THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LEARNING THROUGH SMARTPHONE BASED APPLICATION TO READ THE HILAIYAH (ARABIC ALPHABETS) FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

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The usage of smartphone device has become a fast growing phenomenon in the current decade. Its importance has immersed into various sectors and industries, including education. Within this view, the smartphone applications have also seen increasing importance in helping the children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). As a matter of fact, children with ASD mostly face limitations in the non-verbal communications, for example, communications through eye contacts, facial expression and body posture, in addition to the difficulty of them to socialise. Children with ASD also, at most of the times, have restricted areas of interests. On the other hand, there has been growing interest in the potential technology to support children with ASD in their learning development. In fact, various findings have shown that children in overall tend to get attracted to the functions in the smartphone applications. Various researches have also proven that children with ASD tend to be engaged in using smartphone based applications. Thus, this paper shall explore the effectiveness of using the smartphone based applications to overcome their learning difficulties, as it enables the children to enjoy rich multimedia platforms productively. Specifically, this paper will indeed focus on evaluating the effectiveness of the application to provide learning of the Hijaiyah (Arabic alphabets) in comparison to the traditional learning methods. This paper shall also justify the recommendation that the learning method in Hijaiyah using the smartphone based application should be the conventional method applicable to the children with ASD due to its proven effectiveness in learning development. Special consideration is given to discuss the implications of this application in promoting the Islamic studies within the children with ASD, at the same time ease the monitoring of their learning curve. Noteworthy that this paper utilize the qualitative method to evaluate the whole case with particular issues related to the implementations of the technology tools are also discussed and justified.

Keyword: autism spectrum disorders, smartphone application, learning development, hijaiyah, arabic alphabets