

QUR'AN MEMORIZERS AND INTERNET: STUDY AT MA'HAD KHOIR-UL-KAYYIS AND MA'HAD KUTUBUSSITTAH BABUSSALAM IN MAKASSAR

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Abstract--The Quran memorization is a highly recommended education in Islam. At the same time the internet has penetrated and become an irremovable part of all fields of human life, including *santri* life. Some are optimistic, but some are worried about the harm. The present study will discuss on how the internet utilized among Qur'an memorizers, and how it did affect to the achievement of each of them. It is different with the other scholars who have compared different groups of internet user and proposed contradictory conclusions. The surveys confirm that the Quran memorizers who have various techniques of memorizing, all aimed to utilize internet to increase the knowledge, but they are ultimately affected to use for social satisfactions and mere fun. Furthermore, the experiment has resulted that the increasing achievement has been performed during the internet banning, whereas the decrease happened at the access allowance.

Keywords: Applied communication; Internet effect; Internet utilization; Learning disruption; Quran memorization.

I. INTRODUCTION

The discovery of knowledge is an obligation of Muslim, as the Prophet has quoted fourteen centuries ago, "*Talab al-ilmu faridat 'ala kulli Muslim* [1, p. 49] (seeking knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim)", and the main sources of knowledge of Islam, the last heavenly religion, are the Qur'an and the Sunna [2], since the Prophet has told, "*Al-ilmu thalathat wa ma siwa tzalika fahuwa fadl ayat muhkamat aw sunnat qa'imat aw faridat adilat* [3, p. Book 3, 43] (Knowledge has three categories; anything else is extra; a precise verse, or an established sunna, or a firm obligatory duty)". It is why the preachment and the learning from generation to generation of both the Qur'an and the Sunna are highly encouraged in order that to be sustained. The ways of the Qur'an and the Sunna to be transmitted are by the oral and written tradition [4], [5]. The oral is done by the memorization whether by verbatim text and/or by the mean [6, p. Book 2, 165-8]. The rote of the original texts obviously makes us easy to refer to whenever we find it difficult to understand something [7]. After all, the memorization of the Qur'an has been exemplified by the Prophet, the Companions and the previous followers [4]. It is an educational way that is applied in Islam.

Basically, Education is communication itself. Education aimed to transfer knowledge from teachers to students, to change attitude, and behavior [8], [9, pp. 231–58], [10, p. 12]. Key elements of communication are a communicator, message, and communicant. Those key elements along with actions,

scenes, actors, intermediaries, objectives, environments, supporters and inhibitors of communication should be considered to obtain more effective results of communication [10, pp. 10–1], especially in the era of information and communication technology (ICT), which is getting more recent. Nowadays, with ICT, the communication process is becoming faster, easier and varied.

The icon of the era of advancement of ICT is the internet. It is a network that is able to connect among almost any objects in the world [11]. It offers benefits in various fields of life. So does in Education field where it is utilized to support learning activities [12]–[15]. Bakri, one of the educational observers stated that the implementation of Internet of Things can streamline the learning process. According to him, it is caused by the nature of the Internet *i.e.* interactivity which always demands responses between objects [16].

Nevertheless, behind the benefits of ICT, some are worried about the harm. Since long time ago, when the internet has not been as popular as nowadays, Okan [17] has recommended the importance of critical scrutiny of the adoption of edutainment, applications which are now widespread with a lot of versions across the internet. In addition, Sudibyo, who believes that e-learning helps to facilitate education, remains concerned with the development of ICT that risks raising the chances of plagiarism, cultivating apathy, and short-mindedness, degrading concentration, and creating addictions[18].

But however, the internet has become an irremovable thing from the life of some people at the moment, due to they have regarded it as a necessity. Some utilized it to follow trends [19], for educational needs [20], [21], entertainment [22], and lifestyle [23], [24]. Even the world of *santri*, the students of an Islamic school, has been penetrated by the internet. Some of the Qur'an memorizers use the internet in their daily lives [25], [26] in spite of the process of memorizing Qur'an requires adequate time allocation, high concentration and discipline [27]. This raises concerns, lest the process and expected results of memorization of the Qur'an were disturbed by the habits of students accessing the internet. The reason, it has been proven that some people who spend a lot of time on the cyberspace do not produce benefits for themselves, as well as the organization [28]. Internet that is essentially created to increase productivity, unfortunately makes them unproductive. Kolikant [29] who examines the influence of the internet on students, based on the

recognition of informants concluded that the internet decreases students' learning ability. In different places, students in Nigeria who claimed that internet access does not affect their academic achievement, did not deny that they were often negligent or distracted due to internet usage [30].

