# LIVING QUR'AN RESEARCH METHOD: ANALYSIS OF TRIANGULATION APPLICATION IN DATA VALIDATION

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to analyze the application of triangulation as a method for testing data validity in Living Qur'an research within student papers. This research employs a qualitative approach, which, in terms of its background, falls under library research. Data were obtained from the repository of students' final assignments at PTIQ Jakarta University as the research sample. Data collection was conducted using documentation techniques, followed by content analysis. Based on the research findings, it is concluded that only a small portion of student papers related to the Living Qur'an explicitly mention triangulation as part of their data validation process. However, triangulation techniques have been implicitly applied in student research. The types of triangulation used mainly include methodological triangulation and source triangulation. Nevertheless, inconsistencies in its

application have been observed, which may raise doubts about data validity and lead to premature conclusions. Apart from these two types, time triangulation and theoretical triangulation have not been widely utilized and, in fact, tend to be entirely absent.

**Keywords:** Living Qur'an, Research Method, Triangulation, Data Validity

# ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penerapan triangulasi sebagai pengujian keabsahan data dalam penelitian *living qur'an* pada karya tulis mahasiswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, yang ditinjau dari segi latarnya termasuk dalam penelitian pustaka. Data diperoleh dari repository tugas akhir mahasiswa Universitas PTIQ Jakarta sebagai sampel penelitian. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan teknik dokumentasi, yang kemudian dianalisis melalui analisis konten. Berdasarkan penelitian yang telah dilakukan, disimpulkan bahwa masih sebagian kecil karya tulis berkaitan dengan *living qur'an* vang mahasiswa secara eksplisit mencantumkan triangulasi sebagai salah satu proses pengujian keabsahan datanya. Meski demikian, teknik triangulasi secara implisit telah diterapkan dalam penelitian mahasiswa. Triangulasi yang digunakan berkisar antara triangulasi teknik atau metode dan triangulasi sumber. Meski masih dijumpai inkonsistensi dalam penerapannya yang dapat menimbulkan keraguan akan keabsahan data dan rawan akan penarikan kesimpulan yang terburu-buru. Selain kedua triangulasi tersebut, triangulasi waktu dan triangulasi teori belum banyak digunakan, bahkan cenderung belum digunakan.

Kata Kunci: Living Qur'an, Metode Penelitian, Triangulasi, Keabsahan Data

# INTRODUCTION

Research on the Quran and its interpretation has undergone rapid development in recent times. It is no longer limited to library-based studies that explore the meaning or exegesis of the Quran but has also expanded into field studies aimed at enlivening Quranic values within society or investigating the reception of these values among communities.<sup>1</sup> This development in Quranic research with such objectives is what later came to be known as "The Living Qur'an". The discourse on the living Qur'an is believed to have emerged in Indonesia around 2005, introduced by Faizin in his article titled "Living Qur'an: Sebuah Tawaran" (A Proposal for the Living Qur'an). It was further developed by Syamsuddin in 2007 through his book "Metodologi Penelitian Living Qur'an dan Hadis" (Methodology of Living Qur'an and Hadith Research).<sup>2</sup>

Since it is based on field research, this study is considered adaptable to both qualitative and quantitative approaches. However, in practice, living Qur'an research has primarily developed through a qualitative approach. Since the emergence of the living Qur'an research discourse in Indonesia, Quranic scholars and researchers have increasingly adopted this perspective to examine the manifestation of Quranic values in society. Moreover, it is not uncommon for students in Quranic studies to apply this approach in their final academic projects.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Abdul Ghoni and Gazi Saloom, "Idealisasi Metode Living Qur'an," *Himmah: Jurnal Kajian Islam Kontemporer* 5, no. 2 (2021): 419, https://doi.org/10.47313/jkik.v5i2.1510.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sahiron Syamsuddin, *Metodologi Penelitian Living Qur'an Dan Hadis* (Yogyakarta: Teras, 2007); Hamam Faizin, "Living Qur'an: Sebuah Tawaran," *Jawa Pos*, 2005.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ulviyatun Ni'mah, "The Living Qur'an: Self-Healing Dengan Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an," *Al-Manar: Jurnal Kajian Alquran Dan Hadis* 8, no. 2 (2022): 66, https://doi.org/10.35719/amn.v8i2.26.

