

# QURANIC APPROACH AND ACHIEVEMENT OF HAFAZAN IN ULUL ALBAB MODEL TAHFIZ STUDENTS (TMUA) PROGRAMME IN MALAYSIA: THE MODERATION ROLE OF MAHARAT AL-QURAN

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**Abstract:** *The Tahfiz Model Ulul Albab (TMUA) program emphasizing the Quranic, Ijtihadik and Encyclopedic approach has been implemented since 2014 in secondary schools of the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM). After eight years of implementing this program, there are a number of problems that have arisen, among which the level of student memorization achievement is less than satisfactory. The results of the TMUA implementation rating report in 2017 at one of the schools that implemented the TMUA program found that some students who followed this program were unable to complete the memorization measure based on the level as outlined by the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM). This article was created to identify and examine the relationship between the Quranic approach and interest in the achievement of TMUA students' memorization. In addition, this article also identifies the subject of Maharat Al-Quran as a moderator (moderator) in the relationship between the Quranic approach and the achievement of student memorization. The survey study involved a sample of 302 fourth grade students in three selected TMUA schools. Data was analyzed through structural equation modeling (SEM) using Smart Partial Least Square (SmartPLS 3) software. The results of the study show that there is a relationship between interest and the Quranic approach with the achievement of student memorization. In addition, the researcher found that Maharat Al-Quran acted as a moderating variable in the relationship between the Quranic approach and student*

*memorization achievement. Accordingly, this study gives the implication that the implementation of the TMUA program parallels and coincides with the implementation of the BIFFAS concept (read, remember, understand, think, charity and spread) contained in the Quranic approach.*

**Keywords:** *TMUA, Quranic Approach, Interest, Memorization Achievement.*

## Introduction

Parents have high hopes for the education system to prepare their children with adequate preparation to face the challenges of the 21st century (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2012). In fact, today's parents are also aware of the importance of integrating academic studies and religious studies as well as tahfiz components (Nor Hisham Md. Nawi, & Nasrun Hakim Salleh, 2017; Mohd Jamalil Ismail, Sabri Mohamad, Tengku Intan Zarina Tengku Puji & Nor Hafizi Yusof, 2017) and this is reflected in the tendency of parents to send their children to tahfiz educational institutions as the main choice (Muhammad Zulazizi Mohd Nawi, Mohd Rashidi Omar & Muhammad Amirul Mohd Nor, 2021). This tendency of parents is a positive impact in the national education system, while tahfiz education is seen as an initiative that can produce professionals, technocrats and hafiz entrepreneurs who practice Islamic teachings (mutadayyin) by having various knowledge skills in line with the National Education Philosophy (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2016a).

Tahfiz education develops from the primary school level up to the level of higher education institutions. However, the main focus of society is on the secondary school level. Therefore, the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM) created the Ulul Albab program at the selected high school level to meet the needs of the country. The Ulul Albab program is a transformation of education at the secondary school level which is aimed at injecting reform into the education system in Malaysia (Arniyuzie Mohd Arshad, 2015). The Ulul Albab program was first introduced at Terengganu Foundation Imtiaz Secondary School (Norhazriah, 2012; Rohaizan Baru, Zulkifli Abdul Manaf, Abdul Hakim Abdullah, & Syed Mohamad Azmi Syed Ab. Rahman, 2014). At the initial stage, this effort is a process of modernizing boarding school education in the state of Terengganu that cultivates the Quran and makes the Quran the core of learning by combining it with the Integrated High School Curriculum (KBSM). This effort was later intensified by the People's Trust Council (MARA) through the implementation of the Ulul Albab program at the three MARA Science Junior Colleges (MRSJ) by combining science studies, religious studies and tahfiz studies.

Further to that, the Ministry of Education has prepared a Tahfiz Model Ulul Albab (TMUA) program that combines worldly knowledge and spiritual knowledge (Arniyuzie Mohd Arshad, 2015). The TMUA program is based on a combination of three approaches, namely Quranic, Ijtihadik and Encyclopedic (Idris Jusoh, 2006). In the Quranic approach, students are required to memorize the entire Quran throughout the five-year school term. The Ijtihadik approach requires students to have the ability to think at a high level, be creative and innovative, while the Encyclopedic approach requires students to master a variety of knowledge and languages. These three approaches are parallel and meet the aspirations set in the Malaysian Education Development Plan 2013-2025.

