



WASHBACK EFFECT ASSESSMENT OF MAHĀRAH ISTIMĀ' USING GOOGLE FORMS

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ABSTRACT

Assessment has specific effects on learning, both positive and negative effects. In this case, assessment should encourage the implementation of better learning. This survey research aims to analyze the positive and negative effects of the *mahārah istimā'* assessment using Google Forms or what is also called the washback effect. The respondents in this research were 43 PAI I FTK UIN Imam Bonjol Padang students. In this regard, data was collected through observation techniques, questionnaires, and interviews. As a primary data collection technique, the questionnaire covers three aspects: exam preparation strategies, learning attitudes, and learning materials. Then, the collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The research results show that the total scores for each aspect are 37.4, 3.8, and 3.89, respectively. In other words, these aspects are included in the "excellent" category. Thus, based on these three aspects, the *mahārah istimā'* assessment using Google Forms positively impacts learning. This research contributes practically to the experience of the *mahārah istimā'* test using Google Forms. For future research, explore longitudinal effects, compare assessment methods, and study the sustainability of positive impacts. Also, analyze educators' perspectives and use qualitative data for deeper insights into assessment dynamics and student learning experiences, refining *mahārah istimā'* assessment on digital platforms like Google Forms.



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INTRODUCTION

Assessment significantly impacts learning (Oguguo et al., 2021). The term most commonly used to describe the impact of such assessments is washback (Sadeghi et al., 2021). Washback is the influence of exams on learning. In this regard, there are two types of washback, namely positive and negative effects (Kuang, 2020). Assessment has a positive impact if it encourages good learning to take place. Assessment negatively impacts learning if it produces discomfort (Sabillawati & Ardiana, 2022). One of the factors is a mismatch between the learning material and the material tested during the assessment. However, adverse effects can turn positive if they encourage changes for the better (Hakim & Saputra, 2020)

Furthermore, there are four main concepts regarding washback. First, washback refers to the impact of tests on learning. Second, washback relates to the idea that assessment should support learning (Weiwei, 2023). Third, curriculum alignment focuses on the relationship between assessment and learning. Fourth, systemic assessment emphasizes the link between assessment and the education system and the need to show that assessment can improve learning, including *mahārah istimā'* learning (Hakim & Saputra, 2020).

Mahārah istimā' is a person's ability to absorb and understand words or sentences spoken by a conversation partner or certain media (Mufidah et al., 2019). This skill dramatically contributes to mastering Arabic, mainly if someone studies it regularly (Murshidi et al., 2023). In this case, it is stated that if someone is used to listening to Arabic, it will be easier for him to pronounce, read, and write, which are other skills in Arabic (Cox & Phipps, 2022). That *mahārah istimā'* helps someone master other Arabic language skills. It is due to the position of *mahārah istimā'* as an essential skill in learning Arabic (Rahman et al., 2024).

Nowadays, the world of education is challenged to keep up with the times when almost all activities require technology (Majir, 2020). Because of this, educators are now required to be able to change traditional learning approaches into digital approaches that are more relevant to meeting students' needs (Prayogi, 2020). In this regard, the development of technology has given rise to new learning media that make it easier for teachers and students to learn as well as in assessment (Effendi & Wahidy, 2019). Learning assessment is critical (Baranovskaya & Shaforostova, 2017). If the previous assessment was only based on oral and written, teachers can develop it into a technology-based instrument.

One technology that can be used in learning assessment is Google Forms. Google Forms is a tool that allows users to easily collect information from users through personalized surveys or quizzes and respond in real-time (Jaiswal, 2024). Using Google Forms, users can create questions together in real time (Ayanwale et al., 2024). Then, analyze the results together without needing multiple file versions. In addition, Google Forms works with precise data and responses because there is built-in intelligence for setting responses or validation. This feature ensures emails are formatted correctly, or numbers are within the specified range. Additionally, Google Forms can share Forms via email, link, or website.

According to Houda, assessment impacts how teachers teach, select materials, design courses, and test (Houda, 2021). Research conducted by Fan et al. found that language test designers should not only focus on the test itself but also provide resources and support that are important in student learning and exam preparation (Fan et al., 2014). Meanwhile, Jamil et al. stated that assessments in *mahārah istimā'* often use traditional methods (Jamil et al., 2023). In this case, Hakim and Syafi'i recommended using Google Forms for the Indonesian

language test because it was proven effective (Hakim & Safi'i, 2021). Likewise, Marifah's research found students' interest in assessment via Google Forms (Marifah, 2020).

