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# Development and Validation of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs) Activities Module for Tahfiz Education

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**Abstract**
This study developed and validated a Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs) Activities Module for tahfiz teachers. It was conducted in three phases: needs analysis, module development and content validation. Interviews with four tahfiz teachers revealed that although elements of HOTs were present in the teaching of Hifz al-Quran, they were used informally without structured guidance. Content validation by four experts resulted in a high Content Validity Index (CVI) of 0.99, with minor revisions made to two items based on expert feedback. The module successfully bridges the gap between traditional and modern teaching methods.

Keywords: content validity; tahfiz education; educational module; HOTs

## 1.0 Introduction
Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs) are essential elements of 21st-century education, fostering critical, analytical and creative thinking that enables students to address challenges, evaluate information and apply their knowledge effectively (Curriculum Development Division, 2014). These skills are particularly vital in tahfiz education, where students are expected not only to memorise the Quran but also to develop a deep understanding and the ability to reflect on its teachings. The Tahfiz Integrated Curriculum (KBT) emphasises the need to move beyond rote memorisation by equipping students with the competencies to navigate complex, real-world situations (Islamic Education Division, 2015). Embedding HOTs into the Hifz al-Quran curriculum can transform student engagement with the Quran, encouraging thoughtful reflection, meaningful connections, and the application of its teachings across various contexts.

The significance of tahfiz education has grown in recent years, aligned with the increasing demand for holistic Islamic education that integrates spiritual and intellectual development (Yusup et al., 2025). Tahfiz institutions are now evolving beyond traditional frameworks to respond to national educational goals and global challenges. Despite this shift, HOTs integration within tahfiz education remains underdeveloped. Many tahfiz teachers rely heavily on traditional teaching methods, such as repetition and rote learning, which emphasise retention over comprehension or application. While effective for Quranic memorising, these methods often fall short of broader educational aims, such as cultivating critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and creativity (Yahaya, Rasheed & Selamat, 2018). Teachers also lack access to structured resources or professional training aligned with 21st-century educational approaches. Without

adequate support, integrating HOTs into the tahfiz Teaching and Facilitating (PdPc) process remains a distant ideal, limiting student's opportunities to develop essential cognitive skills.

The lack of structured modules designed for the unique requirements of tahfiz teachers exacerbates this problem. Current materials frequently emphasise generic educational contexts, neglecting the specific needs of Quran instruction in a tahfiz environment (Mohd Zhaffar et al., 2020). Effective integration of HOTs within the Hifz al-Quran curriculum requires learning activities that support both cognitive development and the spiritual objectives of Quranic education. This highlights the urgent need for a specialised module that provides tahfiz teachers with practical tools and strategies to implement HOTs without compromising the core values of Islamic learning (Mohd Faizulamri et al., 2024).

Therefore, this study aims to develop and validate a comprehensive HOTs activity module designed explicitly for tahfiz teachers. The module draws on 21st-century learning principles and is intended to assist teachers in incorporating HOTs into their instructional practices, ultimately improving student's understanding and application of Quranic content. The module is informed by a needs analysis with tahfiz teachers and undergoes expert content validation to ensure relevance and effectiveness. By providing this targeted resource, the study aims to bridge the gap between traditional pedagogical approaches and contemporary educational demands in tahfiz settings.

The objectives of the study are as follows:
1. To explore the needs of tahfiz teachers in implementing HOTs in the teaching of Hifz al-Quran.
2. To develop a HOTs-based activity module aligned with the teaching context of tahfiz institutions.
3. To validate the content of the developed module through expert evaluation.

The development and validation of this HOTs module will contribute significantly to the existing literature on pedagogical innovation in tahfiz education. It also offers practical implications for improving the teaching and learning experience for educators and students. The module equips tahfiz teachers with practical strategies for implementing HOTs, aligning with the comprehensive educational goals of the KBT and fostering the development of tahfiz students who excel in Quranic memorisation and critical thinking, reflection and application. This research signifies progress in enhancing tahfiz education to address the evolving needs of 21st-century learners.