The results of this study are expected to be a reference specifically for the policy-making of the parties those associated with the Qur'an memorization education in planning, methods and facilities to be provided to the students. In the broader framework, the results of this study can also be utilized general education, business, government, etc.

II. METHOD

This study used an educational communication approach. We will discuss on how the Qur'an memorizers utilized the internet, and how it did affect: whether it supported or became disruptions of the learning process and the achievement. The mixed qualitative & quantitative approaches were used to unravel the problems. I will observe the Qur'an memorization *pesantren* (Islamic school), like Ma'had Tahfidzul Qur'an Khoir-UI-Kayyis (MKK) and Ma'had Kutubussittah Babussalam Makassar (MKS), conduct the necessary experiments, surveys, discussions and interviews to the related parties.

One of the purposes of this study is to determine the effect of internet use on the achievements of memorizing Qur'an recitation. Identical research has been done by Khoiriyah [31]. She concluded that the incentives of mobile phone use did not negatively affect the quality of memorizing of the Qur'an. The conclusion was taken after she measured the quality of Qur'an recitation of *santri* who use mobile phones with varying intensities. The use of the intended mobile phone includes the use of the internet features. Khoiriyah's conclusion has been stronger with Zahro's findings [25] of the absence of a negative relationship between the use of gadgets and *santri's* discipline of memorizing the Qur'an. In addition, Mujib suggests the use of the internet for students, since he has found that students who rarely or do not use the Internet tend to have less satisfactory value [32]. Similar conclusions that support the use of the internet for students are also raised by several other researchers [33]–[35].

However, the above findings are contradictory to Hutahaeen's [36], and Manumpil's [37]. According to them, the use of gadgets has negative effects on student achievement. They prove that students who rarely use gadgets have better performance than those who often. These were in line with Fried's findings [38] which stated that the laptop is only a barrier to students to master the subject matter. Besides, based on the findings of Kolikant [29], and Ezemenaka [30], as well as Biggs and Telfer's opinion, it can be concluded that the internet distracts and degrades the ability of learning, then affecting the declining achievements. For a while I was in favor of the second opinion. I assumed that the access of the internet can divert the concentration of the Qur'an memorizers and reduce the allocation of memorization time, so that their performance declines. To prove the assumption, Time Series

Quasi-Experimental Design model had been performed. It would provide causal associative clarities over the use of the internet on the achievements of Qur'an recitation. Sugiyono states that the design of this experiment uses only one single group of acts, without any control group [39].

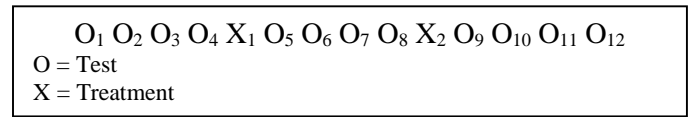


Fig. 1. Time Series Quasi-Experimental Design (modified [39])

The object of this research was the entire *santri* of both *ma'hads* who do actively join in program memorizing the Qur'an as well as access the internet in their daily life. There were total 46 of them. They were examined for the achievement of memorization. The experiments were held for 40 days (from September 30 to November 8, 2017) in five steps. Step one: 4 times sequent examinations are held (once in every 2 or 3 days). Step two: treatment in the form of banning internet access. Then, after they had passed through 8 days without accessing the internet, step three was held: 4 times sequent examinations within no internet access condition (once in every 2 or 3 days). Step four: second treatment in the form of command and/or allowance to access the internet again. Step five: when they had been passing through 8 days accessing the internet, they examined for 4 times sequent (once in every 2 or 3 days). A pair of those opposing treatments is intended to be more convincing the verification of the assumption about the existence of the influence of internet usage on the achievement of the Qur'an memorization.

