

## *ENHANCING SPIRITUAL COGNITION: BRUNEIAN MUSLIMS' HOLISTIC ENGAGEMENT WITH QIRAAT PROFILES OF SURAH AL-FATIHAH AND YASIN*

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study examines the perceptions and attitudes of the Muslim community in Brunei Darussalam regarding the official development of the 10 Qirā'āt profile for the foundational Qur'anic chapters, Surah Al-Fatihah and Surah Yasin. These two Surahs are central to daily Muslim devotion, necessitating an understanding of the legal status (Hukm) and standardization of their authenticated recitation variations (Ilm Qirā'āt). Employing a quantitative research design, data were collected using a questionnaire administered to 69 respondents to assess their levels of awareness, knowledge, interest, and views towards this profiling initiative. The findings indicate a significant dichotomy: while respondents generally exhibit a moderate level of knowledge regarding the specific variations within Ilm Qirā'āt, they overwhelmingly express a strong interest and positive attitude towards the Qirā'āt profiling effort. A substantial majority of the community supports the dissemination and formal introduction of the profile across various platforms, specifically highlighting mass media channels for wider reach. The implications suggest a clear mandate for structured, collaborative action. Religious authorities, educational institutions, and media entities must systematically coordinate promotional and educational programs to bridge the existing knowledge gap. Such efforts are crucial not only for preserving the authoritative knowledge of the Qirā'āt tradition but also for ensuring its accurate practice, thereby strengthening the Bruneian Muslim community's comprehensive appreciation of the Holy Qur'an.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Research concerning *Qirā'āt* typically falls into two main categories. The first category focuses on historical transmission and linguistic validity, meticulously documenting the *Sanad* (chain of narration) and the phonological rules of the various schools of recitation (e.g., *Qirā'āt al-'Ashr*). These works establish the authenticity of the variations but do not often address the practical, juridical application of these differences on the public level.

This first category primarily discusses how a *qirā'āt* becomes a fundamental means of transmitting religious teachings across generations, while simultaneously preserving and strengthening the validity of the *sanad* of religious knowledge.<sup>1</sup> This is based on the hadith stating that without *isnād*, anyone could say whatever they wished. In Islam, the Qur'an holds the position of a primary source of law.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, when it is recited incorrectly, the resulting legal conclusions will also be incorrect. Beyond that, if the *sanad* of its interpretation (*tafsīr*) is problematic—yet is still adopted as a binding legal ruling—then disagreement will arise even more easily, rather than consensus.<sup>3</sup>

The second category comprises studies on Islamic education and policy in Brunei Darussalam, which generally confirm the nation's commitment to reinforcing *Sunnī* and Qur'anic literacy. However, these studies rarely drill down into the community's granular understanding and acceptance of the legal implications (*Hukm*) of recitation variants. This second part is more closely related to the legal dimension of reciting the Qur'an properly and correctly. Since the Qur'an is a source of law, its recitation is also an act of worship performed continuously. Reciting the Qur'an is an act of worship according to all scholars of *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, who define the Qur'an as the Book of God whose very recitation is considered worship. The Qur'an is also recited in every obligatory and voluntary prayer. Therefore, reciting the Qur'an with correct rules of recitation is among the matters that become obligatory.

The development of learning media for teaching the Qur'an has advanced significantly. Its primary aim is to prevent people from making mistakes in reciting the Qur'an. The rulings related to Qur'anic recitation contain specific details, the most important of which is the application of *tajwīd*.<sup>4</sup> Learning *tajwīd* is a collective obligation (*fard kifāyah*), while applying it

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<sup>1</sup> Mohammad Said Mitwally Ar-Rahawan, "Dating Hadith Textual Transposition by Means of Sanad-Cum-Matn Analysis," *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 16, no. 2 (2018): 91-113, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22321969-12340061>.

<sup>2</sup> Norazman Alias et al., "Sanad Qiraat Dan Hadis: Analisa Terhadap Proses Pengjizahan: Qiraat and Hadith Sanads: An Analysis on Authorization," *Ma'ālim Al-Qur'ān Wa al-Sunnah* 14, no. 1 (2018): 109-20, <https://doi.org/10.33102/jmq.v14i1.122>; Anggi Azzuhri, "Enhancing The Indonesian Translation of Quran: Morphological and Historical Semantic Analysis," *TSAQAFAH* 18, no. 2 (2022): 273-90, <https://doi.org/10.21111/tsaqafah.v18i2.6725>.

<sup>3</sup> Mona Hendavi et al., "Automating Sanad Continuity Verification in Disconnected Hadith Using Machine Learning," *2024 34th International Conference on Computer Theory and Applications (ICCTA)*, IEEE, 2024, 206-12, <https://doi.org/10.1109/ICCTA64612.2024.10974901>.

<sup>4</sup> Zulkifly Mohd Zaki et al., "User Interface Designs of an Educational Mobile Application: A Study of Qiraat Teaching and Learning," *Advances in Human-Computer Interaction* 2021, no. 1 (2021): 6648550, <https://doi.org/10.1155/2021/6648550>.

in recitation is an individual obligation (farḍ 'ayn). In essence, Qur'anic recitation is traditionally taught through the *sanad qirā'āt* method.<sup>5</sup> This method continues to be used even in the modern era due to its validity and practicality. Therefore, teaching Qur'anic recitation becomes legally important within the context of education. Although many assessment models now exist to identify the articulation of recitation rules or the legal meanings contained in a verse, the classical method of teaching *qirā'āt* has remained, and its use is even increasing in trend.<sup>6</sup>