Meanwhile, this research aims to analyze the positive and negative effects of using Google Forms in assessing students' *mahārah istimā'*. This research is theoretically expected to add to the literature and expand insight into Arabic language learning assessment and the use of technology in learning, especially *mahārah istimā'*. This research contributes practically to the experience of the *mahārah istimā'* test using Google Forms.

METHOD

To find the survey results, researchers used a type of survey that can be carried out on large or small populations (Musthafa & Hermawan, 2018). In this regard, the respondents of this research were 43 students in the first semester of the 2023/2024 academic year of the PAI I FTK UIN Imam Bonjol Padang study program because the assessment of both quizzes and final exams in this class was carried out online using Google Forms. Thus, the method used is a self-report measure. Meanwhile, the sample for this study was determined using a total sampling technique where all members of the population filled in the questionnaire. In this regard, Arikunto said that if the population is less than one hundred, it is better to take all of the population so that the research is population research (Arikunto, 2014).

Researchers used a survey type of research because the primary data in this research was collected through questionnaires. In this case, researchers have developed a unique questionnaire adapted from Fan et al. (Fan et al., 2014), Pitoyo et al. (Pitoyo & Asib, 2020), and Baksh et al. (Baksh et al., 2016). The questionnaire consists of 25 statement items covering seven categories to analyze the washback effect: exam preparation strategies, learning attitudes, and learning materials. Next, the researcher used a 5-point Likert scale response consisting of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), entirely agree (QA), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD).

All instrument items were tested for validity using external validity. The respondents for this validity test were 1st-semester students of PAI D FTK UIN Imam Bonjol Padang. Then, the data was analyzed with the help of Pearson Product Moment Correlation with the results of all valid questions. Meanwhile, reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha with a result of 0.98. The students filled out the questionnaire online via the Google Forms application by sharing the questionnaire link to the class WhatsApp group deliberately created to facilitate communication. In the introduction to the questionnaire, it is written that the data provided is purely for research purposes, is confidential, and will not affect grades in any course. Researchers also used participant observation techniques in class and documentation to complete the research data.

Then, the collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques. The average of each item and section is calculated using the Formula in Figure 1 (Ainin, 2016) and then categorized according to the average weight, as shown in Table 1 (Archolito V. Pahuriray & Rolan O. Algara, 2021).

$$x = \frac{\sum x}{n}$$

Figure 1. Average score Formula

Information:

x: Average score for each aspect

n: Number of appraisers

Σx : Total score of each

Table 1. Average Score Categories

No	Average Weight	Category
1	4.21 – 5.00	Excellent
2	3.41 – 4.20	Very Good
3	2.61 – 3.40	Good
4	1.81 – 2.60	Fair
5	1.00 – 1.80	Poor

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The researchers classified the details of the respondents from this study according to gender, age, and educational background as follows:

Table 2. Respondent Data

Gender				
Male		Female		
18 (42 %)		25 (58 %)		
Age				
18 Th	19 Th	20 Th	21	22 Th
6 (14 %)	23 (53 %)	10 (23 %)	3 (7 %)	1 (3 %)
School Background				
Senior High School (SMA/SMK)	Islamic Boarding School		Islamic Senior High School (MA)	
15 (35 %)	17 (39.5 %)		11 (25.5 %)	

Table 2 shows data on respondents who have filled out the washback effect questionnaire. It is known that 58% of respondents are female students, while the other 42% are university students. Then, more than half of the respondents were 19 years old (53%), while the youngest respondents (18 years) were 14%, and the oldest (22 years) were 1%. The rest are students aged 20-21 years. In addition, 39.5% of students come from Islamic boarding schools. It is the most significant percentage. This number is not much different from that of students from SMA/SMK, namely 35%. The number of students from MA is 25.5%.

Washback Effect *Mahārah istimā'* assessment using Google Forms

Learning *mahārah istimā'* in the PAI I FTK UIN Imam Bonjol Padang class uses the audiolingual method. In this regard, the audiolingual method consists of two words, namely "audio" and "lingual" (Zakiyah et al., 2023). This method is carried out by students listening to language sounds in the Forms of words or sentences (Becker & McGregor, 2016). Then, students say it before reading and writing lessons. This method is carried out by repeating

the technique often to become a habit (Jauhari, 2018). During learning, students tend to pay less attention to conversations presented by other students. Apart from that, they also tend to be lazy about repeating the lesson material that has been given (Z. Zakiyah, observation, 2023). This attitude continues until the lecturer applies quizzes at every meeting and the final *mahārah istimā'* exam uses Google Forms (Z. Zakiyah, personal communication, 2023).

