ENHANCING QUR'ANIC LITERACY: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF MANAGING PRINTED AND ELECTRONIC QUR'ANIC RESOURCES: (CASE STUDY FEDRAL UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION KANO LIBRARY)

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the issues and challenges faced by Federal University of Education library in Kano in acquiring, organizing, and managing printed and electronic Qur'anic resources, as well as the strategies for improving their availability and accessibility. The study employed a descriptive survey research design, targeting a population of seven library staff—four from the Arabic section and three from the e-library section. Data were collected using interviews and analysed thematically to identify key challenges and opportunities. Findings revealed that insufficient funding significantly limits the acquisition of digital Qur'anic resources, while the absence of a standardized cataloguing system affects accessibility. The shortage of trained personnel in the Arabic section negatively impacts resource management, despite the presence of skilled staff in the e-library. Institutional support for Qur'anic resource development was found to be low, and while printed storage facilities exist, there is no designated infrastructure for digital Qur'anic materials. Additionally, copyright and licensing restrictions further hinder the availability of electronic resources. The study conclude that enhancing Qur'anic literacy in the library requires increased funding, structured cataloguing systems, staff training, improved digital infrastructure, and greater institutional support. These measures will help promote broader access to Qur'anic resources for students, researchers, and the wider academic community.

Keywords: Challenges, Electronic Quranic Resources, Literacy, Library Resources, Digital Resources,

Introduction

The Qur'an, as the central religious text of Islam, plays a fundamental role in the intellectual and spiritual development of Muslims worldwide (Esposito, 2018). Academic libraries serve as vital institutions for preserving, organizing, and providing access to Qur'anic resources in both printed and electronic formats (Khan & Akhtar, 2020). The increasing demand for digital Qur'anic resources has led to a shift from traditional printed materials to electronic formats, improving accessibility and engagement among students, researchers, and scholars (Al-Kandari & Al-Salem, 2021). However, despite these advancements, academic libraries including federal university of education Kano continue to face significant challenges in acquiring, organizing, and managing Qur'anic resources effectively.

One of the major challenges in academic libraries is the acquisition of Qur'anic materials, particularly electronic resources. Financial constraints, copyright restrictions, and limited access to high-quality digital content hinder libraries' ability to provide comprehensive Qur'anic collections (Abdullahi, 2019). Additionally, the organization and cataloguing of Qur'anic resources pose difficulties due to the diversity of available materials, including translations, commentaries (*tafsir*), and scholarly interpretations (Rahman & Yusuf, 2022). Proper classification and indexing are essential for ensuring efficient retrieval and usability of these resources.

Moreover, the management of Qur'anic resources in academic libraries requires trained personnel with expertise in both Islamic studies and digital librarianship. The lack of skilled professionals proficient in Qur'anic cataloguing, digital archiving, and metadata creation has further impeded the seamless integration of Qur'anic resources in library systems (Sani & Bello, 2020). Additionally, technological limitations, inadequate digital infrastructure, and inconsistent Internet access have affected the accessibility of electronic Qur'anic resources, limiting their effectiveness in promoting Qur'anic literacy (Oloyede, 2021).

This study explored issues, challenges and proposes effective strategies for enhancing Qur'anic literacy through improved availability, accessibility, and utilization of printed and electronic Qur'anic resources in federal university of education Kano (FUE) library. By addressing these issues, academic libraries can better fulfil their role in supporting Qur'anic education and research, ensuring that students and scholars have unrestricted access to essential Islamic knowledge sources.

Academic libraries play a crucial role in supporting Qur'anic literacy by providing access to print and electronic Qur'anic resources. However, despite the increasing demand for these materials, many academic libraries, particularly in FUE, face significant challenges in acquiring, organizing, and managing both printed and electronic Qur'anic resources effectively. The availability of these resources is often limited due to budget constraints, copyright issues, and inadequate acquisition policies, making it difficult for students, researchers, and scholars to access comprehensive Qur'anic collections (Khan & Akhtar, 2020).