The role of tahfiz teachers as murabbi (spiritual shaper), mursyid (guide), muaddib (cultivator of manners), mudarris (lesson teacher) and muallim (conveyor of knowledge) is very important in the success of the TMUA program in schools. The tahfiz teacher has a great role as an agent of

change to produce students who have the characteristics of mutadayyin. The quality of teachers nowadays always needs to be improved by meeting the basic knowledge of teachers, namely; knowledge of content, knowledge of general pedagogy, knowledge of curriculum, knowledge of pedagogy and content, knowledge of student background, knowledge of educational context and knowledge of educational goals.

The teacher's role in having this basic knowledge is important in producing lessons that can interest students. Therefore, tahfiz teachers should have a positive attitude and always want to improve current knowledge and skills in developing teaching methods that interest students in learning the subjects of Hifz al-Quran and Maharat al-Quran. Teachers, especially TMUA teachers, need to adapt the Al-Quran PdPc using modern technology (Hassan Nudin, 2020) and be creative in providing the latest BBM and ensuring that the classroom is in a conducive state in an effort to attract student interest. TMUA teachers need to play their main role by combining their own abilities and potential towards creating a more enjoyable PdPc atmosphere that can attract students' interest.

The Quranic approach is a unique approach and method in ensuring students can memorize the Al-Quran and understand its content based on the concept of BIFFAS (read, remember, understand, think, charity and spread) (KPM, 2016b). As for the implementation of the Maharat al-Quran subject, it is divided into six areas, namely Recitation of the Quran, Adab al-Quran, Tajwid, Manhaj Qiraat Sab'ah (Method of Reading), Amali Qiraat Sab'ah (Practical Reading Method) and Uthmani Rasm (Writing Method). This subject will be taught by a tahfiz teacher for 10 students. PdPc for this subject will be held from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm with an allocation of two hours a week. The field of Al-Quran Recitation and the Practical Field of Qiraat Sab'ah (practical method of 7 ways of recitation) are done in Talaqqi (teaching) and Musyafahah (oral reading) in front of tahfiz teachers individually while the field of Adab al-Quran, Tajwid, Manhaj Qiraat Sab' 'ah (method theory of 7 ways of reading) and Rasm Uthmani are practiced in groups in the form of halaqah (KPM, 2016b).

This study focuses on the Quranic approach, which refers to the student's ability to memorize all 30 verses of the Holy Quran based on the memorization measure that has been set from the first to the fifth grade. This process takes five years of schooling at the high school level. Below is a memorization measure based on level:

**Table 1: Division Of Constituents For Each Level**

| Form  | Juz                        | Amount |
|-------|----------------------------|--------|
| One   | 30, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5          | 6      |
| Two   | 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12     | 7      |
| Three | 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18     | 6      |
| Four  | 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 | 7      |
| Five  | 26, 27, 28, 29             | 4      |
| TOTAL |                            | 30     |

### Problem Statement

Despite the implementation of the Ulul Albab Model Tahfiz (TMUA) program in Malaysia, which aims to enhance Quranic memorization among students, there are still significant challenges in achieving consistent and high levels of memorization. One of the key factors affecting this outcome is the varying effectiveness of Quranic approaches and the mastery of Maharat Al-Quran (specialized skills such as pronunciation, tajweed, and Quranic reading). This

study seeks to investigate the impact of Quranic approaches on the success of the TMUA program and the moderating role of Maharat Al-Quran in enhancing the memorization achievements of hafazan (memorizers) students.

Recent studies suggest that Quranic memorization outcomes among students in the TMUA program are influenced by the structure and methodology of teaching approaches (Ibrahim et al., 2024). The effectiveness of these approaches varies widely, with some students excelling while others struggle to master the Maharat Al-Quran adequately, leading to inconsistent learning outcomes (Ibrahim, 2023). Furthermore, research highlights the importance of comprehensive Quranic approaches in achieving higher levels of memorization and understanding among TMUA students (Mustafa & Safar, 2020).

