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Quranic Stories and Creative Thinking in Quranic Students

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ABSTRACT

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Objective: Narratives serve as a form of educational content that assumes a pivotal role in the assessment of arguments while fostering children's creative thinking and enhancing their cognitive capabilities. Among the various categories of narratives are Quranic tales, which, in addition to amplifying children's creativity and analytical thought, are instrumental in the spiritual education process and the internalization of their moral and social principles. Consequently, the objective of the current research is to explore the correlation between Quranic narratives and the creative thinking skills of Quranic learners.

Methods: This investigation is classified as a survey study, with the data being subjected to analysis via a single-sample t-test and the Friedman test. The statistical population for this study comprises 25 educators from the Muhammad bin Jazari Quranic Institute located in Shiraz. Data acquisition was executed through a questionnaire crafted by the researcher.

Results: The outcomes of the research reveal a statistically significant association between Quranic tales and the enhancement of creative thinking among Quranic learners. Among the various dimensions of the relationship between Quranic narratives and creative cognition, the aspect concerning the relationship between Quranic tales and intellectual development registers the highest measure at 15.39, while the aspect of illustrating Quranic storybooks demonstrates the most substantial connection with the augmentation of children's creative thought.

Conclusions: The insights derived from this study may prove beneficial in the formulation of interventions predicated on the reading of Quranic narratives to cultivate creative thinking among Quranic learners.

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Introduction

Today, the advancement of technology coupled with the proliferation of information has precipitated significant transformations in lifestyles; consequently, it is imperative for children and adolescents to acquire a multitude of skills to effectively confront the challenges presented by contemporary society, one of which is the capacity for creative thinking ([Aboluwodi, 2018](#); [Vaganova et al., 2019](#)). The quintessential and most fundamental instrument for fostering and enhancing children's intellectual creativity is the employment of narratives; in this manner, children are systematically exposed to various life opportunities and experiences within the narrative framework, thereby stimulating their curiosity and intellectual engagement; such an approach lays the essential groundwork for innovative thought processes ([Tabieh et al., 2021](#); [Ulu-Aslan & Baş, 2023](#)). Therefore, the incorporation of narratives within educational frameworks as a fundamental educational instrument, particularly during the formative years of a child's development, is crucial; for "narratives can augment the child's cognitive abilities and inquisitive nature, aiding him in evaluating arguments, comprehending causal relationships, discovering and analyzing concepts, and deriving accurate conclusions from events" ([Rashtchi, 2012](#)).

Creative thinking constitutes one of the pivotal contemporary skills requisites for the advancement and development of individuals and societies in the current epoch ([Fadaei et al., 2022](#); [Hamidi Nasrabad et al., 2020](#)). Creative thinking is a sophisticated cognitive process that enables individuals to approach problems and issues from novel and unconventional perspectives, thereby enhancing their capacity to adapt to life's challenges ([Syahrin et al., 2019](#)). This form of cognitive engagement is a skill that empowers individuals to devise innovative solutions and formulate new plans through the faculties of independent thought and reflection. Creative thinking represents a genre of cognition that engenders fresh perspectives, emerging methodologies, and novel ways of comprehending and interpreting objects and situations ([Sheibani et al., 2024](#))

Given that childhood represents the optimal period for the cultivation of creative thinking and the reinforcement of social competencies, one of the fundamental strategies for imparting this mode of thinking to children is through the narration and reconstruction of stories; such storytelling facilitates the establishment of a mental connection between children and the characters within the narratives, thereby advancing cognitive development and enhancing their intellectual skills; for "a portion of the cognitive challenge arises not merely from comprehending the elements of the

narrative, but also from discerning the interplay between the narrative and reality" ([Ab Wahab et al., 2022](#); [Tian & Liao, 2016](#)).

Among the most significant categories of narratives are Quranic stories, which serve as a prominent factor in the spiritual education and the impartation of social values to individuals, particularly children. This category of narratives "is intricately connected with the three fundamental principles of reason, choice, and knowledge. The rhetoric employed in the narratives of the Quran provides the audience with the opportunity to pursue the unspoken truths within the confines of their cognitive frameworks and thus embark on journeys to distant realms by allowing their thoughts to wander. In this manner, the audience is afforded the opportunity to engage in focused contemplation and explore their cognitive potentials, with the truth serving as the central core of the Quranic narrative" ([Shahabadi et al., 2016](#)).