Next, the researcher will describe the analysis results of the positive or negative effects of using Google Forms in assessing *mahārah istimā'*. The assessment grid that was developed and validated can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Washback effect grid

No	Aspect	Indicator	Item		Total
			+	-	
1	Exam Preparation Strategies	Students can prepare for the exam well	1,2,3,4,5	6,7,8,9, 10	10
2	Learning Attitude	Students show a positive attitude both before and after using Google Forms, is held	11, 12, 13, 14, 15	16, 17, 18, 19, 20	10
3	Learning Material	Students have the desire to study Arabic more deeply	21, 22, 23	24, 25	5
Total					25

Table 3 shows three aspects of this washback effect: exam preparation strategies, learning attitudes, and learning materials. Here's the explanation:

Exam preparation strategies

An assessment indicator that positively impacts exam preparation strategies is when students prepare well for their exams. In this case, the positive or negative effects have been visible since students prepared for their exams. In this regard, a more detailed concept regarding aspects of this exam preparation strategy can be seen in each statement item in Table 4.

Table 4. Student Exam Preparation Strategy Scores

No	Item	Respons					Average	Description
		SA	A	QA	D	SD		
1	I studied hard to prepare for the exam using Google Forms	21	16	3	1	2	4.25	Excellent
2	I have prepared targets that I want to achieve in taking the exam using Google Forms	18	10	9	4	2	3.88	Very Good
3	I created a study plan to take the exam using Google Forms	16	12	7	6	2	3.79	Very Good
4	I'm trying to find an excellent way to study for Exam preparation using Google Forms	15	12	6	8	2	3.69	Very Good



No	Item	Respons					Average	Description		
		SA	A	QA	D	SD				
5	I changed my study habits in preparation for the exam using Google Forms			19	8	9	5	2	3.86	Very Good
6	I rarely review lessons in preparation for taking exams using Google Forms			2	6	8	6	19	3.65	Very Good
7	I didn't manage my study time well to prepare for the exam using Google Forms			2	4	7	10	17	3.62	Very Good
8	I panicked when facing the exam using Google Forms			5	5	7	9	17	3.65	Very Good
9	I was stressed when preparing and during the exam using Google Forms			5	5	9	9	15	3.55	Very Good
10	I have difficulty concentrating both when preparing and during the exam using Google Forms			4	7	6	8	17	3.55	Very Good
Total								37.49	Very Good	

Based on Table 4, aspects of students' learning strategies in facing exams using Google Forms are rated as "very good." In this case, the main effect of the *mahārah istima'* assessment using Google Forms is that students actively prepare for the exam because this statement gets the highest score, namely 4.25 (excellent). Apart from that, students also found reviewing learning material using learning methods. The scores for these two things are in the middle position, namely 3.65 and 3.69 (excellent). The total score for the review of material factor is the same as the total score for students' calmness in preparing for their exams.

Additionally, students are not stressed while preparing for exams or have difficulty concentrating. It is proven by the scores obtained from both, namely 3.55. However, both are the lowest values of the 10 existing statements. However, this value is still in the "Excellent" category.

In this regard, Andini quoted Saniskoro and Akmal as saying that academic stress is pressure from excessive academic demands that students cannot overcome. Due to this inability, students accept this stress as a problem. It can occur because of a mismatch between the environment and human resources (Andini et al., 2023). Furthermore, stress is divided into negative and positive (Xu et al., 2024). In line with its practice, negative stress (distress) is stress that causes a person to suffer physical disorders, such as nausea, diarrhea, anxiety, decreased memory, and fatigue. In this regard, stress in facing exams can reduce concentration and affect student learning outcomes (Gustems-Carnicer et al., 2019), as stated by Thinagar and Westa (Thinagar & Westa, 2017). Meanwhile, positive stress (eustress) causes increased achievement motivation and performance, resulting in innovation and creativity (Bunyamin, 2021).

To avoid stress, students should manage it so that it doesn't drag on and have a more severe impact. Experts have offered various approaches and strategies to manage stress, such as a religious approach with dhikr, prayer, and reading the Koran. Distress can also be managed with a psychological approach, such as time management, relaxation, and meditation. These approaches have gone through empirical testing and have been proven effective in reducing stress experienced by individuals and groups (Bunyamin, 2021).

Learning Attitude

An assessment indicator that positively impacts the learning attitude aspect is when students show a positive learning attitude both before and after an exam. In this regard, a more detailed concept regarding aspects of this exam preparation strategy can be seen in each statement item in Table 5.