The issue arises because living Qur'an research, with its fieldwork-based methodology, has not been widely taught to students in the Quranic Studies and Exegesis program. Traditionally, students have been more engaged with library-based exegesis studies rather than field research. As a result, it is not surprising to find various methodological inconsistencies in conducting field studies. This argument is supported by a preliminary study on the research methodology used in the academic writings of Quranic Studies and Exegesis students who attempt to explore real-life phenomena. One of the most notable challenges lies in data validation, particularly triangulation, which is a fundamental aspect of qualitative research.

Research analyzing the use of triangulation in qualitative studies is certainly not new. A review of existing literature reveals previous studies on this topic, including research conducted by Natow on the use of triangulation to extract information from elites in qualitative research. According to Natow, triangulation helps fill gaps in responses that cannot be directly obtained from elites during interviews.<sup>4</sup> Although Natow's study examines the use of triangulation, its focus is primarily on its function rather than assessing the appropriateness of its application in research. Moreover, its formal object of study is not living Qur'an research.

Living Qur'an research has been widely conducted by Indonesian scholars over the past two decades. However, existing studies have primarily focused on developing methodologies, research procedures, and its use as a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Rebecca S. Natow, "The Use of Triangulation in Qualitative Studies Employing Elite Interviews," *Qualitative Research* 20, no. 2 (2019): 1, https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794119830077.

perspective in Quranic studies. For example, research by Nabiel,<sup>5</sup> Prasastia,<sup>6</sup> and Rafiq<sup>7</sup> explores the theoretical foundations, methodological framework, and operational procedures of living Qur'an research. Similarly, studies by Supriyanto & Zaman,<sup>8</sup> Supe'i & Ayubi,<sup>9</sup> and Zakiyah<sup>10</sup> apply the living Qur'an approach to examine social phenomena aimed at enlivening Quranic values in society.

Despite the extensive research on living Qur'an mentioned above, no studies have yet analyzed its methodological application—particularly regarding the implementation of triangulation as a means of validating research data. It remains unclear whether the use of triangulation in living Qur'an research aligns with the standards established by qualitative research experts or if discrepancies exist in its application.

Considering the research gap that needs to be explored, this study aims to examine the application of triangulation as a method for validating qualitative research data in living Qur'an studies in Indonesia. The formal

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Muhammad Nabiel, "Analysis Research Development of Living Al-Qur'an and Hadith," *Samawat: Journal of Hadith and Quranic Studies* 5, no. 2 (2021): 90, https://jurnal.staiba.ac.id/index.php/samawat/article/view/328.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Muhammad Esa Prasastia, "Living Qur'an Study (A New Approach in the Development of Quranic Tafsir)," *Eduvest* 1, no. 1 (2021): 21, https://doi.org/10.59188/eduvest.v1i1.255.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Ahmad Rafiq, "Living Qur'an: Its Texts and Practices in the Functions of the Scripture," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 22, no. 2 (2021): 469, https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.2021.2202-10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Supriyanto and Akhmad Roja Badruz Zaman, "Living Quran in the Context of Rurarl Communities: A Study on the Miracle of the Quran in Gentasari, Kroya, Cilacap," *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadits Studies* 21 (2023): 199, https://doi.org/10.1163/22321969-20230132.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Supe'i and Sholahudin Al Ayubi, "Living Quran: Tabaruk Tradition in the Book of Nurul Burhan at Nahdlatul Ulum Islamic Boarding School," *Al-Qalam: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 39, no. 1 (2022): 25, https://doi.org/10.32678/alqalam.v39i1.6372.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Ermita Zakiyah, "The Foundation of Understanding the Living Al-Qur'an as a Reinforcement of Islamic Humanism in the Cntect of Civil Society," *Al-Mada: Jurnal Agama, Sosial, Dan Budaya* 6, no. 1 (2022): 62, https://doi.org/10.31538/almada.v6i1.2707.

object of this research is limited to the final academic projects of students at Universitas PTIQ Jakarta. This institution is considered one of the pioneering institutions in Quranic research in Indonesia, where several student theses have adopted the living Qur'an perspective from various angles. Additionally, this focus is also influenced by the researcher's time constraints.