Achievements were measured in terms of quantity and quality. The quantity was the number of new rote increments, while the quality was the weight or value given by the tester for the accuracy of rote memorization by *santri*. Memory weights classified into: First: *Naa'jeh* (Success), 100% value weight, provided that there was a maximum of three mistakes in a single page of the Medina Standard Qur'an, the Qur'an consists of pages with 15 lines of verses, begin and end with the tags of the verses which can be fixed by the memorizers only by warning or reprimand, without any notification from the examiner. Second: *Jayyed* (Good), 80% value weight, provided that there was a maximum of three mistakes in a single page of Qur'an, which can be fixed by the memorizers after getting assistance/notice of examiners. Third: *Maqbool* (Acceptable), 60% value weight, provided that there is a maximum of six mistakes in a single page of Qur'an that can be fixed after getting assistance /notice of examiners. Fourth: *Raaseb* (drag), 60% value weight, provided that there is a minimum of seven mistakes in a single page of Qur'an that can only be fixed after getting assistance/notice of examiners. Those four weights could be added or reduced by a maximum of 5% to accommodate the *Tajwid's* (how to read the Qur'an well and truly) assessment, especially but not limited to *Makhray* (exit and character of letters), and other Quranic characters [40, p. 23]. *Tajwid* errors which were made between 0-5 times weighted + 5% to 0%, while errors were made more than 5 times worth to -1% to -5%.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. The Characters of Both Ma'hads (Islamic school)

The first object of this research was MKK. According to Anto, a Qur'an memorizing instructor it was established especially for the memorization of the Qur'an which is intended for strengthening the faith by well-established communication with the God refer to *itha ahabba ahadukum an yuhaddithu rabbahu fal-yaqra' al-Quran* (anyone of you who would like to talk to his God then let him read the Qur'an [41, p. 302]) as well as practicing His promise of the Quran preservation, which refer to *Inna nahnu nazzalna al-zekra wa inna lahu lahafidun* (We have sent down the Message, and We will assuredly guard it [42, Ch. 15 v.9]). In this *ma'had*, the duration of the meeting to deposit memorization is two hours for three times a week with an average target of an additional recitation of one-third page (five lines of verses) per meeting. The number of *santri* enrolled and active in memorizing are 35 peoples. They do not live in dorms like *pesantren* in general [43]. They even live in their own homes, so the process of memorizing the Qur'an is mostly done independently at home. Besides of memorizing the Qur'an, the *santri* run their daily routines mostly just like ordinary people. Some of them are students of formal general elementary or junior high or high school, and some others are collages, housewives, or private or government employees. There are no limitation on *santri*'s jobs, even ages here. As long as they were seriously wishing to be the Qur'an memorizer, then they were welcome. In every meeting, they were classified into several *halaqahs* (small groups of Qur'an recitation) according to their gender and their average memorizing achievements, which were normally consist of a number of 3 to 9 *santris* with an instructor per *halaqah*.

The second object was MKS which prioritizes the studies of six hadiths: *Shahih Albukhari, Shahih Muslim, Sunan Abi Dawud, Sunan Attirmidzi, Sunan Annasa'i* and *Sunan Ibn Majah* than any other activity, whereas memorization of the Qur'an is an additional arranged activity which is aimed at increasing knowledge, strengthening the faith, as well as facilitating *santri* if there are discussions of the hadiths those refer to the verses of the Qur'an. Normally here, the meeting duration for depositing rote memorization is one hour, once a week with an average target of additional is two pages per meeting (30 lines of verses). In this boarding school, the *santri* of 29 people live in the dormitory, but only 20 *santri* follow the Qur'an memorization program. They are strongly advised to make the process of memorizing the Qur'an independently or listening to each other during rest periods, especially during *Sahur* (time between 03.00 a.m. to 04.30 a.m.)

The ways of the *santri* of both *ma'hads* to memorize the Quran were relatively the same as generally in Indonesia. The Both were adopting several techniques of memorizing Qur'an *i.e.* *Wahdah* (one by one: repeating a verse or a set of verses with a certain amount of repetitions until it is memorized, before proceeding to the next verse or set), *Kitabah* (writing: to write the verses which are targeted to be memorized), *Sama'i* (listening: to listen the teacher and / or anything who recite the verses, then mimicked), and *Jama'* (memorizing by reciting

together at the same time) [5], [44, p. 41], [45]. The ways those to be applied would depend on the convenience of students, whichever suits them. After conducting surveys to 46 *santris* of both *ma'hads*, when they asked to short their favorite memorization technique, it was found there that simultaneously, the most preferred applied technique for memorization of the Quran was *Wahdah*, even if the most pleasant technique was *Sama'i*. The found was same as what Ikhwanuddin and Hasyim had found in Madura [5]. An instructor admitted that it is already known that *Sama'i* is the favorite for the *santri*, but the *Wahdah* is the lightest technique for the instructor. Even though, separately, MKS' *santris* seemed indeed to favor *Wahdah* rather than *Sama'i*, where means were $3,81 > 3,19$.