### Research Objectives

This article was produced to meet the needs in an effort to help TMUA teachers in understanding the importance of the Quranic approach in their teaching. This article aims to identify and examine the relationship between the Quranic approach and interest in the achievement of TMUA students' memorization. In addition, this article also identifies Maharat Al-Quran as a mediator effect (moderator) in the relationship between the Quranic approach in the achievement of memorization by TMUA students. In particular, this article will answer the following three objectives:

1. Studying the relationship between interest and memory achievement of TMUA students.
2. Studying the relationship between the Quranic approach and the memorization achievement of TMUA students.
3. Identifying the influence of Maharat Al-Quran as a moderator in the relationship between the Quranic approach and the achievement of TMUA students' memorization.

### Research Questions

In line with the formulated objectives, there are 3 research questions in this study, namely:

1. What is the relationship between interest and memory achievement of TMUA students?
2. What is the relationship between the Quranic approach and the achievement of the memorization of TMUA students?
3. Is Maharat Al-Quran a moderator in the relationship between the Quranic approach and the memorization achievement of TMUA students?

### Research Hypotheses

Therefore, there are three hypotheses to answer the research questions above, namely:

- H1: There is a relationship of interest in the memory achievement of TMUA students.
- H2: There is a relationship between the Quranic approach and the memorization achievement of TMUA students.
- H3: Maharat Al-Quran as a moderator in the relationship between the Quranic approach to the achievement of memorization of TMUA students.

## Literature Review

### Quranic Approach

The Ulul Albab Model Tahfiz (TMUA) program in Malaysia has been designed to promote an in-depth and structured approach to Quranic memorization. This program integrates various teaching methodologies and strategies to enhance the memorization skills of students. According to Ibrahim et al. (2024), the effectiveness of these Quranic approaches is crucial for achieving

high levels of memorization. They evaluated the outcomes of Quranic memorization among students and found that while some methods are effective, there is still a need for improvement in teaching methodologies to ensure higher success rates across all TMUA schools.

Further, Ibrahim (2023) emphasizes the importance of *Maharat Al-Quran* (specialized skills such as pronunciation, *tajweed*, and Quranic reading) in Quranic education. *Maharat Al-Quran* plays a pivotal role in the effectiveness of Quranic memorization approaches. Ibrahim's study indicates that students who possess strong *Maharat Al-Quran* skills tend to have better memorization outcomes. However, not all students master these skills adequately, leading to inconsistencies in learning outcomes.

Mustafa and Safar (2020) explored various Quranic approaches within the TMUA program and highlighted the importance of integrating both traditional and modern methods. They suggest that digital tools and technology can complement traditional Quranic teaching methods, providing a more holistic approach to Quranic education. This integration can help cater to different learning styles and enhance overall memorization achievements.

Additionally, Abu Bakar and Zulkifli (2024) examined the methods and motivation of *Al-Quran* memorization and emphasized the need for innovative teaching techniques to maintain students' interest and motivation. Haryono (2024) reviewed Quran memorization technologies and methods, suggesting that integrating modern technologies can enhance traditional memorization practices.

Moreover, Muhd Zulhilmi et al. (2024) studied the adoption of technological devices in teaching and learning among *Tahfiz* teachers. Their findings indicate that the integration of technology can support traditional methods and improve overall teaching effectiveness in the TMUA program.

### **Achievement Of Hafazan**

Student achievement in Quranic memorization is a key indicator of the success of the TMUA program. Ibrahim et al. (2024) report that despite the structured approaches, there are still disparities in memorization achievements among students. They identify factors such as individual learning styles, teacher effectiveness, and the availability of resources as significant contributors to these disparities. Their study suggests that a more tailored approach to teaching could help address these challenges and improve overall memorization outcomes.

In a separate study, Ibrahim (2023) investigates the achievement of Quranic memorization among students at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama (SMKA) implementing the TMUA program. The findings reveal that not all students can complete the memorization of 30 *juzuk* within the designated timeframe, indicating a need for more effective teaching strategies and support systems. Continuous assessment and personalized feedback are highlighted as crucial factors in supporting students' progress and improving their memorization achievements.

Mustafa and Safar (2020) also identify several challenges that hinder student achievement in Quranic memorization. These include lack of motivation, inadequate teacher training, and insufficient support systems. Their research underscores the need for targeted strategies to address these challenges, such as enhancing teacher training programs, providing additional resources, and implementing motivational initiatives to boost student engagement and performance.

Ridza, Tumiran, and Halim (2024) conducted a comparative study on the techniques for memorizing the Quran, highlighting the differences in memory system tendencies among Maahad Integrasi Tahfiz Selangor (MITS) students. Their findings suggest that understanding these tendencies can help develop more effective memorization techniques tailored to individual student needs.