# **METHOD**

To achieve this objective, the study employs a qualitative method through library research. Data collection is conducted using documentation techniques, specifically by analyzing students' final academic projects from the e-repository of Universitas PTIQ Jakarta. The collected data is then subjected to an in-depth content analysis, focusing on the use of triangulation as a validation method in living Qur'an research. This analysis examines both its planning, as outlined in the research methodology, and its implementation, as reflected in the results and discussion sections. Such an approach ensures that conclusions are drawn with sufficient depth and rigor.

# **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

# Validity and Reliability in Qualitative Research

The use of validity and reliability has long been a common practice in quantitative research, but it has only been considered for qualitative research in the past two decades. Similarly, triangulation—originally associated with qualitative research—has recently been explored as a means to enhance data validity in quantitative studies.<sup>11</sup> Validity and reliability are

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Nahid Golafshani, "Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research," *The Qualitative Report* 8, no. 4 (2003): 597, https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2003.1870.

fundamentally tools rooted in positivist epistemology. <sup>12</sup> As a result, they are more closely linked to quantitative research, which is built upon a positivist-logical paradigm aimed at testing the generalization of hypotheses. <sup>13</sup> Consequently, when validity and reliability are applied to qualitative research—which is based on a naturalistic paradigm that seeks to understand phenomena within specific contexts—adjustments and methodological compromises are necessary to ensure their appropriate implementation. <sup>14</sup>

When discussing issues related to validity and reliability in qualitative research, Noble & Smith identified a terminological bias that arises when quantitative-specific terms and criteria for validity and reliability are directly adopted for data validation in qualitative research. To address this, they proposed alternative terms that are more suitable for assessing the credibility of qualitative research data. Some of these alternative terms include:

1. The term validity (*keabsahan*), which refers to the accuracy of findings in reflecting data precisely, is replaced with truth value (*nilai kebenaran*),

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Glyn Winter, "A Comparative Discussion of the Notion of Validity in Qualitative and Quantitative Research," *The Qualitative Report* 4, no. 3 (2000): 7, https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2000.2078.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Marie C. Hoepfl, "Choosing Qualitative Research: A Primer for Technology Education Researchers," *Journal of Technology Education* 9, no. 1 (1997): 47, http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JTE/v9n1/pdf/hoepfl.pdf.

 $<sup>^{14}</sup>$  Michael Quinn Patton,  $\it Qualitative~Research~\&~Evaluation~Methods$  (London: Sage Publications, 2001), 39.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Helen Noble and Joanna Smith, "Issues of Validity and Reliability in Qualitative Research," *Evidence-Based Nursing* 18, no. 2 (2015): 2, https://doi.org/10.1136/eb-2015-102054.

- meaning the acknowledgment of a reality that presents perspectives clearly and accurately.
- 2. The term reliability (*keandalan*), which refers to the consistency of analytical procedures, is replaced with consistency (*konsistensi*), which denotes the trustworthiness of the methods used by researchers, ensuring that their decisions are clear and transparent. Additionally, neutrality (*netralitas*) is introduced to emphasize the researcher's consistency and impartiality in presenting and analyzing data in accordance with observed phenomena.<sup>16</sup>

# THE NATURE AND TYPES OD TRIANGULATION

The initial concept of triangulation originates from ancient Greek mathematics, where it was applied across various fields. Triangulation was first introduced in research by Campbell and Diske (1959) and later developed by Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, and Sechrest (1966). These scholars agreed that researchers should use more than one research instrument to measure a variable. They introduced the idea of triangulation through multiple data sources to enhance the credibility and reliability of research findings.<sup>17</sup>

According to Patton,<sup>18</sup> as cited by Odiri, there are four types of triangulation: 1) Method or Technique Triangulation, verifying data using different methods or techniques, such as combining interviews,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Noble and Smith, 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Amatari Veronica Odiri, "Awareness and Usage of Data Triangulation among University Students in Rivers State, Nigeria," *Education Quarterly Reviews* 2, no. 2 (2019): 300, https://doi.org/10.31014/aior.1993.02.02.62.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*, 555–59.

observations, and documentation. 2) Source Triangulation, cross-checking data from different sources using the same method or technique. 3) Investigator Triangulation, using multiple researchers or observers to examine the same phenomenon for validation. 4) Theory or Perspective Triangulation, assessing the credibility of data by applying different theories, also known as comparative explanation.<sup>19</sup>