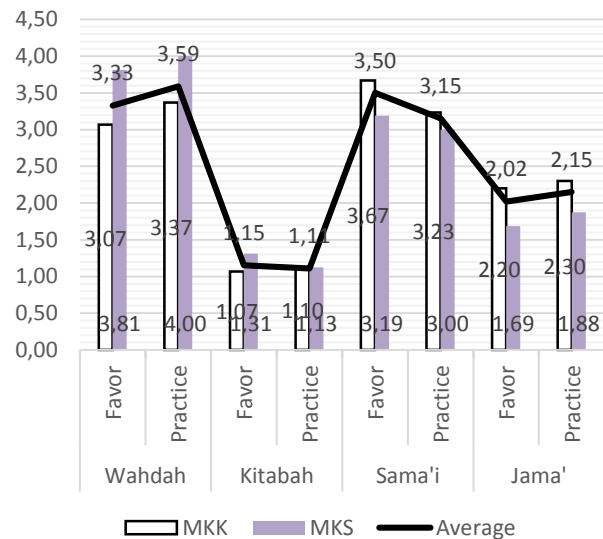


Fig. 2. Favorite and Applied Technique of the Quran Memorization Average Score

B. Internet Use by the Qur'an Memorizers

Generally, *pesantrens* are traditionally managed [46] where *santri* are forbidden to use mobile phones, including internet access [47]. but the rule did not apply at these both *ma'hads*. Each *santri* has been allowed to use his/her own method of memorization, even using the available means. They were welcome to use smartphones, laptops, and internet connections to support their learning process. There has been no strict control of *ma'had*'s management, unless recommendations to use the ICT device only for useful things. They were not recommended to spend the time accessing the internet for only entertainment and trends, due those were considered as vain there.

“We are constantly reminded that those who will be able to truly memorize the Qur'an inwardly are only real people of faith, *wa allazina hum 'ani allaghwi mu'ridhun* (and who refrain from vain things [42, Ch. 23 v. 3])”, realized Harun a *santri* at MKK.

A Qur'an memorizing instructors at MKK explained that *santri*, especially those who have passed adolescence step are expected to be able to control themselves. Meanwhile, for those who are still children are left to their parents to direct them to

positive things those can help them to achieve the learning targets.

Generally, the internet is utilized to achieve process, content, social satisfaction [48], [49, p. 5], and/or just to be used for pleasure as an escape from everyday saturation activities [49, p. 5], [50] or, it could be that someone just uses it aimlessly because he has been addicted, just as West and Turner [51] have discussed. I was very eager to get to know how internet to be utilized among the Qur'an Memorizers of the both *ma'had*, since the surveys those have been conducted for the last three years in Indonesia resulted that increasingly the most of users of the internet used it for accessing social media at the most [52, p. 22], [53, p. 17], [54, p. 28], To determine the utilization, then the survey to 46 *santris* of both *ma'hads*, as well as several interviews had been conducted. They were asked to give a value of 'never' to 'always' (duration included) with a range of values 0 to 10 for what they planned to access from the internet and what they really did. *First*, the variable of internet content satisfaction consists of the access to education, information, knowledge, learning, homework, ideas, interesting, news, and shopping. *Second*, the social consist of chatting, friends, interaction, people, communication, current, group news. *Third*, the pleasures were entertainment, games, relaxing, and fun. *Fourth*, the process was a search engine, searching, surfing, websites, software, and work (Modified from [48, pp. 272–3]).