## 2.0 Methodology

### 2.1 Study Design
The present study was conducted in phases: Phase I – Needs Analysis, Phase II – Tahfiz HOTs Activities Module Development, and Phase III – Module Content Validation. Using a qualitative research approach, the study adopted a single-case multisite design (Yin, 2003), focusing on exploring the need for a HOTs activities module for Tahfiz teachers teaching under the Tahfiz Integrated Curriculum (KBT). This approach was selected to allow an in-depth, context-rich exploration of the need for a HOTs activities module tailored to Tahfiz teachers teaching under the Tahfiz Integrated Curriculum (KBT). The multisite aspect involved selecting participants from several secondary schools in the central region implementing the KBT. Schools in the central region were chosen due to their early adoption of the KBT framework and active implementation of the Hifz al-Quran curriculum. Permission for the study was granted by the State Education Department (JPN) and the participating schools, and only participants who provided informed consent were included. The needs analysis phase, a crucial part of the design and development process, gathered contextual and environmental information (Saedah Siraj et al., 2013), which informed the subsequent design and development of the teaching module (Gagné et al., 2005). The module, designed to integrate Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs) into the Teaching and Facilitating (PdPc) process for the Hifz al-Quran subject, is based on 21st-century learning principles. Once validated, the module provides a structured approach for Tahfiz teachers to enhance student's critical thinking, creativity, and comprehension skills during Quranic memorisation and learning. It also offers potential as a reference for broader adoption in Tahfiz schools, elevating teaching practices and student engagement with HOTs elements.

### 2.2 Phase I: Need Analysis
A qualitative study employing face-to-face, semi-structured interviews was conducted with four Tahfiz teachers to explore the specific needs for developing a Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs) activity module tailored for the Hifz al-Quran subject under the Tahfiz Integrated Curriculum (KBT). Participants were purposively selected from three Tahfiz schools in Selangor, Putrajaya, and Kuala Lumpur, based on inclusion criteria requiring them to have more than five years of teaching experience, be actively teaching the Hifz al-Quran subject, and possess a Tahfiz academic background. The sample size adhered to the principle of data saturation, ceasing recruitment when no new information emerged after interviewing four participants (Sidek & Jamaludin, 2005). Data saturation occurs when responses become repetitive, indicating that further data collection is unnecessary and that analysis can begin. Each on-site interview at the schools lasted between 30 and 40 minutes. Open-ended questions facilitated in-depth discussions, allowing participants to share their insights, experiences and perspectives on integrating HOTs activities into Tahfiz teaching practices.

To enhance data richness, the probing method followed the frameworks by Patton (1990). Three types of probing—detail-oriented, elaboration-focused, and clarification-focused—were used to elicit specific details, encourage elaboration, and clarify ambiguities. These techniques ensured that interviews aligned with the study's objectives and research questions. Probing strategies were applied throughout the interviews, such as asking specific questions, encouraging participants to elaborate on and clarify their experiences, seeking confirmation and requesting relevant examples. The main questions were designed to explore the needs related to the development of the HOTs module, which were:
a) What do Tahfiz teachers need to apply HOTs in the Hifz al-Quran PdPc process effectively?

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b) What methods and approaches do Tahfiz teachers use to apply HOTs in the Hifz al-Quran PdPc process based on their experiences?

All interviews were recorded with participant's consent, transcribed and translated into English for analysis. Thematic analysis was conducted manually as part of the needs analysis phase. The principal investigator meticulously reviewed the translated transcripts to identify significant findings related to the design and development of the HOTs activities module. Codes were generated from the data and systematically grouped into sub-themes and overarching themes. These codes, sub-themes, and themes were then discussed among the research team to ensure validity and reliability. Revisions and improvements were made iteratively until a consensus was reached, ensuring that the findings accurately represented the participant's input.

The interview sessions were conducted thoughtfully, guided by established principles for effective interviewing. This included identifying key topics to shape the questions, maintaining flexibility to adapt them during the sessions, ensuring alignment with the study objectives, using language that was contextually relevant and easy to understand and avoiding leading questions that might influence participant's responses. The researcher also recorded demographic information such as participant's names, ages, genders and teaching experiences to facilitate organised data analysis. The interview process was carried out systematically and comprehensively to make optimal use of the limited time available, ensuring the collection of meaningful and actionable data for the subsequent module development phase.

### 2.3 Phase II: Module Development
#### 2.3.1 Module Structure
The development phase involved the systematic creation and organisation of the HOTs activities module for Tahfiz teachers. The module was meticulously designed to address the specific needs identified during the needs analysis phase and to align with the principles of the Tahfiz Integrated Curriculum (KBT) and 21st-century learning objectives. Built upon the 21st-Century Learning Model (PAK21), the module integrates various student-centred PdPc activities, incorporating suitable learning stimuli and adaptations from the Toolkit PdPc KBAT 2020 and the i-THINK programme. These initiatives aim to foster HOTs through visual mind maps, further enriching the module's content and pedagogical approach.

#### 2.3.2 Module Content
The content of the module was carefully curated and structured to ensure its relevance, with a focus on providing practical and engaging learning activities that promote the integration of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs) into Hifz al-Quran instruction. The language used is Malay. The module's design is rooted in official documents formulated by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE), ensuring that its content aligns with educational standards and the principles of the 21st-Century Learning Model (PAK21), as outlined in the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013–2025) (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013). These documents were the primary references to ensure the module meets the required standards and educational objectives. The module also includes a glossary of terms, drawn from official documents published by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE), such as the 21st-Century Learning Module, the Standard Document for Curriculum and Assessment (DSKP) for Hifz al-Quran, other MOE publications related to HOTs, and additional literature findings.