# THE URGENCY OF TRIANGULATION IN DATA VALIDATION

The primary purpose of triangulation is not to establish a single absolute truth regarding observed phenomena but rather to enhance the researcher's understanding of their findings. This is because, when a researcher collects data using triangulation, they are simultaneously conducting a credibility test by verifying the data through multiple theories, techniques, methods, and sources. This approach strengthens the reliability and depth of the research findings.<sup>20</sup>

The urgency of data triangulation can be further detailed as follows:

1) Providing deeper insights into a phenomenon by incorporating additional sources of information. 2) Minimizing data limitations by using multiple sources to confirm the same phenomenon. 3) Enhancing data verification and validation through diverse data sources, ensuring completeness. 4) Ensuring a more comprehensive dataset by integrating various perspectives.

5) Facilitating conclusion-drawing by acquiring supplementary data and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Odiri, "Awareness and Usage of Data Triangulation among University Students in Rivers State, Nigeria," 300.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Zuhri Abdussamad, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (Makassar: Syakir Media Press, 2021), 156.

information. 6) Preventing superficial conclusions by cross-examining findings. 7) Identifying inconsistencies more effectively within the data.<sup>21</sup>

# LIVING QUR'AN RESEARCH AT UNIVERSITAS PTIQ JAKARTA

As mentioned in the introduction, Universitas PTIQ Jakarta is recognized as a pioneering institution in the field of Quranic Studies and Tafsir research. Various methods, techniques, theories, and perspectives in Quranic and Tafsir studies are commonly found in the works of both students and faculty members at the university. This includes research on "Living Qur'an" and "Living Tafsir Qur'an". Although Universitas PTIQ Jakarta is not the originator of Living Qur'an research, it acknowledges its existence within Quranic studies in Indonesia. This is evidenced by the presence of numerous research studies that explicitly use the term "living" in their titles and discussions.

After conducting a search in the Universitas PTIQ Jakarta repository, at least nine academic papers or student theses were found that use the term "living" in Quranic and Tafsir studies.<sup>22</sup> However, one of these studies was excluded from the formal object of this research because it does not aim to analyze phenomena occurring in the field. Instead, it is a library research study that leans toward Tafsir analysis and focuses solely on examining the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Odiri, "Awareness and Usage of Data Triangulation among University Students in Rivers State, Nigeria," 300.

<sup>22 &</sup>quot;Title Matches Living and Item Type Matches Thesis," Repository Universitas PTIQ Jakarta, n.d., https://repository.ptiq.ac.id/cgi/search/archive/advanced?dataset archivescreen Search & action\_search Search documents merge ALL& documents & title merge=ALL&title

 $living\&creators\_name\_merge=ALL\&creators\_name=\&abstract\_merge=ALL\&abstract=\&date=\&keywords\_me.$ 

concept of living values found in the Quran.<sup>23</sup> As a result, only eight Living Qur'an studies from Universitas PTIQ Jakarta qualify for further analysis in this research.<sup>24</sup>

When categorized, these eight academic papers consist of two undergraduate theses and six master's theses from the Quranic Studies and Tafsir program at Universitas PTIQ Jakarta. From another perspective, these eight works can also be classified into one study on Living Tafsir and seven studies directly focusing on Living Qur'an.

# ANALYSIS OF TRIANGULATION APPLICATION AS A VALIDITY TEST IN LIVING QUR'AN RESEARCH

A thorough review of eight student theses from Universitas PTIQ Jakarta, which employed the Living Qur'an theory or methodology, revealed that not all studies explicitly mentioned triangulation as part of their data