Additionally, Muhd Zulhilmi et al. (2021) examined teachers' pedagogical knowledge, learning facilities, and the teaching quality of Ulul Albab Tahfiz Model (TMUA) teachers in Malaysia. Their study found that these factors significantly impact student achievement in Quranic memorization.

Muhd Zulhilmi et al. (2020) also explored the relationship between school facilities and student achievement in Ulul Albab Model Tahfiz schools. They found that adequate facilities and student satisfaction play a mediating role in enhancing memorization achievements.

### **Maharat Al-Quran**

Maharat Al-Quran encompasses specialized skills essential for effective Quranic memorization, including accurate pronunciation, tajweed rules, and mastery of Quranic reading. Ibrahim (2023) highlights the critical role that Maharat Al-Quran plays in the TMUA program. Students who have mastered these skills are more likely to achieve higher levels of Quranic memorization. The study suggests that enhancing Maharat Al-Quran through focused training and continuous practice can significantly improve memorization outcomes.

Moreover, Ibrahim et al. (2024) emphasize that Maharat Al-Quran acts as a moderating factor in Quranic memorization achievements. Their research indicates that students who excel in Maharat Al-Quran are better able to retain and recall Quranic verses, leading to more consistent and successful memorization results. To address the varying levels of mastery among students, the TMUA program must implement targeted interventions and support mechanisms to strengthen these essential skills.

### **Student Interest**

Student interest is a crucial factor that can significantly influence the effectiveness of Quranic memorization approaches and overall memorization achievements. Abu Bakar and Zulkifli (2024) examined the role of motivation and interest in Al-Quran memorization, highlighting that students who are genuinely interested and motivated are more likely to achieve better memorization outcomes. They emphasize the need for innovative and engaging teaching techniques to maintain and stimulate student interest.

Haryono (2024) also suggests that incorporating modern technologies and interactive methods can help sustain student interest and make the memorization process more engaging. The study indicates that when students are interested in the learning material, they are more likely to invest time and effort, leading to improved memorization achievements.

Moreover, Mustafa and Safar (2020) identify student interest as a key factor in overcoming challenges related to motivation and engagement. They suggest that creating a supportive and stimulating learning environment can enhance student interest and contribute to higher levels of Quranic memorization.

### Research Methodology

This study uses a quantitative approach involving students from three schools that have fully implemented the TMUA program for five years of implementation compared to 12 other schools. Determining the sample size is one of the main things that needs to be paid attention to in order to ensure that the right sample can be selected to represent a population (Noraini, 2013). There are a total of 440 fourth grade students from three different schools. The following table 1.2 shows the student population based on the three schools that implement the TMUA program for cohort 1.

**Table 2: Pupil Attainment Population Based On School Enrolment**

| No. | TMUA Schools | Students Enrolment |
|-----|--------------|--------------------|
| 1   | School X     | 149                |
| 2   | School Y     | 145                |
| 3   | School Z     | 146                |
|     | TOTAL        | 440                |

Through this study, the researcher chose the proportional stratified random sampling method. This method is used considering the occurrence of an imbalance in the distribution of the sub-population between the intake of TMUA students in the three schools. This makes a total of 104 respondents required for school X, a total of 102 respondents required for school Y and a total of 102 respondents required for school Z. Table 1.3 below reports the total sample of students in the three schools involved.

**Table 3: Total Sample Of Students In Three Selected Schools**

| No. | TMUA Schools | Students Population | Samples |
|-----|--------------|---------------------|---------|
| 1   | School X     | 149                 | 104     |
| 2   | School Y     | 145                 | 102     |
| 3   | School Z     | 146                 | 102     |
|     | TOTAL        | 440                 | 308     |

Based on Table 1.4, the distribution of respondents based on gender as a whole 170 female respondents (56.3%) and 132 male respondents (43.7%). The distribution of respondents based on school shows that there are 99 respondents in school X (32.8%), 103 respondents in school Y (34.1%) and 100 respondents in school Z (33.1%).