The organization and classification of Qur'anic resources in academic libraries remain a challenge due to the lack of standardized cataloging systems, making retrieval difficult (Al-Kandari & Al-Salem, 2021). Electronic Qur'anic resources are poorly integrated into library databases, limiting accessibility. Technological challenges, including inadequate digital infrastructure, unreliable Internet, and low ICT skills among staff, further hinder effective management (Oloyede, 2021). Additionally, the absence of digital archiving systems and metadata standards reduces their usefulness (Sani & Bello, 2020). The lack of trained professionals and preservation policies puts rare Qur'anic manuscripts at risk of being lost or underutilized (Abdullahi, 2019).

Given these challenges, there is a pressing need to examine the role of academic libraries in providing access to Qur'anic resources, identify barriers to their effective utilization, and propose strategies to enhance their availability and accessibility. Addressing these issues will contribute to improving Qur'anic literacy and ensuring that academic libraries fulfil their role in supporting Islamic education and research.

This study aims to examine the issues, challenges and strategies in acquiring, organizing, and managing printed and electronic Qur'anic resources in FUE library Kano. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Identify the challenges faced by library in acquiring, organizing, and managing printed and electronic Qur'anic resources in federal university of education Kano;

2. Examine the role of digital technologies in enhancing or hindering access to electronic Qur'anic resources in federal university of education Kano library;
3. Propose strategies for improving the availability, accessibility, and utilization of printed and electronic Qur'anic resources in federal university of education Kano libraruy;

This study is significant in identifying the challenges FUE Kano library faced in acquiring, organizing, and managing printed and electronic Qur'anic resources. By addressing these challenges, it provides insights to FUE Kano library and other academic libraries for improving collection development, enhancing accessibility, and integrating digital technologies to support Qur'anic literacy. The findings will assist library administrators in making informed decisions on funding, digital resource management, and cataloguing to ensure effective preservation and utilization of Qur'anic materials.

Additionally, the study highlighted the need for specialized training in Islamic librarianship and the adoption of digital tools to enhance Qur'anic resource management. It offers recommendations for digitization, classification, and policy reforms to improve accessibility. Ultimately, this research benefits students, lecturers and researchers of FEU Kano, and the broader Muslim community by strengthening academic research, spiritual engagement, and lifelong learning.

This study examined acquisition, organization, and management of printed and electronic Qur'anic resources in FUE Kano library, focusing on issues, challenges and strategies for improving access. It explored digital technologies' impact on Qur'anic resource accessibility, considering Internet availability, digital literacy, and database integration. It also assesses best practices in cataloguing, preservation, and classification. Covering printed Qurans, translations, tafsir, and digital resources, the study provides insights into how academic libraries support Qur'anic literacy and research, emphasizing both traditional and electronic resource management for enhanced accessibility and utilization.

Empirical Literature Review

Ibrahim and Musa (2020) conducted a study titled *Funding, Acquisition and Challenges of Qur'anic Resources in Nigerian Academic Libraries* in Northern Nigeria. Their findings revealed that inadequate funding, institutional neglect, and a lack of trained personnel significantly hinder the acquisition and organization of Qur'anic resources. The study involved a population of 50 librarians across ten academic libraries, showing that 70% of respondents reported difficulties in obtaining up-to-date Qur'anic materials. Similarly, Aliyu (2021), in a study conducted in Kano State, titled *Challenges in Organizing Islamic Collections in Nigerian Academic Libraries,* found that poor cataloguing and classification systems led to accessibility issues, affecting students and researchers in five major academic libraries surveyed.

Bello and Yusuf (2019), in their research titled *The Role of Digital Libraries in Promoting Qur'anic Literacy Among University Students* in Southwest Nigeria, examined how digital technologies enhance Qur'anic resource accessibility. Their findings, based on a population of 200 students and 30 librarians, indicated that 85% of respondents benefited from online Qur'anic resources, yet 40% of libraries lacked the necessary digital infrastructure to support e-Qur'anic materials. Equally, Adebayo and Sani (2022), in a study titled *Barriers to the Effective Utilization of Digital Qur'anic Resources in Academic Libraries* in Kaduna State, found that limited internet access, low digital literacy, and inadequate technical support hindered effective use. Their study surveyed 150 library users and 20 librarians, with 60% of respondents citing slow Internet speed as a major barrier.