Discussing the variants of *qirā'āt* (modes of Quranic recitation) naturally brings us to the understanding that the techniques for reciting the Qur'an have been validated with strict, detailed, and rigorous precision (through *ṣaḥīḥ* chains of transmission (*sanad*) and strict acceptance criteria). This diversity is a manifestation of Allah's mercy, facilitating the ease of reading His Holy Book. The rules of *tajwīd* (the science of pronouncing the letters of the Qur'an accurately) serve as a scholarly framework that accommodates the various recitation variants recognized as valid (*ṣaḥīḥ*). For instance, differences in vowel length (*mad*), vocal inclination (*imālah*), or momentary silence (*saktah*) between one variant and another all have established, foundational *tajwīd* rulings. Generally, there is recognition of seven canonical *qirā'āt* (known as *al-Qirā'āt as-Sab'ah*), attributed to seven main Imams of Qira'at: Nāfi', Ibn Kathīr, Abū 'Amr, Ibn 'Āmir, 'Āṣim, Ḥamzah, and al-Kisā'i. Beyond these seven, there are additional variants that enrich the scholarly tradition, specifically three supplementary *qirā'āt* (bringing the total to ten *qirā'āt*, known as *al-Qirā'āt al-'Asyr*), involving Imams Abū Ja'far, Ya'qūb al-Ḥaḍramī, and Khalaf al-'Āsyir. These variants further inform and expand the scope of *tajwīd* rulings related to Qur'anic recitation. All ten *qirā'āt* are widely recognized as *mutawātir* (transmitted by numerous narrators through multiple paths, making collusion on a lie impossible) or *mashhūr* (popular and authentically transmitted), serving as the main benchmark for establishing correct *tajwīd* rules.<sup>7</sup>

This study seeks to bridge this critical gap. While the theoretical legal consensus (*Ijmā'*) often permits recitation according to any authenticated *Qirā'ah*, public compliance and legal certainty require the Muslim populace to be adequately aware of these legal boundaries. Prior research has not systematically mapped the convergence between this specialized juridical knowledge and the general public's awareness. Therefore, a gap exists in understanding the socio-religious dynamics of a community as it assimilates new, formally standardized *Qirā'āt* profiles and their associated legal rulings.

The science of *Qirā'āt* is a principal branch of Qur'anic studies that traces the authentic and *mutawātir* variations of recitation, transmitted with an unbroken chain (*sanad*) from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). These variations are not merely phonetic differences; they also carry profound meanings and divine wisdom that enrich the interpretation

<sup>5</sup> Noraziahtulhidayu Kamarudin et al., "Acoustic Echo Cancellation Using Adaptive Filtering Algorithms for Quranic Accents (Qiraat) Identification," *International Journal of Speech Technology* 19, no. 2 (2016): 393–405, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10772-015-9319-z>.

<sup>6</sup> Hafizhah Zulkifli et al., "Challenges and Elements Needed for Children with Learning Disabilities in Teaching and Learning the Quran," *Children* 9, no. 10 (2022): 1469, <https://doi.org/10.3390/children9101469>.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn al-Jazarī Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad, *Al-Nashr Fī al-Qirā'āt al-'Asyr* (Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2004), 45–50.

and understanding of the Qur'an among Muslims.<sup>8</sup> The institution of the *Qirā'āt* (modes of recitation) is a profound demonstration of the vast mercy of Allah (rahmah) in providing ease (*taysīr*) and diversity in engaging with the divine revelation. This diversity was crucial because it directly corresponded to the differing linguistic and socio-cultural contexts of the early Muslim ummah, alleviating the burden of the community and ensuring the Qur'an's accessibility.<sup>9</sup>

Brunei recognizes the importance of this expertise by offering dedicated degree programs. In Brunei Darussalam, Qur'anic education has existed since the early arrival of Islam and has since developed gradually over time. However, the teaching of *Qirā'āt* remains largely confined to higher education institutions such as UNISSA, while at the community level, its dissemination is not yet comprehensive or systematic.<sup>10</sup> Studies indicate that the history of Qur'anic education in Brunei has tended to emphasize recitation, memorization, and the fundamentals of *tajwid*, with comparatively less focus on *tafseer* and *Qirā'āt*.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, public understanding of authentic recitational variations remains uneven and is often perceived as a field reserved for imams or professional *qari'*.

A study conducted by the FPPI-USIM (Faculty of Quranic and Sunnah Studies, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia) highlights the significant practical implications of recitational variations (*qirā'āt*) in foundational chapters such as Surah Al-Fatihah and Surah Yasin, both of which are central to the daily liturgical and devotional practices of Muslims worldwide.<sup>12</sup> The research critically stresses that while these variations are authoritative, their unstandardized transmission can inadvertently lead to confusion and inconsistencies within the community if not managed systematically.<sup>13</sup> Consequently, the study advocates for the urgent necessity of developing a formal *Qirā'āt* profile—a standardized, authoritative guide for teaching and learning—to ensure clarity and uniformity in Islamic education. In seeking models for this standardization, the robust pedagogical systems of Indonesia offer valuable blueprints to emulate, particularly through their emphasis on *talaqqi musyafahah* (direct, face-to-face oral transmission from teacher to student) and structured performance development programs.<sup>14</sup> This commitment to the authentic, physical transmission of sound and articulation (*makhārij al-ḥurūf* and *ṣifāt al-ḥurūf*) in institutions like *Pesantren* ensures the preservation of the

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<sup>8</sup> Ismail Albayrak, "Revisiting the Meaning of the Divine Preservation of the Qur'an: With Special References to Verse 15: 9," *Religions* 13, no. 11 (2022): 1064, <https://doi.org/10.3390/children9101469>.

<sup>9</sup> Ismail Abd Halim et al., "Perbezaan Etimologi Dalam Qiraat Al-Quran Dan Kesannya Kepada Pentafsiran: Kajian Terhadap Perkataan Fa'azallahumā," *RABBANICA: Journal of Revealed Knowledge* 3, no. 1 (2022): 73-88.

<sup>10</sup> Sarinah Yahya, "Sejarah Perkembangan Pengajian Dan Penulisan Al-Qur'an Di Negara Brunei Darussalam," *AR-RĀ'IQ* 2, no. 2 (2019): 67-107, <https://doi.org/10.59202/riq.v2i2.430>.

<sup>11</sup> Haji Awg Asbol bin Haji Mail, "Transformasi Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Negara Brunei Darussalam Pramerdeka: Dari Rumah Ke Sekolah Rendah Agama," *Kertas Kerja Konferensi Antar-Universiti Di Borneo Kalimantan Pertama, Transformasi Sosial Masyarakat Pesisir. Anjuran Universiti Malaysia Sarawak.*, 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Muhammad Syafee Salihin et al., "Pelaksanaan Pengajaran Ilmu Tawjih Al-Qiraat Dalam Kalangan Pensyarah Institut Pengajian Tinggi Malaysia: Implementation of Teaching the Knowledge of Tawjih Al-Qiraat Among the Lecturers of the Malaysian Institute of Higher Education," *ATTARBAWIY: Malaysian Online Journal of Education* 8, no. 1 (2024): 102-14, <https://doi.org/10.53840/attarbawiy.v8i1.211>.

