(2017)	
Memorizing (MQ)	MQ improves IQ, QoL and serotonin level in Tahfiz secondary school students.	Ismarulyusda et.al(2016)
	MQ produce positive relationship with academic performance AP among Tahfiz secondary school students	Tarmuji et al (2022)
	MQ has positive relationship between with HPT, DM and depression in older men	N Saqib et al(2016)
	No difference in learning (verbal and visuospatial) capacity between the 3 groups H, NH and NM	Black et al. (2020)

Reciting (RQ) RQ produce highest alpha band EEG wave and frequency (relax mind wave) in young adults, leading to state of resting and calming minds compare with Reading Book N.Kamal et al (2013)

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Only 21 articles fulfilled the inclusion criteria and were included in this review. There were five studies from Iran, four studies each from Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and one study each from Iraq, Tunisia, UAE and UK. Most of the journals were not from prestigious publications but multidisciplinary in nature. The number of samples ranged from 8 to 168 and the duration of intervention ranged from 30 minutes to six months. The methods employed included experiments (9 studies), randomized controlled trial (7 studies), cross sectional (4 studies) and one qualitative descriptive study. For Quranic listening the famous surahs used were Surah Ar-Rahman, Maryam, Ya-Siin, Al- Baqarah, Al Fatihah and the 3 Quls recited by renowned reciters like Al Ghamidi and Misyari. The summarized reviewed articles are in Table 1 and the benefits according to Quran listening, memorizing and reciting were grouped in table 2. Five main areas of benefits were physical, mental and psychological benefits, intelligence Quotient (IQ), Quality of life (QoL) and pain relief. Articles from the same area will be discussed together.

## 6.0 Discussion

This scoping review explores the benefits of Quranic engagement, including recitation, listening, and memorisation. It examines the effects of Quranic engagement on various aspects of well-being, such as emotional response, anxiety reduction, mental health, cognitive abilities, sleep quality, pregnancy outcomes, academic performance, cardiovascular health, and recovery from medical procedures. The findings reveal that Quranic engagement offers therapeutic effects, including anxiety reduction, improved mental health, enhanced cognition, and support during medical procedures. It also correlates with better academic performance.

One area of benefit is the reduction of anxiety levels. Studies by Galal et al. (2016) and MBA Al-Jubouri et al. (2021) demonstrate that listening to Quranic recitation can effectively reduce anxiety, comparable to or even more than other interventions like instrumental music. The melodic and spiritual nature of the Quranic verses creates a soothing effect, promoting relaxation and positive emotions. Engaging in Quranic recitation triggers relaxation, redirects attention away from anxious thoughts, promotes emotional regulation, and provides spiritual comfort. Neurochemical changes may also contribute to the anxiety-reducing effect. Further research is needed to validate these mechanisms.

The Quran's impact on mental health is evident in studies by Babamohamadi et al. (2017) and Ismarulyusda et al. (2023). Quranic engagement positively affects depressive symptoms and emotional well-being. Memorising the Quran enhances cognitive abilities and improves the quality of life. Quranic engagement combined with exercise also improves the physical condition and quality of life and reduces anxiety among hemodialysis patients. Quranic recitation positively affects cardiovascular health, reducing cardiovascular reactivity in hypertensive pre-elderly subjects.

Furthermore, Quranic engagement shows potential benefits during critical medical procedures. Listening to the Quran significantly reduces anxiety levels in patients before cardiac catheterisation. Quranic recitation from mechanical ventilation in the intensive care unit during the weaning process can be a safe and non-pharmacological intervention, potentially contributing to patients' overall well-being and recovery. The mechanisms involve distraction, the relaxation response, positive emotional resonance, spiritual comfort, and neurochemical release.

Regarding academic performance, Tarmuji et al. (2022) found a positive relationship between Quran memorisation and students' academic performance. Memorising the Quran enhances cognitive abilities, linguistic skills, vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, oral communication, public speaking skills, critical thinking, analytical skills, and deep reflection. These mechanisms collectively contribute to improved academic performance. The studies included in this scoping review employ various methodologies, such as experimental studies, randomised controlled trials, qualitative studies, and cross-sectional studies. They have been conducted in different countries, indicating a multidisciplinary and global interest in understanding the effects of Quranic engagement on well-being. However, there is a need for more robust studies involving many participants and multicentric in nature.

## 5.0 Limitation

The sample population in some of the studies were small in numbers and some intervention were of short duration thus possibly affecting the intended outcome. The study by Yadak et al. (2019) which compared ventilation weaned with or without Quranic recitation between control and trial subjects found no significant effect between the two groups possibly because the intervention of 30 minutes duration was too short and that some of the trial subjects had more complex and multiple illnesses.

## 6.0 Conclusion

Quranic engagement through recitation, listening, and memorisation offers various benefits, including anxiety reduction, improved mental health, enhanced cognition, positive pregnancy outcomes, better academic performance, cardiovascular health improvement, and support during medical procedures. The findings contribute to our understanding of the potential therapeutic effects of Quranic

engagement and highlight the diverse range of methodologies employed in studying these benefits. Further research is needed to uncover the underlying mechanisms and explore how Quranic engagement facilitates these positive outcomes.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Datuk Dr Nor Asiah Muhammad, Dr Ungku Ameen Mohd Zam, Dr Noor Harzana Harrun and Cik Nurani Nordin as the reviewers and all that have been involved directly and indirectly in preparing and writing this manuscript.

## Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study

This paper contributes to the field of Islamic studies, Medicine and Health Sciences.

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