Ahmed and Umar (2021), in their research titled *Enhancing the Availability of Qur'anic Resources Through Digital Collaborations in Nigerian Universities,* conducted in Bauchi State, explored strategies to improve Qur'anic resource access. Their findings, based on 100 librarians and faculty

members, showed that collaborations with Islamic research institutions and open-access repositories increased the availability of Qur'anic texts. Similarly, Hassan and Abdullahi (2023), in their study titled *Strategies for Improving Access and Utilization of Printed and Electronic Qur'anic Resources in Nigerian Universities* in Sokoto State**,** surveyed 80 library staff and students and found that training programs for librarians, digital indexing, and awareness campaigns significantly improved Qur'anic literacy and resource utilization.

Methodology

This study employs a descriptive survey research design with a qualitative approach, using interviews to explore the challenges and strategies in acquiring, organizing, and managing printed and electronic Qur'anic resources in academic libraries. The target population consists of seven (7) library staff, including four (4) from the Arabic Section and three (3) from the E-Library Section. Given the small population, the study adopts a total enumeration sampling technique, ensuring all staff members participated. Data were analysed using thematic analysis to identify key issues in resource acquisition, accessibility, and digital integration for enhancing Qur'anic literacy.

Results

Theme One: Challenges in Acquiring, Organizing, and Managing Electronic Qur'anic Resources

Sub Theme One: Funding Constraints

The findings of this study reveal a significant challenge in the acquisition of digital Qur'anic resources, with all 7 respondents (100%) identifying insufficient funding as a key barrier. While some printed Qur'anic materials are accessible, the respondents emphasized that the lack of adequate financial support severely restricts the ability to acquire electronic versions. This financial limitation creates a considerable gap, preventing users from accessing a broader range of digital Qur'anic materials. As a result, opportunities for research and learning are significantly curtailed, limiting the overall educational experience and scholarly engagement with Qur'anic content.

Sub Theme Two: Cataloguing and Classification Issues

The findings of this study highlight the critical issue of the absence of a standardized system for indexing and organizing Qur'anic resources, a challenge identified as reported by all 7 respondents (100%). This lack of a unified classification system hampers users' ability to efficiently access Qur'anic materials, both in printed and digital formats. Without a clear structure, navigating through these resources becomes a time-consuming and frustrating process, which impedes their overall usability and accessibility. The absence of a standardized approach to organization ultimately restricts the effectiveness of Qur'anic resources in academic libraries, limiting their potential for research, study, and scholarly engagement.

Sub Theme Three: Technical Expertise

According to the study, 4 out of 7 respondents (57.1%) highlighted the negative impact of insufficiently trained personnel in the Arabic section on the effective management of electronic Qur'anic resources. Despite 3 respondents (42.9%) being trained in e-library management, their expertise might not be fully utilized for Arabic-language materials. This mismatch in expertise leads to inefficiencies in organizing and providing access to Qur'anic resources, both in electronic and printed forms. As a result, the potential benefits of having trained personnel in managing these resources are not fully realized, thereby affecting the overall accessibility and usability of Qur'anic materials in academic settings.

Sub Theme Four: Institutional Support

Institutional support for acquiring and managing Qur'anic resources is reported to be low. Without administrative prioritization and adequate resource allocation, academic libraries struggle to expand

their Qur'anic collections, particularly in digital formats. This limitation reduces the ability of the libraries to meet the needs of students and researchers.

Sub Theme Five: Storage and Preservation Challenges

The study highlights a critical challenge in the storage and preservation of Qur'anic resources, as narrated by all 7 respondents (100%). While storage facilities for printed Qur'anic materials are available, their limited capacity restricts efficient organization and accessibility. More notably, the absence of designated storage infrastructure for electronic Qur'anic resources poses a significant barrier to digital preservation. Without a structured system for storing and managing digital materials, long-term access and sustainability are compromised, limiting the effective use of electronic Qur'anic resources for research, learning, and scholarly engagement.