**Table 4: Distribution Of Pupil Respondents Based On Gender And School**

| Profile       | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------|-----------|------------|
| <b>Gender</b> |           |            |
| Male          | 132       | 43.7%      |
| Female        | 170       | 56.3%      |
| Total         | 302       | 100%       |
| <b>School</b> |           |            |
| School X      | 99        | 32.8%      |
| School Y      | 100       | 33.1%      |
| School Z      | 103       | 34.1%      |
| Total         | 302       | 100%       |

All the items in this study are the result of adaptation from Azmil Hashim (2010) which has been modified based on the appropriateness of the research question. This instrument was evaluated by nine experts consisting of academics, officials at the Malaysian Ministry of Education and excellent tahfiz teachers. This instrument is divided into two parts; Part I and Part II. Part I is a questionnaire related to student demographics and Part II of the questionnaire includes two constructs namely Quranic Approach (5 items) and interest (5 items). Cronbach's alpha value for the entire item is high at 0.837.

In this study, the Structured Equation Model (Partial Least Squares; PLS-SEM) was applied in determining the measurement model and the structured model using SmartPLS 3.0 software. The PLS-SEM model was chosen as a method in data analysis because it is a robust multivariate analysis method. In addition, PLS-SEM is suitable for the nature of this study because of its ability to provide accurate predictions to see the relationship between the Quranic Approach and interest in the achievement of memorization. In addition, PLS-SEM can also maximize the variance explained by endogenous latent variables through the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression method (Hair et al. 2010).

## Findings

### Reliability And Validity Of Data

In order to ensure that the research data meets the requirements of statistical data testing, the reliability and validity of the data has been implemented. Based on the analysis shown in Table 1.5, the average value of extracted variance (AVE) for all constructs exceeds 0.50, the value of construct reliability (CR) and cronbach  $\alpha$  value for all constructs exceeds 0.7. Based on this finding, the reliability and validity of the data for this study is statistically acceptable for the measurement model (Hair et al. 2017).

**Table 5: Average Value Of Variance Extracted (AVE), Construct Reliability (CR) And Cronbach A Value**

| Construct                          | AVE  | CR   | Cronbach $\alpha$ |
|------------------------------------|------|------|-------------------|
| <i>Maharat Al-Quran</i>            | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00              |
| Interest                           | 0.72 | 0.93 | 0.90              |
| Achievement of <i>Hafazan</i> TMUA | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00              |
| <i>Quranic</i> approach            | 0.57 | 0.84 | 0.74              |
| <i>Quranic</i> * <i>Maharat</i>    | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00              |

The discriminant validity of each construct was tested based on the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT). These values are shown in Table 1.6. Based on the analysis, all values of the ratio between the constructs are less than 0.85. This shows a clear discriminant validity value between the tested constructs (Hair et al. 2017).

**Table 6: Discriminant Validity Analysis (HTMT Ratio)**

|   | MQ   | M    | PH   | PQ   | Q*M |
|---|------|------|------|------|-----|
| <i>Maharat Al-Quran</i> (MQ)            |      |      |      |      |     |
| Interest (M)                            | .218 |      |      |      |     |
| Achievement of <i>Hafazan</i> TMUA (PH) | .306 | .354 |      |      |     |
| <i>Quranic</i> approach (PQ)            | .179 | .518 | .409 |      |     |
| <i>Quranic</i> * <i>Maharat</i> (Q*M)   | .058 | .036 | .143 | .021 |     |