<sup>13</sup> Rita Elizabeth Risser, "Qur'anic Recitation and The Aesthetics of Piety," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 76, no. 3 (2018): 309-18, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jaac.12578>.

<sup>14</sup> Azzuhri, "Enhancing The Indonesian Translation of Quran: Morphological and Historical Semantic Analysis"; Irwan Ahmad Akbar, "Multiplying Barakah to Waliullah: The Quranic Manifestation in a Sociological Context within the Tarekat Community in East Java, Indonesia," *MAJ-Malaysia Architectural Journal* 7, no. 1 (2025): 19-32.

recitation's integrity and authenticated *sanad*, providing a replicable methodology for reliably transmitting the Qirā'āt profile to the broader Muslim community.<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, the digital revolution has created new opportunities for disseminating Qirā'āt knowledge. Research has shown that online *maqrā'ah* have emerged as alternative platforms for global Qirā'āt learning, overcoming geographical and temporal limitations. While traditional *maqrā'ah* based on *halaqah* and physical *talaqqi* remain important, online platforms have proven to be flexible and effective mediums for expanding access to Qirā'āt knowledge, particularly among younger generations.<sup>16</sup>

In line with this, Brunei has also demonstrated its commitment to preserving Qur'anic recitation through the establishment of institutions such as KUPU SB and UNISSA, along with the growing number of *tahfiz* and Qirā'āt programmes. Nonetheless, systematic improvements to curricula, teaching methodologies, and the development of Qirā'āt modules are still needed in order to bring them on par with leading global Islamic educational institutions.<sup>17</sup>

Taking into account current needs and the potential of Qirā'āt in enriching Muslims' understanding of the Qur'an, the development of a Qirā'āt profile for Surah Al-Fatihah and Surah Yasin is a significant initiative. Such a profile must be authoritative in terms of *sanad*, accessible to the wider community, and suitable for use as a formal reference in religious education across various levels. The ability to integrate traditional approaches with modern technology will be the key to ensuring the success of this endeavour in Brunei Darussalam. The most important point to highlight here as the final outcome is the legal commitment within this learning process—particularly the awareness and legal vigilance of the participants regarding the application of *tajwīd* rules when reciting the Qur'an.

## METHODS

This study employed a quantitative survey approach to explore the perceptions of the Muslim community in Brunei Darussalam regarding the development of the 10 Qirā'āt profile for Surah Al-Fatihah and Surah Yasin. This approach was chosen to obtain empirical data that could be objectively measured in order to identify general patterns concerning the levels of knowledge, awareness, and interest in Qirā'āt among the community.

### *Instrument Design*

The primary instrument used was a structured questionnaire developed based on indicators drawn from previous literature on the mastery and understanding of Qirā'āt. The questionnaire comprised four main sections: (i) respondents' demographics, (ii) level of knowledge regarding the 10 Qirā'āt in Surah Al-Fatihah and Surah Yasin, (iii) level of interest in Qirā'āt recitations, and (iv) perceptions of the importance and impact of Qirā'āt programmes on the community. Each item was measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to capture the intensity of responses to each statement.

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<sup>15</sup> Muhammad Fairuz A Adi et al., "Wacana Ilmuwan Al-Qur'an Terhadap Hukum Tarkīb al-Qirā'āt: Perspectives of Qur'anic Scholars on the Legal Permissibility of Tarkīb al-Qirā'āt," *QIRAAT: Jurnal Al-Quran Dan Isu-Isu Kontemporer* 8, no. 1 (2025): 49–58, <https://doi.org/10.53840/qiraat.v8i1.96>.

<sup>16</sup> Marian Adawiah Dzulkifli and Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu, "Methods of Qur'anic Memorisation (Hifz): Implications for Learning Performance," *Intellectual Discourse* 26, no. 2 (2018): 931–47, <https://doi.org/10.31436/id.v26i2.1238>.

<sup>17</sup> Yahya, "Sejarah Perkembangan Pengajian Dan Penulisan Al-Qur'an Di Negara Brunei Darussalam."

### ***Sampling***

A total of 69 respondents participated in this study, consisting of Muslim individuals residing in Brunei Darussalam. Respondents in this study were selected using convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling technique where participants are chosen not randomly, but based on their accessibility and proximity to the researchers. In this specific context, the implementation of convenience sampling involved distributing the questionnaire via Google Forms and sharing it digitally through easily reachable channels, such as social networks, WhatsApp groups, and existing communication platforms of Islamic educational institutions. This method proved to be highly efficient, enabling the quick and practical collection of data. It was thus highly suitable for an initial exploratory study operating with limited resources (such as budget or manpower). However, the use of convenience sampling carries significant methodological risks. Since the selection of respondents is not based on equal probability for every member of the population, the technique has a high potential for selection bias.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, the representativeness of the sample to the actual Muslim population in Brunei Darussalam is limited. The collected data is likely to be over-represented by groups who are active on social media or who have strong affiliations with specific Islamic educational institutions, and may not accurately reflect the views of groups who are less digitally connected or are outside these established networks. Therefore, the findings of this research must be interpreted with caution, particularly when generalizing the results to the broader population.

### ***Data Analysis***

The study, employing a systematic quantitative survey approach, aimed to investigate the perceptions of the Muslim community in Brunei Darussalam regarding the development of a standardized 10 Qirā'āt profile for key chapters like Surah Al-Fatihah and Surah Yasin. Utilizing convenience sampling, a non-probability technique that leveraged accessible digital channels—Google Forms, WhatsApp groups, and established educational networks—the researchers achieved quick and practical data collection, suitable for an initial exploratory phase despite the inherent risk of limited sample representativeness. The collected quantitative data were subsequently analyzed descriptively using SPSS software, focusing on calculating frequencies, percentages, and mean scores to concisely identify general levels of knowledge, awareness, and interest in Qirā'āt among respondents. Particular attention was also directed toward analyzing demographic variables like age and occupational backgrounds to detect varying patterns of understanding across different segments of the society.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section discusses the demographics of respondents and the main findings related to their levels of knowledge, interest, and perceptions towards Qirā'āt.