The narratives presented within the Quran assume a critical function in the educational and developmental processes of children, and in addition to facilitating sustainable learning and establishing a foundation of values and methodologies, they enhance their cognitive and imaginative capabilities and activate their reasoning and logical processes. The heightened significance of this phenomenon is illustrated by the integration of religious heritage with contemporary educational paradigms, which promotes the advancement of children's creative thinking abilities.

Quranic narratives represent a distinctive category of literature that articulates a multitude of moral, social, and religious themes. The narration of these stories to children engenders a closer connection to their existential authenticity and affords them access to profound meanings and unadulterated Islamic teachings, thereby enabling them to adopt a novel perspective when confronting life's challenges.

Among the most significant investigations that have explored the intersection of religious and Quranic narratives with creative thinking skills or inquiry as a metric for the enhancement of creative thinking are the following. In his scholarly article, [Alrashed \(2017\)](#) assessed the impact of religious and social narratives on the cultivation of creative thinking skills among 92 preschool children in the Al-Qassim region, employing two experimental groups and a control group. He analyzed one experimental group exposed to religious narratives and the other to social narratives. The findings of the study reveal a statistically significant disparity between the experimental and

control groups, with results predominantly favoring the experimental group, particularly in the domains of creative thinking and cognitive flexibility.

[Shahabadi et al. \(2016\)](#) investigated the influence of Quranic narratives on questioning skills, which are fundamental elements of the learning process. The statistical sample of their research comprised second-grade male students from high schools in the 5th district of Tehran, arranged into experimental and control groups. A principal finding of this study is that the questioning abilities of students who were exposed to Quranic narratives (experimental group) were markedly superior to those of the control group.

In another investigation, [Al-Mandhari \(2011\)](#) examined the effect of utilizing Quranic narratives on the enhancement of creative thinking skills among preschool children in the Safout region (Oman), also employing experimental and control groups. The findings of this research indicated that the incorporation of Quranic narratives significantly influenced the development of creative thinking skills in the children from the experimental group.

[Eskandari and Kiani \(2008\)](#) conducted a comprehensive analysis in an article regarding the influence of narratives on enhancing the philosophizing and questioning abilities of 60 first-year high school students in Tehran, focusing specifically on the impact of Quranic narratives on the augmentation of their religious questioning skills. The findings indicated that the pedagogical approach of utilizing narratives, particularly those derived from the Quran, significantly contributes to the enhancement of questioning skills, with a particular emphasis on religious inquiry. A thorough examination of the research undertaken reveals that a majority of studies within the country have concentrated on the relationship between narratives and the questioning abilities of students; however, the present investigation not only explores the correlation between Quranic narratives and the enhancement of creative thinking skills in preschool children but also identifies the specific component that exhibits the most substantial relationship with the creative thinking of students engaged with Quranic content.

In this context, the current study aims to investigate the correlation between Quranic narratives and the creative thinking abilities of Quranic students at the Muhammad bin Jazari Quranic Institute in Shiraz, while endeavoring to address the following inquiries:

1 .What is the correlation between Quranic narratives and the creative thinking of Quranic students?

2 .Which components of the Quran exhibit the strongest relationship with the creative thinking of Quranic learners?

Material and Methods

The current methodological framework employed in this investigation is characterized by its purposive nature and is classified as a survey in reference to the methodology of data acquisition. The statistical population encompasses a total of 25 educators affiliated with the Muhammad bin Jazari Quranic Institute located in Shiraz, which was utilized in its entirety as the statistical sample. Subsequent to the compilation of data, the t-test was employed as a statistical tool for data analysis. The instrument for data collection in this study is a questionnaire developed by the researchers, which is informed by extensive literature review and the adaptation of analogous questionnaires within this scholarly domain. The questionnaire's validity was substantiated by subject matter experts, while its reliability was established through the application of Cronbach's alpha coefficient, yielding $\alpha=0.81$ for the construct of creative thinking and $\alpha=0.73$ for the domain of Quranic narratives; thereafter, the aforementioned instrument was formally administered to facilitate the research process.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics of the research sample indicate that most respondents were female (72%) and had a bachelor's degree (56%). Their demographic characteristics are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics

Variable	Value	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	18	72
	Male	7	28
Education	Diploma	4	16
	Bachelor	14	56
	Master degree	6	24
	Ph.D.	1	4

Descriptive analysis of the study variables, including mean, median, and standard deviation, for the study variables is given in table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive information of the research variables

Variable	Mean	Median	SD
Quranic stories	4.70	4.27	2.10
Creative thinking	3.28	3.10	1.81

In order to analyze the data and select the type of tests required, the normality of the variables must first be checked. If the variables are normal, then parametric and nonparametric tests are used; otherwise, only nonparametric tests are allowed. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test is used to check the normality of the variables. If the significance level of this test is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis that the data is normal is accepted; therefore, the following statistical hypothesis is examined.

Table 3. Test of the normality of the data of research variables

Variable	K-S	P	Status
Quranic stories	1.124	0.150	Normal
Creative thinking	1.177	0.111	Normal

The table 3 shows the values of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the P value for the variables. As can be seen, the P value of the variables under study is greater than 0.05 and the null hypothesis is not rejected; as a result, the data of the variables under study are normal.

Question 1: What is the relationship between Quranic stories and the creative thinking of Quran learners?

The table 4 shows the relationship between Quranic stories and the creative thinking of Quran learners using a one-sample t-test. All tests were performed at a significance level of five percent ($p < 0.05$). The lower limit for all factors is 3, so the following statistical assumptions should be examined at a 95% confidence level:

H_0 : The average relationship between each of the factors (listed in Table 4) affecting the effectiveness of stories and the creative thinking of Quran learners is equal to 3.

H_1 : The average relationship between each of the factors or components (listed in Table 4) affecting the effectiveness of stories and the creative thinking of Quran learners is not equal to 3.

$$H_0 = \mu = 3$$

$$H_1 = \mu \neq 3$$

Table 4. One sample T-test results related to effective factors of Quranic stories on creative thinking

Item	Test Value = 3						Confidence interval	
	T value	DF	P	Mean	Mean difference	High limit	Low limit	
The extent of the impact of Quranic stories on the creation of creative thinking in Quranic learners	13.03	24	0.001	4.07	1.07	1.25	0.90	
The extent of the special coaching course on the creation of creative thinking in Quranic learners	1.49	24	0.15	3.28	1.28	0.46	0.10	
The extent of the Quranic learner's interest in stories on the creation of his creative thinking	13.37	24	0.001	4.56	1.56	1.80	1.31	
The extent of Quranic stories on the social development of Quranic learners on the creation of his creative thinking	13.58	24	0.001	4.60	1.60	1.83	1.36	
The extent of the impact of stories on the development of the religious personality of Quranic learners on the creation of his creative thinking	12.62	24	0.001	4.48	1.48	1.72	1.23	
The extent of the impact of stories on the intellectual development and upbringing of Quranic learners on the creation of creative thinking	15.39	24	0.001	4.56	1.56	1.76	1.35	
The extent of the impact of stories on the moral development and upbringing of Quranic learners on the creation of his creative thinking	14.23	24	0.001	4.56	1.56	1.71	1.34	
The extent of the impact of stories on guiding the imagination of Quranic learners on the creation of his creative thinking	8.22	24	0.001	4.32	1.32	1.65	0.98	
The extent of the impact of Quranic learners on the role models of the heroes of the stories on the creation of creative thinking in Quranic learners	7.46	24	0.001	4.24	1.24	1.58	0.89	
The extent of the impact of Quranic stories on solving Quranic learners' problems on the creation of creative thinking	7.85	24	0.001	4.20	1.20	1.51	0.88	
The extent of the impact of Quranic learners' skills on solving their problems and shaping their creative thinking	4.67	24	0.001	3.84	0.84	1.21	0.46	
The extent of the impact of Quranic stories on creating a good relationship between Quranic learners and their parents and creating creative thinking in Quranic learners	8.57	24	0.001	4.24	1.24	1.53	0.94	
The extent of the impact of current stories on moral points on the creation of Creative thinking of Quran learners	4.23	24	0.001	3.68	0.68	1.01	0.34	
The extent of the effect of current stories relying on vocabulary, words and sentences for Quran learners' language learning to create their creative thinking	3.32	24	0.001	3.32	0.32	0.62	0.01	
The extent of the effect of the role of stories in creating initiative and mental creativity in Quran learners and creating creative thinking of Quran learners	8.43	24	0.001	4.16	0.32	1.44	0.87	
The extent of the effect of Quran learners' role in asking creative questions to create creative thinking of Quran learners	3.52	24	0.001	3.64	0.64	1.01	0.26	
The extent of the effect of the usefulness of stories in introducing the values and norms of society to Quran learners to create their creative thinking	8.43	24	0.001	4.16	1.16	1.44	0.87	
The extent of the effect of the way of storytelling (with singing, music or simply) in influencing Quran learners to create creative thinking of Quran learners	10.36	24	0.001	4.48	1.48	1.77	1.18	