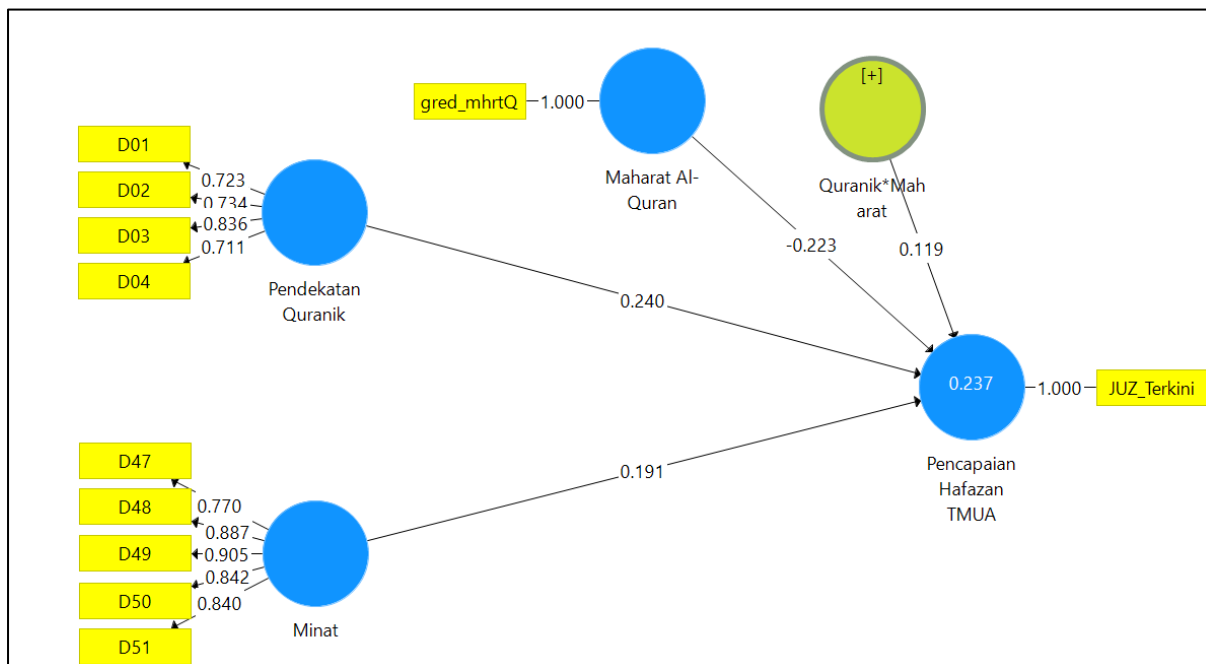
### Hypothesis Testing

This study was conducted based on three test hypotheses. Through testing the structured model, it was found that all research hypotheses were accepted. Findings clearly show that there is a relationship between interest ( $\beta=0.191, p=0.001$ ) and the achievement of memorization, as well as a relationship between the Maharat Al-Quran ( $\beta=-0.233, p=0.000$ ) and the achievement of memorization. Therefore both hypotheses H1 and H2 are accepted. The results of the analysis also show the role of Maharat Al-Quran as a moderator in the relationship between the Quranic approach and the memorization achievement of TMUA students is evident ( $\beta=0.119, p=0.027$ ). Therefore the third hypothesis of the study, H3 is also accepted. Table 1.7 shows the results of structured model testing while Figure 1 shows the PLS-SEM testing model implemented.

**Table 7: Structured Model Testing**

|                  | $\beta$ -Value | Standard Deviation | T -Value | p-Value |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| M $\square$ PH   | 0.191          | 0.056              | 3.388    | 0.001   |
| MQ $\square$ PH  | -0.233         | 0.052              | 4.252    | 0.000   |
| Q*M $\square$ PH | 0.119          | 0.054              | 2.209    | 0.027   |