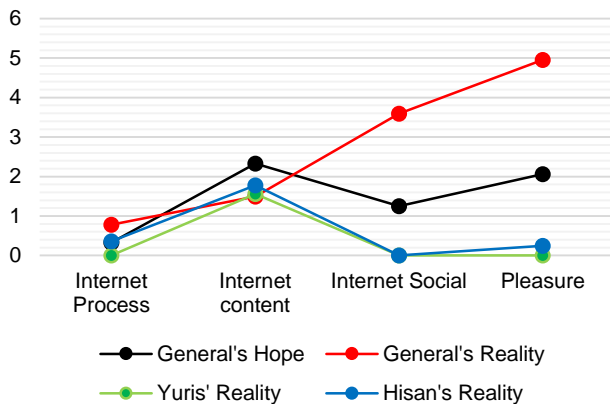


Fig. 3. Internet utilization

The survey resulted that none of *santri* who was aimless, they commonly initially aimed to achieve internet content satisfaction instead, even the reality, they were heading toward the social and the pleasure instead when accessing it. But, there were two outliers *i.e.* Yuris and Hisan, *santris* of MKK, 8 and 5 years old. The most thing they had accessed were the factors of the variable of content, especially education and learning. Parents of both of them always take care of them when accessing the internet. They never allowed accessing internet by their selves. They utilized the internet to access the Qur'an recitation on Youtube which then they mimicked. Playing online game has not been forbidden for Hisan. He used to be allowed to play a little as a reward whenever he succeeded to achieve a feat.

In fact, I have found that there was a total of 5 kids who were controlled by their parents in terms of internet access, but 3 of

them wriggled out of the control. They clandestinely accessed the internet for pleasure most, even if they still learned from the internet. The found to be quite worried was the use of the internet by 19 teenagers freely without any control, neither by parents nor by self-awareness of their selves. They even sometimes belittles their parents by their opinion that they were more skillful on the internet, just like what has been found in Europe [49, p. 5]. Besides, there were 13 adult *santris* who admitted that they always attempted to control by their selves, but unfortunately when they were accessing it, they cannot stand to resist the temptation of the internet. But even if so, they acknowledged that they feel uncomfortable when not accessing it *i.e.* when their internet data credit was expired, when forgetting to bring gadgets, when in no signal area, when low-battery.

“Usually, I started using my gadget to recite the Quran, but then, I was tempted to open incoming notifications, after that, I instead went on with the search for interesting things and social media. I regret it, but it happens constantly. I also wonder why.” Said Anto.

“I cannot get away from my mobile phone.” Said Harun.

A Qur'an memorizing instructors at MKK acknowledged that basically, the allowance of the utilization of internet was intended to extend the source of knowledge *such as* texts, exegesis, explanations and sounds of the Quran. It is considered to provide many benefits, and the *santri* realized that, especially those who favor *sama'i* style. They always had a desire to access recitations of the Quran as a ref. material for understanding, rote and tones of reading, but again they could not stand the temptation of the internet.

A survey of device ownership and the duration of access was also available. The results showed that there were 26 *santris* (56,52%) who own devices, consist of 4 teenagers and 22 adults. The rest were using the property of parents (47,83%), friends (82,61%) or cafe (8,7%). Most of those who do not own the device used the parent's, with the main reason of it's free of cost and availability. Meanwhile, the duration of the internet access varies at approximately 1 hour to 24 hours, except for those who do not have their own the devices, they have 12 hours maximum access.

C. Effects of Internet Access to Qur'an Memorizing Achievement

According to McCrum-Gardner [55], the best way to analyze this problem is by using the paired t-test, which is requiring normally distributed data. The Shapiro-Wilk normality test was carried out, due to there were only less than 50 data [56, p. 53]. The test had generated that 3 of 5 p values < 0.05 alpha, which meant that the data were distributed abnormally. Due to the result did not satisfy the requirement of the paired t-test, I then used Wilcoxon signed rank test [55] to make the analysis.

In general, the test had resulted that the achievement of memorizing Qur'an of *santri* when they kept accessing internet had a significant distinction with them when they did not, due Table 2 shows that p values = 0.000 or p values < 0.05 alpha.

TABLE 1
Shapiro-Wilk Tests of Normality

	Statistic	Df	Sig.
internet access (pre)	,929	46	,008*
change after 1 st experiment	,801	46	,000
no internet access	,941	46	,020*
change after 2 nd experiment	,765	46	,000
internet access (post)	,912	46	,002

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

TABLE 2
Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test (Statistics)

	no internet access - internet access (pre)	internet access (post) - no internet access
Z	-5,676a	-5,194b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000

- a. Based on negative ranks.
- b. Based on positive ranks.