The extent of the effect of illustrating books in understanding and facilitating the subject of the story to the Quran and creating his creative thinking	15.08	24	0.001	4.68	1.68	1.90	1.45	
The extent of the effect of listening to the voice of the Quran reciter with regard to the story content to create creative thinking of Quran learners	0.214	24	0.832	2.96	-	0.04	0.34	-0.42
The extent of the effect of Quran learners' interest in listening to Quran stories with regard to new stories and the effect of this innovation to create creative thinking of Quran learners	2.75	24	0.001	3.48	0.48	0.83	0.12	
The extent of the effect of addressing realism in children's stories to create creative thinking of Quran learners	5.94	24	0.001	4.04	1.04	1.40	0.67	
The effectiveness of the measure Stories that were told or read to Quran students at the institute to foster creative thinking in Quran students	9.43	24	0.001	4.28	1.28	1.56	1	

Upon meticulous scrutiny of Table 4, it is evident that the computed significance levels for each of the components pertaining to Quranic narratives and the creative cognition of Quranic learners - with the sole exception of the component concerning the extent of auditory engagement with the recitations of the Quran in relation to the narrative content influencing the creative cognition of Quranic learners - are below the threshold of 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). Given the calculated value of T and degrees of freedom equal to 24, the null hypothesis consequently fails to be upheld. Furthermore, as the mean values derived from all components exceed the criterion threshold of 3, it can be concluded that there exists a desirable and statistically significant relationship between the aforementioned components of Quranic narratives and the enhancement of creative thinking among Quranic learners.

Regarding the effect of the amount of listening to the voice of the Quran reciter with regard to the story content on increasing the creative thinking of the Quran learner, since the calculated significance level of this component in the table 4 according to result ($t=0.214$, and $df=24$) is reported to be more than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), then the null hypothesis is accepted and since the calculated mean is equal to 2.96 and is within the criterion number of 3, therefore the amount of listening to the voice of the Quran reciter with regard to the story content has a favorable and moderate effect on increasing the creative thinking of the Quran learner.

Question 2: Which of the Quranic components has a greater relationship with the creative thinking of the Quran learners?

The results of the Friedman test to answer this question are summarized in table 5.

Table 5. Results of Friedman's ranking for the factors studied in the present study

Row	Factors influencing the creative thinking of Quran learners	Mean rank
1	How much training has the instructor received?	6.06
2	How much interest does the Quran learner have in stories?	14.81
3	To what extent do Quranic stories affect the social development of the Quran learner?	15.90
4	To what extent do stories affect the development of the religious personality of the Quran learner?	14.77
5	To what extent do stories affect the intellectual development and upbringing?	15.17
6	To what extent do stories affect the moral development and upbringing of the Quran learner?	15.15
7	To what extent do stories play a role in guiding the imagination of the Quran learner?	13.13
8	To what extent do Quran learners follow the heroes of the stories as role models?	12.50
9	To what extent can Quranic stories be effective in solving the problems of the Quran learner?	12.42
10	To what extent can the Quran learner refer to Quranic stories to solve his problems?	9.63
11	To what extent do Quranic stories play a role in creating a good relationship between Quran learners and their parents?	12.90
12	To what extent do current stories rely on moral points?	8.19
13	How much do current stories rely on words, phrases, and sentences in order to help Quran learners learn the language?	5.54
14	What is the role of stories in creating intellectual initiative and creativity in Quran learners?	12.04
15	To what extent do your Quran learners ask creative questions?	8
16	To what extent can stories be useful in introducing the values and norms of society to Quran learners?	11.83
17	To what extent does the way of storytelling (with singing, music, or simply) play a role in influencing Quran learners?	14.29
18	To what extent can the illustration of a book help Quran learners understand and facilitate the subject of the story?	16.15
19	When Quran learners listen to the voice of the Quran reciter, how much does it pay attention to the content of the story?	4.02
20	To what extent do Quran learners usually like to invent new stories after listening to Quran stories?	6.98
21	To what extent is it necessary to focus on realism in children's stories?	10.67
22	To what extent did the stories that were narrated or read to Quran learners in the institution have an impact on them?	12.88
Chi-Square=199.471		DF=21
P < 0.001		