Sub Theme Six: Copyright and Licensing Issues

The study reveals a significant challenge regarding copyright and licensing, as all 7 respondents (100%) stated that libraries face difficulties in obtaining permissions for electronic Qur'anic resources due to legal restrictions. These copyright barriers limit the acquisition and distribution of digital Qur'anic texts, preventing academic libraries from fully expanding their collections. As a result, efforts to enhance Qur'anic literacy and provide broader access to Qur'anic materials through digital platforms are severely hindered, affecting the overall educational mission of libraries.

Theme Two: Role of Digital Technologies in Enhancing or Hindering Access to Qur'anic Resources

Sub Theme One: Availability of Digital Qur'anic Resources

The availability of electronic Qur'anic resources in federal university of education Kano library is limited. While some digital materials, including e-Qur'an and tafsir, exist, they are not comprehensive enough to meet users' needs. This limitation affects students and researchers who rely on digital resources for learning and scholarly activities.

Sub Theme Two: Internet Accessibility

Unreliable and slow Internet connectivity poses a significant barrier to accessing online Qur'anic resources. Respondents highlighted that Internet availability is inconsistent, and even when accessible it often operates at a slow speed. This issue restricts users from effectively utilizing online Qur'anic databases and digital materials.

Sub Theme Three: Library Digital Infrastructure

While computers are available for use, the absence of dedicated databases and a digital library management system for Qur'anic resources hinders proper access and organization of e-Qr'anic resources. The respondent/interviewee narrated that without a structured digital system, users struggle to retrieve and engage with Qur'anic resources effectively, reducing the potential benefits of digital technology.

Sub Theme Four: Technical Support Services

Technical support personnel are available to assist users with digital Qur'anic resources as revealed by the interviewee. However, the effectiveness of these services is limited by the scarcity of digital materials. The presence of IT support is beneficial, but without sufficient electronic Qur'anic resources, users cannot fully utilize their expertise.

Sub Theme Five: Restrictions and Barriers

Access to digital Qur'anic resources is further hindered by restrictions such as login requirements, subscription fees, and digital rights management issues. The interviewee highlighted that these barriers limit free and seamless access to Qur'anic materials, creating challenges for students, researchers, and library users seeking to engage with digital Qur'anic knowledge.

Theme Three: Strategies for Improving the Availability, Accessibility, and Utilization of Printed and Electronic Qur'anic Resources

Sub Theme One: Increased Funding and Resource Allocation

Academic libraries should advocate for increased budgetary allocations to acquire both printed and electronic Qur'anic resources. This can be achieved through institutional funding, grants, and partnerships with Islamic organizations or research bodies to enhance Qur'anic literacy.

Sub Theme Two: Development of a Digital Qur'anic Database

Libraries should establish a dedicated digital repository for Qur'anic resources, including e-Quran, translations, tafsir, and scholarly works. This database should be easily searchable and categorized based on standardized cataloguing and classification systems to improve access.

Sub Theme Three: Strengthening Internet Connectivity

Improving Internet infrastructure within libraries is essential for accessing online Qur'anic materials. Collaboration with ICT service providers and educational institutions can help enhance Internet speed and reliability, ensuring uninterrupted access to digital Qur'anic resources.

Sub Theme Four: Training Library Staff in Digital Resource Management

Capacity-building programs should be organized for library staff, especially those in Arabic sections, to enhance their skills in managing and organizing digital Qur'anic resources. Training in digital cataloguing, metadata creation, and e-resource management will ensure efficient service delivery.

Sub Theme Five: Establishing Institutional Policies for Qur'anic Resource Management.

Clear policies should be developed to guide the acquisition, organization, and preservation of Qur'anic resources. These policies should also address copyright and licensing concerns to ensure sustainable access to digital Qur'anic materials.

Sub Theme Six: User Education and Awareness Programs

Workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns should be conducted to educate students and researchers on how to access and utilize both printed and electronic Qur'anic resources effectively. This will enhance engagement and promote Qur'anic literacy in academic settings.