Table 5. Student Learning Attitude Scores

No	Item	Respons					Average	Description
		SA	A	QA	D	SD		
1	I paid more attention to the Arabic language teacher's explanation of the exam using Google Forms	14	16	5	7	1	3.81	Very Good
2	I am motivated (interested and enthusiastic) to learn Arabic by having an exam using Google Forms	18	10	9	3	2	3.83	Very Good
3	I am more confident or not afraid to learn Arabic with the exam using Google Forms	16	12	7	6	2	3.79	Very Good
4	Exams using Google Forms have improved the accuracy of my way of studying	15	12	6	8	2	3.69	Fair
5	I'm sure I'll get a good score on the exam using Google Forms	19	8	9	5	2	3.86	Very Good
6	I feel lazy in studying Arabic after the exam using Google Forms	4	2	6	12	19	3.93	Very Good
7	With the exam using Google Forms, I don't want to be active in Arabic lessons	4	1	4	11	22	4.02	Very Good
8	I don't want to spend time studying Arabic with an exam using Google Forms	4	1	6	8	24	4.09	Very Good
9	I feel that my learning results have decreased after taking the exam using Google Forms	5	0	6	9	23	4.04	Very Good
10	Exams using Google Forms did not help me find my needs in learning Arabic	6	1	6	11	19	3.6	Very Good
Total							3.8	Very Good

Table 6 explains the effect of the *mahārah istimā'* assessment using Google Forms on students' learning attitudes. In this case, the overall score for that aspect is "excellent." Furthermore, by using Google Forms, students spend time learning Arabic. This statement received the highest score compared to other statements, namely 4.09 in the "excellent" category. In addition, students become motivated to study Arabic, so they are sure they will get the expected grades. According to students, Google Forms helps them find their Arabic language learning needs. This effect gets a value of 3.6. This score is the lowest, but still in the "excellent" category.

Asrina and Sihombing explained that, mastering foreign languages, including Arabic, is essential for all UIN Imam Bonjol Padang students because it will help students understand literature from various fields of science. However, students' Arabic language skills are still weak (Asrina & Sihombing, 2019). Therefore, students' understanding of their Arabic language learning needs is necessary (Cruz et al., 2023). In this case, students learn Arabic to communicate in Arabic. In particular, so that students can listen and listen to Arabic conversations, capture messages from the Arabic conversations they hear, discover the meaning of new vocabulary in the context of specific sentences, and express thoughts, ideas, opinions, and feelings using spoken and written language in Arabic.

Learning Materials

An assessment indicator positively impacting the learning material is when students want to study Arabic more deeply. In this regard, a more detailed concept regarding aspects of this exam preparation strategy can be seen in each statement item in Table 6.

Table 6. Learning Material Scores

No	Item	Response					Average	Description
		SA	A	QA	D	SD		
1	I want to expand my knowledge of Arabic more after the exam using Google Forms	22	8	9	2	2	3.37	Very Good
2	I want to watch Arabic videos after the exam using Google Forms	16	13	7	4	2	3.79	Very Good
3	Exams using Google Forms have motivated me to study the study materials	18	11	9	3	2	3.93	Very Good
4	I didn't want to read Arabic books because there was an exam using Google Forms	4	4	4	11	19	3.79	Very Good
5	I don't want to take part in activities that can improve my Arabic skills after the exam using Google Forms	4	0	5	6	25	3.9	Very Good
Total							3.89	Very Good

Table 7 shows that the effect of assessing *mahārah istimā'* using Google Forms has an "excellent" impact on learning material. This aspect also received the highest score compared to the other two aspects. Students are motivated to study learning material from various sources, both books and learning videos; even though they got the lowest score, students said this was based on their desire to learn more Arabic. By studying Arabic, students are expected to be able to speak Arabic actively and passively (Farouqa & Hysaj, 2022).

Moreover, Arabic is a scientific language and has been recognized as an international communication tool (Ulfah, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Overall, the *mahārah istimā'* assessment using Google Forms positively impacted exam preparation strategies, learning attitudes, and learning materials in Arabic courses. It is proven by sequentially achieving each aspect with values of 37.4, 3.8, and 3.89 in the "excellent" category. In this regard, this aspect also gets the highest score compared to the other two aspects. With this assessment, students want to learn more about Arabic from various sources, including books, videos, or participating in Arabic language activities. In general, this research has implications for using Google Forms in assessing students' *mahārah istimā'* because it has been proven to impact the aspects tested positively. However, this research is limited to *mahārah istimā'* only. Further research is recommended to analyze the washback effect of using Google Forms on other aspects of Arabic.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

[R] designed the study. [ZZ] performed the experiments. [JS] analyzed the data. [ZZ] wrote the paper with input from [R].

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