According to the data presented in Table 5 derived from the Friedman test, it can be inferred that, given the significance level is below 0.05, the hierarchy of the factors examined in relation to their correlation with creative thinking skills is deemed significant in terms of its relevance, thereby validating the applicability of the Friedman test. It is evident that among the variables analyzed, the factor pertaining to the extent to which illustrations in books aid Quran learners in comprehending and facilitating the narrative of the story exhibits the most pronounced correlation with their creative thinking, whereas the aspect of the Quran learner's insufficient attention to the content of the Quranic narrative while listening to the reciter's voice demonstrates the least significance and correlation in comparison to the other identified factors. Consequently, it can be

concluded that the association of the 22 factors influencing creative thinking is substantial and is thus accepted.

Discussion

The findings pertaining to the initial research inquiry elucidate that, among the various facets of the correlation between Quranic narratives and the enhancement of creative cognition in Quranic students at the Mohammad Bin Jazari Institute in Shiraz, the most pronounced relationship pertains to the degree to which the narrative influences intellectual growth and the advancement of creative thought, yielding a coefficient of 15.39. The dimensions regarding the effect of illustrated Quranic texts on the comprehension and facilitation of narrative subjects, the influence of these stories on the moral advancement and development of Quranic students to foster their creative thinking, the impact of Quranic stories on the social maturation of students and the augmentation of creative thought, as well as the role of narratives in shaping the religious identity and enhancing the creative faculties of Quranic students, are respectively of paramount significance. The relevance of the aforementioned dimensions in relation to the enhancement of creative thinking among Quranic students substantiates the assertion that Quranic narratives are instrumental in imparting sound reasoning, logical thought processes, and the cultivation of children's religious and social identities, thereby directing their cognitive faculties towards inquiry, experiential learning, and exploration.

Moreover, it is imperative to acknowledge the substantial correlation between the facet of illustrating Quranic storybooks and the proliferation of creative thought among children within the aforementioned institution; the research findings distinctly demonstrated that this facet exhibits the most significant association with the enhancement of creative thinking among Quranic students at the Mohammad Bin Jazari Institute in Shiraz. A primary rationale for this phenomenon is the capacity of Quranic illustrated storybooks to amplify motivation, augment cognitive abilities, and invigorate children's creativity, thereby actualizing their potential; furthermore, they facilitate the exploration of meaning and foster a novel comprehension of the intrinsic workings of phenomena and their manifestations within the realm of reality.

In light of the assertion that delivering educational content through narratives invigorates cognitive engagement and actualizes individual creativity, it is anticipated that stakeholders and educators

within educational institutions should leverage this approach to enhance pedagogical practices, thereby establishing a foundation for the cultivation of creative and critical thinking among students. In contemporary contexts, considering the detrimental effects of cyberspace and its adverse influence on the educational experiences of adolescent learners, it is advisable to employ Quranic stories as a straightforward yet potent and dynamic medium for conveying life philosophies, with the objective of transforming attitudes and rectifying behaviors; concurrently, it is essential to furnish opportunities for learners to engage in creative contemplation, thereby fostering problem-solving competencies. Finally, recognizing that the current study sample does not encapsulate the entirety of Quranic learners across diverse regions, it is recommended that further regional inquiries be conducted to facilitate the generalization of the findings.

Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Author contributions

All authors contributed to the study conception and design, material preparation, data collection and analysis. All authors contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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