### **a. Respondent Demographics**

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Age

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<sup>18</sup> Yusuf Hanafi et al., "Self-Regulation in Qur'an Learning," *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction (MJLI)* 18, no. 2 (2021): 103–28, <https://doi.org/10.32890/mjli2021.18.2.4>; Mohamed Hossam Ismail, "Experiences of Listening to the Qur'an in Egypt: A Qualitative Phenomenological Study of Therapeutic and Recreational Listening," *Contemporary Islam* 17, no. 1 (2023): 109–31, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-023-00513-0>.

Age Group	Number of Respondents
20-35 years	41
36-45 years	13
46-55 years	13
56 years and above	2

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents (58%) were aged 20–35 years. The analysis of respondent demographics revealed that nearly half of the participants came from the "Others" and "Education" occupational categories, demonstrating that engagement with Qirā’āt issues in Brunei extends significantly beyond purely religious institutions into the broader public and private sectors. Notably, those working in education exhibited consistently stable and higher mean scores regarding both the knowledge and perceived importance of Qirā’āt, a stability likely linked to greater religious literacy and an inclination toward structured academic material. Complementing this, the demographic analysis by age showed a significant pattern: while younger groups showed engagement, the small percentage of respondents aged 56 years and above (3%) recorded the highest scores across understanding and appreciation dimensions. This superior performance strongly suggests that deep religious experience and traditional educational backgrounds—which emphasize strict adherence to the laws of Tajwīd and *sanad* (transmission validity)—play the most crucial role in shaping a high level of Qirā’āt mastery.

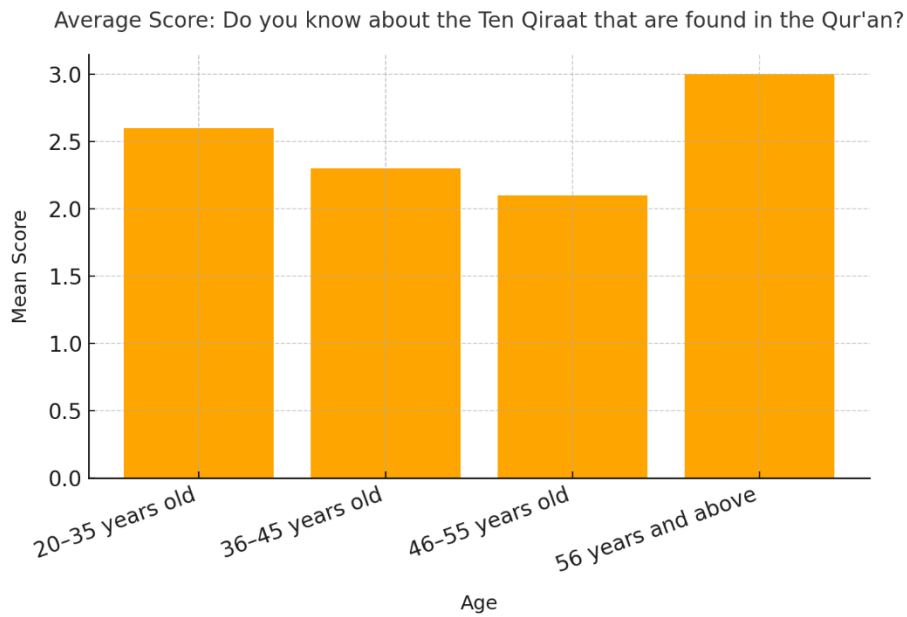
Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

Occupation	Number of Respondents
Others	35
Education	29
Business/Corporate	2
Technology	1

The occupational analysis revealed that nearly half of the respondents belonged to the "Others" and "Education" categories, signifying that engagement with Qirā’āt is not limited to religious specialists but actively permeates the public sector and general society. Respondents in the education sector displayed more stable and higher mean scores in both knowledge and perceived importance of Qirā’āt, a tendency linked to their higher religious literacy and professional inclination toward structured academic materials. This is crucial because adherence to the law of Qirā’āt—which mandates the precise application of Tajwīd rules and the integrity of the sanad (chain of transmission)—requires a disciplined, academic approach. Thus, promoting the standardized Qirā’āt profile through educational institutions serves as a key strategic pathway, leveraging a segment of the population that is not only already proficient in the necessary academic discipline but is also best positioned to systematically teach and disseminate the strict legal requirements governing the authentic recitation of the Qur'an.



**b. Level of Knowledge on Qirā’āt**



The empirical analysis summarized in Table 3 revealed a notable variation in Qirā’āt awareness across age groups, directly relating to the religious imperative of understanding the law of Qirā’āt as Fardhu 'Ain (individual obligation) for accurate Qur'anic recitation. The highest average score (3.00) was recorded by respondents aged 56 and above, strongly indicating that prolonged religious experience and traditional educational grounding have fostered a deeper appreciation and adherence to the strict Tajwīd rules and sanad validation required by the law. In contrast, the youngest group (20–35) showed a relatively high score (2.56), suggesting effective exposure through modern formal education channels. However, the middle-aged cohorts (36–55) recorded the lowest scores (2.22), highlighting a critical knowledge gap that may stem from comparatively reduced learning opportunities or interest during their key life stages. The resulting 0.78 gap between the highest and lowest mean scores demonstrates a significant disparity in the fulfillment of this foundational religious obligation across the community, underscoring the necessity for targeted educational strategies to bridge this divide.

*Table 3: Average Scores for Knowledge of the 10 Qirā’āt in Surah Al-Fatihah by Age Group*

Age Group	Mean Score
20–35 years	2.56
36–45 years	2.22
46–55 years	2.22
56 years and above	3.00

Table 3 shows that respondents aged 56 and above recorded the highest average score of 3.00, reflecting stronger awareness of Qirā’āt in Surah Al-Fatihah. Age and longer experience likely contributed to this higher understanding. The 20–35 age group also demonstrated a relatively high score (2.56) which, although lower than that of the 56 and above age group, suggests that younger respondents may have gained exposure through formal education or community

learning. The 36-45 and 46-55 age groups recorded the same average score of 2.22, the lowest compared to other age groups. This may indicate that individuals in this middle-aged cohort have less in-depth knowledge of certain aspects of Qirā'āt. Factors such as participation, interest, or learning opportunities within this group may also be comparatively lower. The gap of 0.78 between the highest and lowest mean scores indicates a notable difference in knowledge across age groups. This relatively significant difference indicates a clear variation in the level of knowledge across age groups.