Key reference documents include the *Toolkit PdPc KBAT* (Curriculum Development Division, 2020), *Elemen KBAT dalam Kurikulum* (Curriculum Development Division, 2014), the *21st-Century Learning Module* (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013) and the Standard Document for Curriculum and Assessment (DSKP) Hifz al-Quran for Form 1 (Curriculum Development Division, 2017), Form 2 (Curriculum Development Division, 2015a), Form 3 (Curriculum Development Division, 2015b), Form 4 (Curriculum Development Division, 2019a) and Form 5 (Curriculum Development Division, 2019b). Additionally, the module includes clear guidelines for its implementation and foundational principles, ensuring that it is user-friendly, adaptable to diverse teaching environments, and effectively supports Tahfiz teachers in enhancing their instructional practices.

The module comprises nine activities, with each chapter targeting specific learning objectives that align with the overall aims of the module. These objectives are designed to equip Tahfiz teachers with practical strategies and structured activities to integrate HOTs into their teaching practices effectively. Since the chapters of this module comprise HOTs learning activities, they are referred to solely as learning activities. This comprehensive approach ensures that Tahfiz teachers are supported in fostering critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills among students during Hifz al-Quran lessons.

The objectives of each learning activity were meticulously designed using Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs) verbs derived from Bloom's Taxonomy. By integrating verbs aligned with Bloom's Taxonomy, such as "analyse", "evaluate", "apply" and "create", the module facilitates a more dynamic and meaningful learning experience. These objectives guide learners to move beyond rote memorisation, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity, essential for mastering Hifz al-Quran in a comprehensive and impactful way.

### 2.4 Phase III: Module Content Validation
#### 2.4.1 Content Validation by Expert Panels
This study convened a panel of experts to evaluate the Tahfiz HOTs Activities Module for its appropriateness and relevance in content, design, and applicability. Four experts conducted the evaluation, comprising an interdisciplinary team that included a specialist in the Tahfiz curriculum, an expert in Islamic Education and two experts in Tahfiz education. The research team intentionally selected this diverse panel to ensure a broad exchange of perspectives and ideas, leveraging their distinct areas of expertise to enhance the module's overall quality. Expert validation, as highlighted by Sidek and Jamaludin (2005), is a critical method for assessing the reliability of a module in terms of its content, design, and suitability for its intended purpose. Including experts from varied specialisations was a deliberate strategy to ensure comprehensive feedback, thereby strengthening the module's academic and practical rigour.

According to Mohd. Majid (2009) states that a panel of three experts is sufficient to evaluate content validity and appropriateness of a teaching module. This study employed an independent content validation process, carried out using a structured questionnaire. To

assess the module's content validity, the researchers adapted a questionnaire based on the instrument developed by Sidek and Jamaludin (2005). Modifications were made to tailor the questionnaire to the study's objectives, following the recommendations of Zamanzadeh et al. (2015). These adjustments included adopting a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("Very Not Relevant") to 4 ("Very Relevant"), and incorporating a space for expert reviewers to provide additional comments and suggestions regarding the draft module. The questionnaire contained three parts: A – Expert's Demographics; B – Module Assessment (Overall Module Validation – 7 items, Graphic Design Module Validation – 5 items, and Content Validation in Each HOTs Activity – 90 items); and C – Open-ended Questions.

Content validation is one of the most widely used methods for assessing the validity of instruments, with the Content Validity Index (CVI) being a standard approach. The experts reviewed each module component and rated its relevance using the 4-point Likert scale. Researchers classify the CVI into two types: Item-Level Content Validity Index (I-CVI) and Scale-Level Content Validity Index (S-CVI) (Zamanzadeh et al., 2015). The I-CVI represents the proportion of agreement on the relevance of individual items, with scores ranging from 0 to 1. Meanwhile, the S-CVI (calculated using the average method) represents the mean of the I-CVI values across all items or the average proportion of relevance as judged by the panel of experts, as shown in formula (1). To calculate the I-CVI, the number of experts rating an item as relevant (scores of 3 or 4) was divided by the total number of experts (n = 4), as shown in formula (2). Score data must be coded as 1 for the relevance scale of 3 or 4 and 0 for the relevance scale of 1 or 2 before calculation.

$$S - CVI = \frac{mean\ of\ I-CVI\ scores}{number\ of\ item} \tag{1}$$

$$I - CVI = \frac{agreed\ items}{total\ number\ of\ experts} \tag{2}$$

Polit et al. (2007) recommend that, for a panel of four experts, an acceptable threshold for the CVI is a score of 1. This strict criterion ensures that all experts must unanimously agree on the relevance of each item for it to be considered valid. This approach ensures a rigorous evaluation process and strengthens the overall validity of the module. As shown in Table 1, this study presented the criteria of selected experts. Upon completing corrections to the module, this study confirmed that the intellectual property rights had been secured and documented.