Sub Theme Seven: Collaboration with External Institutions and Publishers

Libraries should collaborate with Islamic research centers, publishers, and online platforms that provide free and subscription-based access to Qur'anic resources. These partnerships can help in acquiring high-quality digital materials at reduced costs.

By implementing these strategies, academic libraries can significantly improve the availability, accessibility, and utilization of Qur'anic resources, ultimately promoting Qur'anic literacy among students and researchers.

Discussion

The findings of this study align with existing literature that highlights key challenges in acquiring, organizing, and managing electronic Qur'anic resources in academic libraries. One of the major obstacles identified is the lack of sufficient funding, which limits the acquisition of digital Qur'anic materials. This finding is consistent with the work of Khan and Ahmed (2020), who found that inadequate financial resources hinder the procurement of digital Islamic resources in academic libraries across Muslim-majority countries. Similarly, this study reveals that printed Qur'anic materials are available, but electronic versions remain underfunded, restricting users' access to comprehensive Qur'anic literature. The absence of a standardized cataloguing and classification system further complicates the accessibility of these resources. As noted by Ibrahim and Yusuf (2019), the lack of proper indexing in Islamic libraries reduces efficiency in retrieving religious texts, making it difficult for users to locate specific Qur'anic materials. Additionally, the shortage

of trained personnel in the Arabic section negatively impacts the management of electronic Qur'anic resources, mirroring the findings of Abdullah et al. (2021), who emphasized that specialized training in handling digital religious texts is often lacking in academic libraries. Institutional support also emerged as a critical factor affecting the acquisition and management of Qur'anic resources. This study found that administrative backing for Qur'anic collections is low, which aligns with the research of Olanrewaju and Musa (2018), who reported that Islamic studies resources often receive less institutional priority compared to other academic disciplines. Furthermore, storage and preservation challenges persist, with limited infrastructure for digital Qur'anic materials. This finding corresponds with the work of Farouk and Bello (2022), who found that most academic libraries in Nigeria lack designated digital preservation strategies for Qur'anic texts, thereby affecting long-term accessibility. Finally, copyright and licensing issues were identified as significant barriers to acquiring electronic Qur'anic resources, which supports the findings of Rahman (2020), who noted that digital rights management policies often restrict access to Islamic e-books and scholarly materials. These comparisons highlight the broader systemic challenges facing academic libraries and emphasize the urgent need for policy interventions, improved funding, and institutional commitment to enhancing Qur'anic literacy through accessible digital and printed resources.

Conclusion

This study has explored the challenges and strategies in acquiring, organizing, and managing printed and electronic Qur'anic resources in academic libraries in Kano State. The findings reveal significant barriers, including inadequate funding, lack of trained personnel, absence of standardized cataloguing systems, institutional neglect, and technical constraints such as poor digital infrastructure and copyright restrictions. These factors collectively hinder the availability and accessibility of Qur'anic resources, limiting their role in promoting Qur'anic literacy among students, researchers, and the general academic community.

Despite these challenges, the study underscores the potential of digital technologies in improving access to Qur'anic resources, provided that libraries receive adequate funding, institutional support, and technical expertise. Implementing structured cataloguing systems, training staffs in digital resource management, and enhancing digital infrastructure are crucial steps toward addressing these issues. Moreover, collaboration with relevant stakeholders, such as Islamic organizations, educational institutions, and funding agencies, can play a vital role in improving Qur'anic resource acquisition and management. By addressing these challenges, academic libraries can better fulfil their role in supporting Qur'anic literacy and advancing Islamic scholarship in Nigeria.

Recommendations

1. The library should conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to identify specific gaps in funding, trained personnel, storage infrastructure, and indexing systems for both printed and electronic Qur'anic resources. This will help in formulating targeted solutions to improve acquisition, organization, and management.
2. The library should invest in digital repository systems with user-friendly interfaces and multilingual support to enhance access to electronic Qur'anic resources while addressing technological and copyright-related barriers.
3. The library should establish partnerships with Islamic research institutions and funding bodies to secure resources, improve digital infrastructure, and train personnel in the effective management of both printed and electronic Qur'anic materials.

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