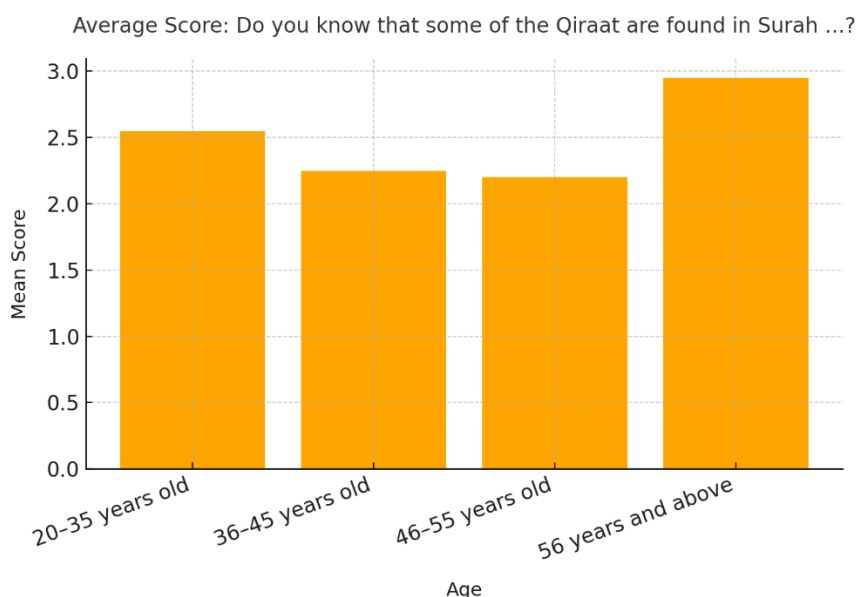


Figure 2: The chart shows the average scores for the question, “Are you aware of some of the Qirā’āt found in Surah Yasin?” This comparison illustrates how each age group evaluates or understands certain aspects of Qirā’āt knowledge.

Table 4: Average Scores for Knowledge of the 10 Qirā’āt in Surah Yasin by Age Group

Age Group	Mean Score
20-35 years	2.55
36-45 years	2.23
46-55 years	2.23
56 years and above	3.00

The data presented in Table 4, showing the average scores for knowledge of the Ten Qirā’āt in Surah Yasin, consistently demonstrated that age and experience significantly influence adherence to the law of Qirā’āt. The 56 and above age group recorded the highest average score of 3.00, serving as empirical validation that longer exposure and dedication to traditional education produce the highest awareness necessary for fulfilling the Fardhu 'Ain (individual obligation) of correct recitation. Conversely, the 36-55 age groups recorded the lowest identical scores of 2.23, creating a 0.77 knowledge gap between the oldest and middle-aged cohorts. While the 20-35 age group showed relatively good knowledge (2.55)—indicating the success of modern educational exposure—this substantial disparity underscores the urgent need for targeted

intervention and learning programs aimed at the middle-aged segment to enhance their understanding and ensure widespread compliance with the strict legal requirements governing authentic Qur'anic transmission.

**c. Interest in Qirā'āt Recitations**

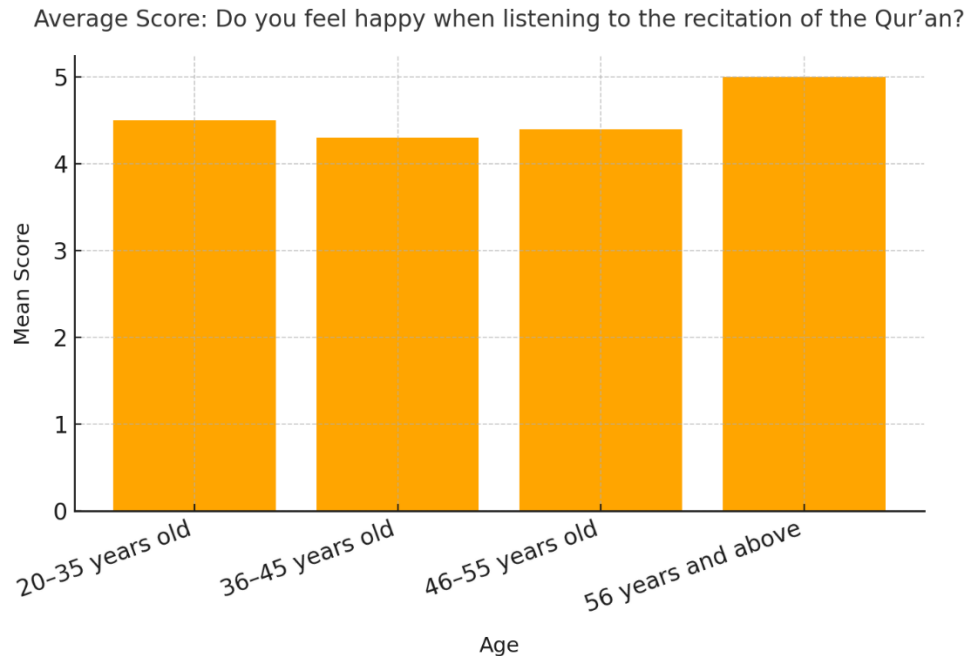


Figure 3 shows the average scores for the question, “Do you enjoy listening to Qur’anic recitation performed with the Ten Qirā’āt?” This comparison illustrates how each age group evaluates or understands certain aspects of Qirā’āt knowledge.