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Musyfiq Amrullah, "Living Value Education Bagi Anak Berbasis Al-Qur'an" (Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2021).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Abdul Hafidh, "Tahfidz Al-Qur'an: Studi Living Qur'an Di Pondok Pesantren Al-Kamaliyyah Bogor" (Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2022); Fitri Maftuhah, "Bacaan Al-Qur'an Dalam Tradisi Tujuh Bulanan: Studi Living Qur'an Terhadap Masyarakat Kelurahan Lenteng Agung, Jakarta Selatan" (Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2023); Makmunzir, "Tradisi Pembacaan Surat Yasin Dalam Ritual Rabu Abeh: Studi Living Qur'an Pada Masyarakat Hampong Lhok Pawoh Kecamatan Manggeng Kabupaten Aceh Barat Daya" (Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2023); Azka Mufarrida, "Membangun Kesehatan Mental Melalui Aktivitas Menjurnal Al-Qur'an: Studi Living Qur'an Pada Anggota Wbinar Qur'an Journaling for Self Healing" (Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2023); Ranowan Putra, "Kasambu Pada Masyarakat Muna: Studi Living Qur'an Di Kelurahan Waimhorock Kecamatan Abepura Kota Jayapura" (Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2022); Naili Rohmah, "Living Tafsir Abyan Al-Hawaij Karya Ahmad Rifa'i: Studi Dinamika Pelestarian Ajaran Ahmad Rifa'i Di Kabupaten Pekalongan" (Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2022); Muhammad Rizieq Ramadhan, "Praktik Dan Metode Tahfizh Al-Qur'an: Studi Living Al-Qur;an Di Pesantren Tahfizh Daarul Qur'an Tangerang" (Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2022); Agus Imam Wahyudi, "The Living Our'an: Upaya Penanaman Nilai-Nilai Al-Our'an Dalam Kehidupan Santri (Studi Kasus Di Pondok Pesantren Nurul Qur'an Rumpin Bogor" (Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2023).

validity testing. Only three theses (37.5%) explicitly referred to triangulation, integrating it into their research methodology. The remaining five theses (62.5%) did not mention triangulation explicitly, yet they implicitly applied its principles in their research. Despite the lack of direct acknowledgment, these five studies effectively utilized triangulation principles, including time triangulation, theoretical triangulation, source triangulation, and methodological triangulation, to enhance the validity and reliability of their findings.

Then, in terms of its application, it can be detailed as follows: 1) All of the research papers (100%) apply the principle of "methodological triangulation", by combining observation, interviews, and documentation in data collection and discussion. 2) All of the research papers (100%) also apply the principle of "data source triangulation" when collecting data through interviews, by exploring responses from multiple different informants regarding the phenomenon being studied. 3) None of the research papers (0%) conduct repeated observations at different times for the same phenomenon, which is referred to as time triangulation. 4) Only two research papers (25%) apply theory triangulation to analyze the phenomenon, while the other six (75%) do not.

Although methodological triangulation and data source triangulation appear to have been applied, there is no consistent implementation of these triangulation methods in the research findings and discussions. In every research paper, there are sections that negate the process of data collaboration, either in terms of technique or sources. For example, some phenomena that should be explored using methodological triangulation are concluded solely based on observational data interpretation, without

incorporating other methods such as interviews or documentation. Similarly, some phenomena that require data source triangulation are concluded based on the interpretation of a single informant's statement, without cross-checking with multiple sources.

The negation of the triangulation process does not always occur, but it happens frequently. Such hasty conclusions are certainly undesirable in research, as they risk leading to superficial conclusions. This inconsistency in applying triangulation can have negative implications for the validity of research data. If the validity of the data itself is questionable, then the conclusions drawn from it may also be unreliable. Therefore, it is crucial to apply triangulation consistently in qualitative research, which is built upon a naturalistic paradigm, to enhance the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

#### CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATION

Based on the research findings and discussion presented above, a total of eight student theses from Universitas PTIQ Jakarta were analyzed. Given that the Living Qur'an research design was only recently introduced in Indonesia, its application at Universitas PTIQ Jakarta can be considered relatively extensive, as studies using this approach are conducted annually. The findings reveal that only a small number of student research papers on Living Qur'an explicitly mention triangulation as a process for validating data. The majority do not explicitly state it, even though they implicitly apply triangulation principles, either consciously or unconsciously. The types of triangulation used are primarily methodological triangulation and source triangulation. However, inconsistencies in their application still occur, which

may raise concerns about data validity and lead to hasty conclusions. Moreover, time triangulation and theory triangulation are rarely, if ever, utilized.

Considering that the Living Qur'an research design is highly popular within Quranic and Tafsir studies in academic settings, it is crucial to equip students with a better understanding of data validation techniques, particularly triangulation. Strengthening their knowledge in this area is essential to ensure that the collected data is valid and reliable, ultimately improving the quality of research conclusions.

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