TABLE 3
Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test (Ranks)

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
no internet access - internet access (pre)	Negative Ranks	4 ^a	5,25	21,00
	Positive Ranks	42 ^b	25,24	1060,00
	Ties	0 ^c		
	Total	46		
internet access (post) - no internet access	Negative Ranks	39 ^d	24,10	940,00
	Positive Ranks	5 ^e	10,00	50,00
	Ties	2 ^f		
	Total	46		

- a. no internet access < internet access (pre)
- b. no internet access > internet access (pre)
- c. no internet access = internet access (pre)
- d. internet access (post) < no internet access
- e. internet access (post) > no internet access
- f. internet access (post) = no internet access

As you can see in fig 4 (the average line) and Table 3, the no internet access seemed to be positively increasing the achievements. There were 42 objects who had the increased achievements of memorizing Qur'an after being banned to access the internet, then 39 had the decreased achievements after being allowed to access the internet again. Quite the contrary, there were 4 lost their performance in memorizing Qur'an after being banned to access internet and 5 got back their

performance after accessing the internet again. Besides, there were 2 who kept their performance stable during the examinations post the 1st and the 2nd treatments.

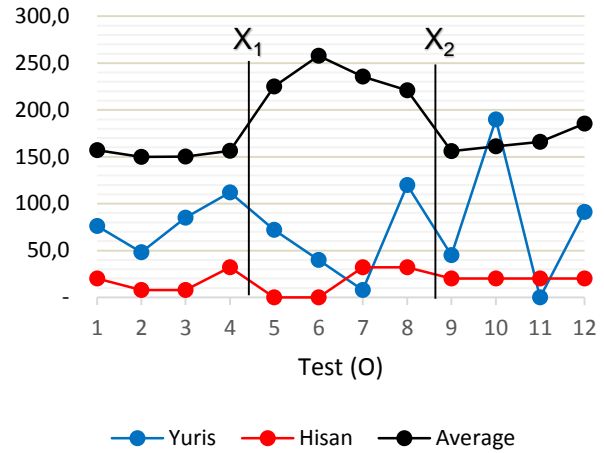


Fig. 4. Time Series Quasi-Experimental Points

There were two of outliers had a contradictive curve with the average curve. Hisan could not even deposit his memorization at a pair of examinations at the beginning of internet ban. Possibly, the cause was they were the well-controlled internet users, unlike the other general *santris* as mentioned in the previous sect.

IV. CONCLUSION

Islam is the last heavenly religion that has come down since fourteen centuries ago. In order to preserve the faith, the Quran as the main knowledge source of it should be passed from generation to generation. The Quran memorization is always to be one of the most recommended ways for the learning as the Prophet has also exemplified, because by having the Qur'an rote means that someone has had the first basis for understanding Islam.

On the other hand, this kind of education which requires adequate time allocation, high concentration and discipline is facing challenges in this era of advancement of ICT when internet has become an integral part of the human life, whereas nobody can assure whether to be able to control the internet for the success or vice versa to be lulled thus impacting into the failure of the education process which is expected for the sustainability of the generation progressors. The *santris*, who are always directed not to be excessive in worldly matters, nor do they escape from these challenges. At some *pesantrens*, they have been allowed to the internet utilization and were expected to gain benefits of it.

It has also been found that the *santris* who access the internet, with any memorization style, initially always planned to use the internet for knowledge enhancement by accessing positive content, but in fact they are ultimately affected to use for mere fun. Less benefit they had got, even though they had used a considerable amount of time. Some of them realized it, but continued to happen repeatedly. They had been addicted,

due they feel uneasy if without internet, so even if they tried to control themselves, they failed.

The more worrisome were the teenagers who accessed the internet at will, without any control at all. They were worse, because they did not realize they had been addicted to the internet. This is ironic, because actually for those who did not have their own devices, they mostly still borrow the devices of the parents, but as if parents did not care about them. There are only very few *santris* who access the internet in a controlled manner, they actually accessed what had been planned. They were still small kids and well controlled.

Indeed, the use of the internet can lead to two opposite things. It turned out after comparing internet users and non-users and/or heavy and light users students groups, some researchers have proposed several contradictory propositions. Some of them found the internet is good for education, while some other argue contrary. Due every single person has his/her different character, then the present study compares the achievements of the Quran memorization of each the *santri* on when they use the internet and when they do not, by using the experimental technique.

The study confirms that the internet banning for only a few days resulting in a significant increase in the Quran memorizing achievements of *santris*, while returning to the accessing allowance for a few days had declined the achievements significantly either. It shows that risk is more likely than the expected benefit, except for the few children who really used the internet just to learn, whose achievement was lower when do not access the internet, than when do.

As it turned out, uncontrolled internet access has really interfered with the learning outcomes of the Quran memorizers. Although the expected results were actually produced by the outliners, it is worth considering. It is why, I invite scholars for future research to find out what is going on at the well-controlled internet access population.

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