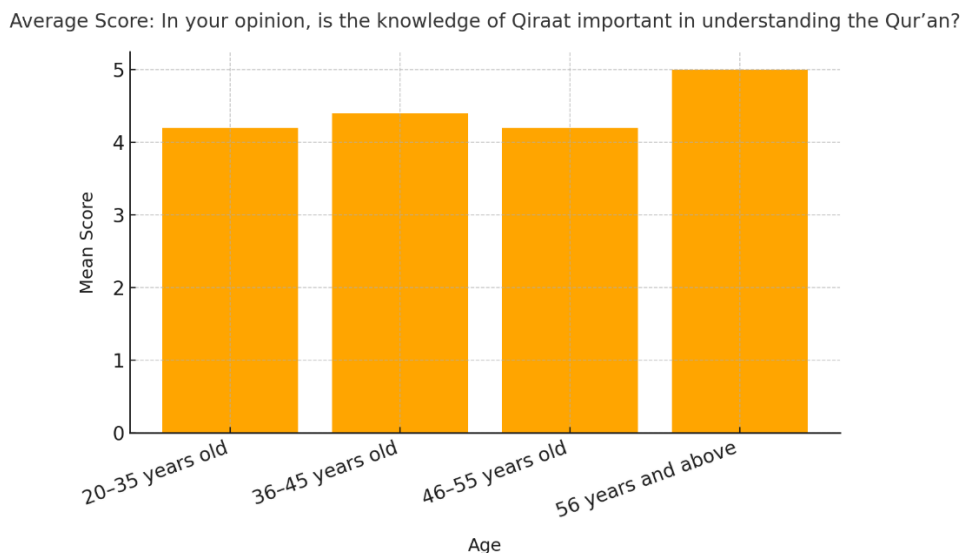
*Table 5: Average score of Interest in reciting the Quran Qirā’āt 10 by age group*

Age Group	Mean Score
20-35 years	4.6
36-45 years	4.3
46-55 years	4.5
56 years and above	5.0

The analysis of respondent sentiment, detailed in Table 5, reveals a remarkably strong and consistent level of enjoyment and appreciation for Qur’anic recitation using the Ten Qirā’āt across all age groups. This finding contrasts sharply with the knowledge gaps identified earlier, as the 56 and above age group recorded the maximum average score of 5.0, reflecting the deepest spiritual fulfillment cultivated by years of experience and adherence to the strict law of Qirā’āt. Similarly, the 20-35 age group registered a very high score of 4.6, confirming that high appreciation for the aesthetic and spiritual value of variant recitations is successfully being fostered in the younger generation. Even the 36-45 age group, despite having the lowest score (4.3), still demonstrates a highly positive valuation. The fact that all age groups recorded scores above 4.0 highlights a profound, shared cultural and religious foundation that places a premium

on Qirā’āt recitation, offering an ideal and motivating environment for the targeted educational strategies necessary to close the observed knowledge deficits.

#### d. Perception of the Importance of Qirā’āt



The question analyzed in Figure 4—specifically, "In your opinion, is the knowledge of Qirā’āt important in understanding the meaning of the Qur’an?"—shifts the study's focus from mere awareness to the evaluation and recognition of the academic and practical significance of *Qirā’āt* within the broader context of Qur'anic interpretation (*Tafsīr*). The comparison of average scores across different age groups empirically illustrates how each cohort assesses the discipline's value, measuring the extent to which they recognize that variations in *Qirā’āt* (such as differences in vocalization or emphasis) can yield distinct nuances in meaning or even juristic rulings (as acknowledged in *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*). Therefore, the scores in Figure 4 determine if there is a robust public recognition that *Qirā’āt* is not merely a matter of recitation technique (*tilāwah*), but rather a foundational discipline within *Ulūm al-Qur’ān*, essential for comprehensively and correctly interpreting the sacred text.

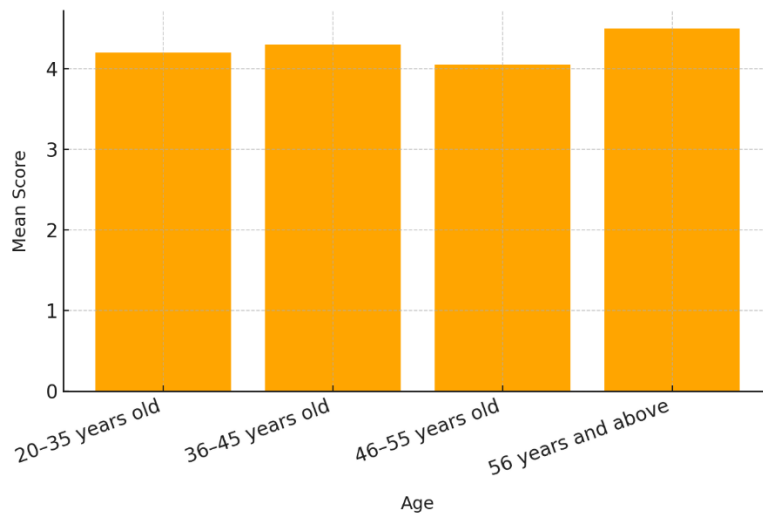
Table 6: Average Scores on the Importance of Qirā’āt in Understanding the Qur’an by Age Group

Age Group	Mean Score
20-35 years	4.2
36-45 years	4.4
46-55 years	4.2
56 years and above	5.0

The data presented in Table 6 provides strong empirical evidence that the community universally recognizes the academic necessity of Qirā’āt knowledge for effective Qur'anic comprehension, scoring consistently high across all demographics. Crucially, the 56 and above age group recorded the maximum score of 5.0, demonstrating the deepest internalized appreciation that aligns with the requirements of the law of Qirā’āt—where accurate recitation is

seen as foundational to correct interpretation (*Tafsīr*). The consistent high scores across younger and middle-aged groups (with the lowest score being 4.2) affirm that *Qirāʾāt* is widely viewed not merely as an art of recitation but as an essential element in *Ulūm al-Qurʾān* (Sciences of the Qur'an). This widespread and unified positive perception provides a compelling mandate for educational strategies to prioritize the teaching of *Qirāʾāt*, leveraging this high level of appreciation to bridge the knowledge gaps observed in previous analyses.

Average Score: Do you believe that greater emphasis on Qiraat can help in understanding the Qur'an?