p<0.05

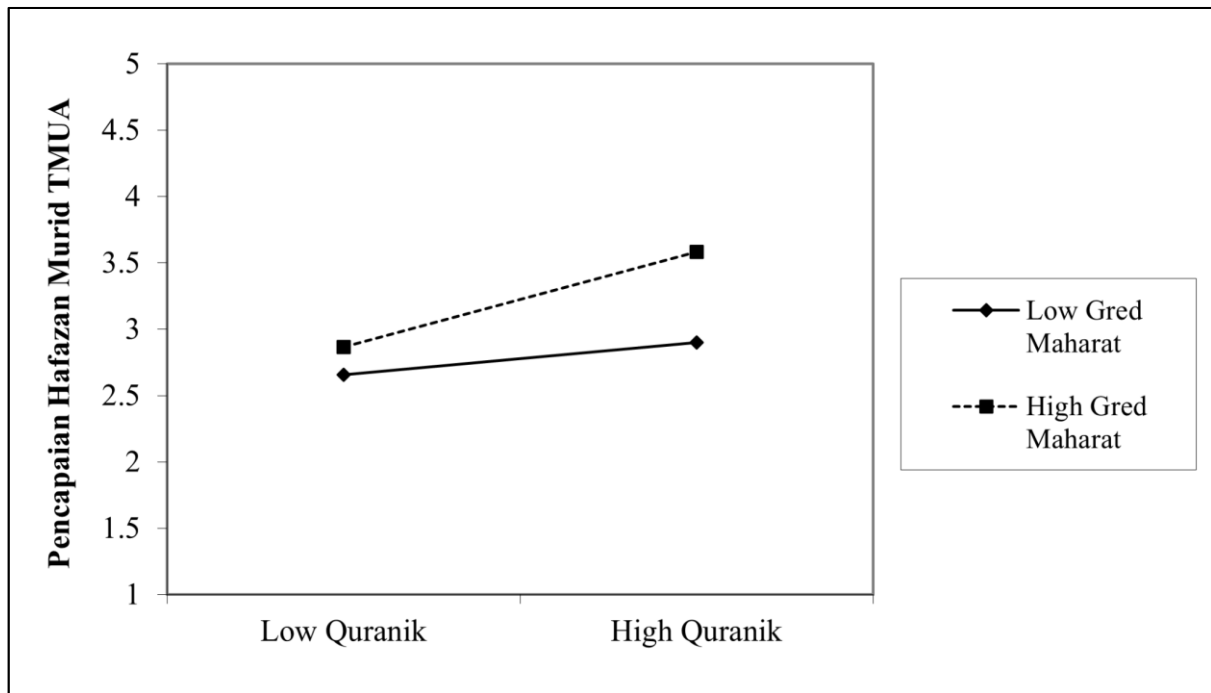


**Figure 1: PLS-SEM Testing Model For The Relationship Between Quranic Interest And Approach With TMUA Memorization Achievement**

### Discussion

Based on the findings of the study, the Quranic approach and interest are predictive factors for TMUA students' memorization achievement. In this study, the construction of the research hypothesis is based on contributing factors to the achievement of TMUA students' memorization. Hypothesis one (H1) is the relationship between interest and memory achievement of TMUA students. The coefficient value for H1 is 0.191 which is at a low value. Findings for the second research hypothesis (H2) which is the relationship between the Quranic approach and the memorization achievement of TMUA students show a coefficient value of 0.240 which is also at a low value.

The third research hypothesis (H3) is the role of Maharat Al-Quran as a moderating factor. The findings of the study show that Maharat Al-Quran is a moderating factor for the relationship between the Quranic approach to the memorization achievement of TMUA students with a coefficient value of 0.119. Figure 2 shows the role of Maharat Al-Quran as a moderator. The memorization achievement of TMUA students can be improved when they master Al-Quran Maharat and a high Quranic approach.



**Figure 2: The Role Of Maharat Al-Quran as the Moderating Factor**

The role of the Quranic approach has been discussed by Idris Jusoh (2006) which is that students need to master the entire memorization aspect of the Al-Quran throughout the five-year period during the school session. The results of the study prove that the Quranic approach needs to be continued to develop the memorization achievement of TMUA students. Interest also plays an important role in the achievement of TMUA students' memorization. The interest factor has also been discussed by Hassan Nudin (2020), which is related to the creativity of teachers, especially TMUA teachers, in adapting PdPc Al-Quran using modern technology in an effort to attract students' interest. In an effort to attract students to achieve outstanding achievements in memorizing the Quran, TMUA teachers need to play a major role by combining their abilities and potential towards creating a more enjoyable PdPc atmosphere. Next, the effort to improve the memorization achievement of TMUA students is related to the Maharat Al-Quran factor. Mastery of Al-Quran requires a work movement that is organized and systematically moved to produce the expected quality students as well as the implementation of the curriculum that is carried out in accordance with the planned goals and objectives.

### Conclusion

Overall, the researcher thinks that there is a relationship between interest and Quranic approach with student memorization achievement. In addition, the researcher found that Maharat Al-Quran acted as a moderator in the relationship between the Quranic approach and the achievement of TMUA students' memorization.

Therefore, this study is seen to be significant in looking at the relationship between interests and the Quranic approach to the memorization achievement of TMUA students. In addition, this study can also identify the influence of Maharat Al-Quran as a strengthening factor between the Quranic approach and the achievement of TMUA students' memorization. Accordingly, this study gives the implication that the implementation of the TMUA program parallels and coincides with the implementation of the BIFFAS concept (read, remember, understand, think, charity and spread) contained in the Quranic approach.

Based on this finding, the researcher suggests that the teachers of TMUA play their role in stimulating the students' interest in ensuring that the students' memorization achievement is at an excellent level based on memorization measures. This is to prevent the dropout of accumulated memory along with the increase in the number of years of study. In addition, the Quranic approach based on six areas in the Maharat Al-Quran subject is comprehensively strengthened to ensure the effectiveness of its implementation in the classroom.

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