The final question analyzed, presented in Figure 5, addresses the community's assessment of *Qirāʾāt*'s societal role: “Do you believe that greater emphasis on *Qirāʾāt* programmes can have a positive impact on Bruneian society as a whole?” This question shifts the focus to the collective recognition of the discipline's strategic value, which is particularly salient given Brunei's commitment to *Melayu Islam Beraja* (MIB).<sup>19</sup> The anticipated high scores will serve as a powerful public mandate, affirming the community's belief that deeper engagement with the law of *Qirāʾāt*—which ensures the legal certainty of Qur'anic meaning by validating the transmission (*sanad*) and meticulous application of *Tajwīd*—is essential not just for individual piety (*Fardhu 'Ain*) but also for promoting social cohesion, educational excellence, and the legal and socio-religious stability of the nation.<sup>20</sup>

Table 7: Average Scores on the Perceived Positive Impact of *Qirāʾāt* Programmes by Age Group

Age Group	Mean Score
20-35 years	4.3
36-45 years	4.3

<sup>19</sup> Ann Black, “Ideology and Law: The Impact of the MIB Ideology on Law and Dispute Resolution in the Sultanate of Brunei Darussalam,” *Asian Journal of Comparative Law* 3 (2008): 1-41, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S2194607800000168>; Dominik M Müller, “Beyond the Sharia State: Public Celebrations and Everyday State-Making in the Malay Islamic Monarchy of Brunei Darussalam,” *Asian Journal of Law and Society* 9, no. 3 (2022): 418-39, <https://doi.org/10.1017/als.2022.33>.

<sup>20</sup> Dominik M Müller, “Hybrid Pathways to Orthodoxy in Brunei Darussalam: Bureaucratised Exorcism, Scientisation and the Mainstreaming of Deviant-Declared Practices,” *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 37, no. 1 (2018): 141-83, <https://doi.org/10.1177/186810341803700106>.

Age Group	Mean Score
46-55 years	4.1
56 years and above	4.6

Table 7 shows that the age group of 56 and above recorded the highest average score of 4.6. This indicates that this group strongly believes that greater emphasis on Qirā'āt programmes can have a positive impact on society. The 20-35 and 36-45 age groups each recorded an average score of 4.3, reflecting strong and positive support for efforts to strengthen Qirā'āt programmes. The 46-55 age group recorded the lowest score of 4.1. Although slightly lower, this score still reflects a high level of confidence in the impact of Qirā'āt programmes. Overall, all age groups recorded scores above 4, indicating consistent positive support for Qirā'āt programmes.

The strong, consistent support across all age groups demonstrates that Bruneian society generally recognizes the strategic value and necessity of Qirā'āt programmes in community development, extending this appreciation across four key dimensions. While there are notable variations in specific Qirā'āt knowledge, with the 36-55 age group showing a significant gap and the 56+ group exhibiting the highest mastery—consistent with the demands of the law of Qirā'āt (Tajwīd and *sanad*)—the interest and emotional appreciation for the beauty of Qirā'āt remain exceptionally high throughout all demographics. The older cohort's conviction, possibly due to experience and adherence to traditional values and the Melayu Islam Beraja (MIB) philosophy, underscores the value of the knowledge. Ultimately, the data confirms that while demographics shape understanding, the high level of unanimous appreciation provides a robust public mandate for educational institutions to launch standardized, targeted Qirā'āt programs aimed at closing the knowledge deficit in the middle-aged cohort without compromising the strong communal interest.

### The Influence of Demographics on Knowledge of Qirā'āt

The findings indicate that respondents aged 56 and above consistently achieved the highest mean scores across various aspects of Qirā'āt, such as knowledge of the Ten Qirā'āt in Surah Al-Fatihah and Surah Yasin. This pattern suggests that older individuals possess greater understanding and awareness, likely due to accumulated life experience, prolonged exposure to religious practices, and a stronger emphasis on tradition within this age group. Research on elderly learners of the Qur'an highlights that adaptive teaching strategies and a supportive environment further enhance motivation and engagement, with spiritual and social factors playing a significant role in sustaining their learning and deepening their connection to the text.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, studies in cognitive domains show that older adults often demonstrate superior knowledge retention and self-awareness regarding their mastery, supporting the notion that age contributes positively to both knowledge and confidence in religious and linguistic domains.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Firdausi Nuzula et al., "The Interaction of Elderly Individuals in Learning to Read the Qur'an," *Aphorisme: Journal of Arabic Language, Literature, and Education* 6, no. 1 (2025): 337-53, <https://doi.org/10.37680/aphorisme.v6i1.7366>.

<sup>22</sup> Gitit Kavé and Vered Halamish, "Doubly Blessed: Older Adults Know More Vocabulary and Know Better What They Know.," *Psychology and Aging* 30, no. 1 (2015): 68, <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038669>.

In contrast, respondents aged 36–55 recorded lower average scores in Qirā’āt knowledge. This may reflect reduced exposure, limited interest, or fewer structured learning opportunities during this life stage. Broader research on health and literacy in middle-aged populations also reveals that this group may experience disparities in educational engagement and skill acquisition, often due to competing life responsibilities or lack of targeted programs. As such, the middle-aged cohort represents a critical demographic for educational interventions. Tailored initiatives—such as community-based classes, flexible learning formats, and awareness campaigns—could help bridge the knowledge gap and foster a deeper understanding of Qirā’āt among this group.

<sup>23</sup>

The relatively high scores achieved by the younger group aged 20–35 underscore a promising capacity among the younger generation to master and sustain Qirā’āt knowledge. This positive trend is likely influenced by increased access to formal education programs and active participation in community-based learning activities, which provide structured opportunities for both theoretical and practical mastery of Qirā’āt. Studies show that when educational initiatives incorporate interactive methods, digital media, and participatory approaches, young learners demonstrate greater motivation, engagement, and improved learning outcomes in Qirā’āt and Qur’anic studies. To be relevant, the presence of dedicated Qirā’āt programs in educational institutions has contributed to the growth of Qirā’āt knowledge among youth, although mastery levels are often moderate, indicating room for further enhancement through improved teaching strategies and practical application.<sup>24</sup>

Given this foundation, targeted educational approaches that harness the interest and learning styles of young people—such as integrating technology, fostering peer learning, and providing mentorship—can play a crucial role in ensuring the continuity and advancement of Qirā’āt knowledge within society. By building on the existing enthusiasm and leveraging innovative teaching methods, educational institutions and community organizations can empower the younger generation to become future custodians and transmitters of Qirā’āt traditions.<sup>25</sup>

### The Law of Ten Qirā’āt and Understanding the Qur’an

The analysis of interest in Qur’anic recitation with the Ten Qirā’āt reveals consistently high enthusiasm across all age groups, with mean scores exceeding 4.0. This widespread appreciation underscores the enduring beauty and emotional resonance of Qirā’āt recitation within the community. Notably, individuals aged 56 and above achieved a perfect mean score of 5.0, reflecting a profound

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<sup>23</sup> Syazwan Nazri Amir et al., “Impact of Religious Activities on Quality of Life and Cognitive Function among Elderly,” *Journal of Religion and Health* 61, no. 2 (2022): 1564–84, <https://doi.org/10.1002/hsr2.1751>; Khadijeh Moulai et al., “The Effect of the Holy Quran Recitation and Listening on Anxiety, Stress, and Depression: A Scoping Review on Outcomes,” *Health Science Reports* 6, no. 12 (2023): e1751, <https://doi.org/10.1002/hsr2.1751>.

<sup>24</sup> Ismail, “Experiences of Listening to the Qur’an in Egypt: A Qualitative Phenomenological Study of Therapeutic and Recreational Listening.”

<sup>25</sup> Salihin et al., “Pelaksanaan Pengajaran Ilmu Tawjih Al-Qiraat Dalam Kalangan Pensyarah Institut Pengajian Tinggi Malaysia: Implementation of Teaching the Knowledge of Tawjih Al-Qiraat Among the Lecturers of the Malaysian Institute of Higher Education”; Moulai et al., “The Effect of the Holy Quran Recitation and Listening on Anxiety, Stress, and Depression: A Scoping Review on Outcomes.”

emotional attachment and reverence for this sacred art. Such strong affective responses among older adults are supported by research highlighting the deep spiritual and communal significance of Qur'anic recitation, which fosters feelings of connection, solidarity, and motivation to perfect recitation skills.

Positive responses among younger and middle-aged groups further demonstrate that Qirā'āt remains relevant and appealing across generations. The affective, cognitive, and motivational impacts of recitation are evident in diverse settings, with participants of all ages experiencing spiritual fulfillment and intellectual engagement. This intergenerational appeal opens opportunities to expand recitation activities and Qirā'āt programs, ensuring that the tradition continues to thrive and adapt to the needs of different community segments. Community-based and participatory approaches, as well as collaboration between families, educators, and religious institutions, can further strengthen engagement and appreciation for Qirā'āt across all ages.

The findings reveal a consistently high level of awareness regarding the importance of Qirā'āt for understanding the meaning of the Qur'an across all age groups, with mean scores above 4.0. The oldest group, in particular, demonstrated the highest appreciation, reflecting their recognition of Qirā'āt not only as an art of recitation but also as a crucial tool for deep comprehension of the Qur'anic message. This aligns with research showing that Qirā'āt plays a vital role in uncovering the linguistic, grammatical, and contextual richness of the Qur'an, enabling a more nuanced and holistic interpretation of its verses. The study of Qirā'āt fosters intellectual engagement by highlighting the diversity of recitation and interpretation, which in turn supports pluralism, tolerance, and a deeper spiritual connection to the text. Furthermore, mastery of Qirā'āt is essential for accurate understanding and application of Qur'anic teachings, as variations in recitation can influence the interpretation of legal, ethical, and theological concepts.

Given this widespread awareness, educational programs and awareness campaigns should be designed to emphasize both the intellectual and spiritual dimensions of Qirā'āt. Such initiatives can enhance holistic Qur'anic understanding by integrating theoretical study with practical recitation, encouraging critical thinking, and fostering appreciation for the diversity and depth of the Qur'anic tradition. By capitalizing on the strong foundation of awareness across generations, these efforts can ensure that the study and appreciation of Qirā'āt continue to enrich the religious and intellectual life of the community.

### **Support for Qirā'āt Programmes and Their Impact on Society**

All age groups expressed strong support for efforts to strengthen Qirā'āt programmes, with average scores exceeding 4.0. The oldest group again showed the highest confidence that greater emphasis on Qirā'āt programmes would positively impact Bruneian society. This broad-based support highlights a shared recognition of Qirā'āt as a vital component of both spiritual and social development. Research demonstrates that participatory and well-structured Qirā'āt programmes can significantly enhance both individual competencies and community engagement. For example, initiatives that involve diverse age groups and utilize interactive methods have led to improved teaching quality, increased student motivation, and greater interest in Qirā'āt across all ages. The success of such programmes is not limited

to children or youth; older adults also benefit, often serving as role models and transmitters of tradition, which further strengthens intergenerational bonds and community cohesion. The strong, cross-generational support for Qirā'āt programmes provides a solid foundation for expanding and innovating these initiatives. Community-based activities, integration of digital tools, and collaboration with religious institutions have proven effective in increasing participation and sustaining interest. Moreover, the role of mosques and local organizations in facilitating Qirā'āt and related activities has been shown to foster not only spiritual growth but also social solidarity and mutual support within the community.

## **CONCLUSION**

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that age and experience play a crucial role in shaping the level of knowledge, interest, and appreciation of Qirā'āt among the Muslim community in Brunei. Respondents aged 56 and above consistently demonstrated the highest levels of understanding, enjoyment, and awareness of Qirā'āt variations, reflecting the effectiveness of continuous exposure and the influence of traditional values in appreciating Qur'anic scholarship. By contrast, the middle-aged group (36–55 years) appeared relatively less exposed and thus requires additional support through educational programmes and knowledge dissemination.

The findings also confirm that interest in Qur'anic recitation based on the Ten Qirā'āt is high across all age groups. This demonstrates significant potential for expanding Qirā'āt education beyond academic settings, positioning it as a medium for spiritual development, the strengthening of Islamic identity, and the preservation of scholarly heritage in Brunei Darussalam. Furthermore, the strong level of community support for Qirā'āt programmes highlights a readiness to actively participate in initiatives that reinforce understanding and appreciation of this recitational legacy of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him).

Nevertheless, the main challenge lies in the limited availability of systematic, authentic, and easily accessible learning resources. Public perceptions regarding the scarcity of teaching materials and pedagogical limitations call for immediate action from relevant stakeholders to develop structured resources such as reading modules, Qirā'āt infographics, talaqqi recordings, and technology-driven approaches like interactive applications. These efforts must be strengthened through collaboration between educational institutions, mosques, and digital media to ensure inclusive dissemination of Qirā'āt knowledge across age groups and educational backgrounds. Therefore, a holistic and multi-layered educational approach—engaging the youth as inheritors, the middle-aged as catalysts, and the elderly as custodians of heritage—forms the essential foundation for the continuity of Qirā'āt in Brunei. The provision of comprehensive and integrated learning resources will be the key to advancing Qirā'āt knowledge sustainably within Bruneian society.

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