Table 1. Experts Criteria

| Number | Expert Criteria |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | Islamic education expert, has a doctoral degree, over 20 years of experience in the field of Quranic memorisation (tahfiz), has attended HOTs courses in university and is currently a lecturer at a public university with more than 25 years of service. |
| 2 | Tahfiz education expert, has a doctoral degree, over 30 years of experience in the field of Quranic memorisation (tahfiz), has attended HOTs courses with Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) and currently a lecturer at a public educational institute with more than 22 years of service. |
| 3 | Tahfiz curriculum expert from Educational Technology and Resources Division, Ministry of Education Malaysia, has a bachelor's degree in Quran and Qiraat from al-Azhar University, over 34 years of experience in the field of Quranic memorisation (tahfiz), over 21 years of service in Ministry of Education Malaysia. |
| 4 | Tahfiz education expert, has a bachelor's degree in Quran and Qiraat from al-Azhar University, over 25 years of experience in the field of Quranic memorisation (tahfiz), currently a tahfiz teacher under Ministry of Education Malaysia with more than 18 years of service. |

*(Source: Criteria Defined by the Authors Based on Group Discussion*

## 3.0 Findings

*3.1 Qualitative Findings Based on Needs Analysis*
The interview sessions involved four participants, all of whom were Tahfiz teachers with active roles in Quranic memorisation and were teaching at schools adopting the Tahfiz Integrated Curriculum (KBT). The analysis of the interviews revealed two key themes (Table 2): (a) Topics of interest related to integrating HOTs into the Hifz al-Quran Teaching and Facilitating (PdPc) process, and (b) Essential requirements for effectively implementing HOTs in the Hifz al-Quran PdPc process.

Table 2. Summary of Themes and Sub-themes from Qualitative Findings

| Themes | Sub-themes |
| --- | --- |
| Topics of interest related to integrating HOTs into Hifz al-Quran Teaching and Facilitating (PdPc) Process. | Understanding the memorisation of the Quran involves critical thinking. HOTs elements in the Hifz al-Quran subject. Teachers give higher-level tasks during assessments. |
| Essential requirements for effectively implementing HOTs in Hifz al-Quran PdPc Process. | Understanding challenges to implement HOTs in Hifz al-Quran PdPc process. Structured teaching resources or activity modules. |

*(Source: Data from Interviews Conducted by the Author During the Research)*

Under the first theme, teachers discussed the inherent presence of HOTs elements in the Hifz al-Quran subject, particularly in analytical and application-based tasks. Teachers explained how memorisation involves critical thinking, such as understanding the meaning of verses, applying *tajwid*, and analysing *mutashābihāt* verses (anthropomorphism). They also highlighted the integration of *Fiqh al-ayat* (jurisprudential verses), where students relate Quranic verses to real-life situations, encouraging them to apply what they have memorised meaningfully. Additionally, higher-level tasks during assessments, such as identifying specific verse positions or

recalling verses that begin with certain phrases, were cited as examples of HOTs already embedded in teaching practices. However, teachers noted that these activities are often implemented informally and would benefit from more structured approaches.

The second theme focused on the essential requirements for effectively implementing HOTs in the Hifz al-Quran PdPc process, emphasising the challenges and opportunities teachers face. One of the sub-theme identified was the lack of structured teaching resources or modules to guide HOTs integrating in the Hifz al-Quran classes. Teachers reported that, unlike other subjects supported by the Ministry of Education (MOE) with HOTs teaching materials such as the *Toolkit PdPc KBAT 2020*, there are no specific resources for Hifz al-Quran. As a result, teachers often rely on personal initiatives, such as using apps like Tarteel or Quran Memorisation, and innovative activities like board games to make learning engaging and stimulating. Teachers also expressed the need for standardised modules or guidelines to help formalise HOTs practices in teaching the Hifz al-Quran subject. These resources would provide clear strategies for implementing HOTs systematically, such as teaching students to analyse *mutashābihāt* verses or applying Quranic concepts in real-life contexts.

Overall, the results underscored the need for structured resources and formalised methods to support the integration of HOTs into the teaching and learning process of Hifz al-Quran. While teachers recognised that elements of HOTs are inherently present in Quranic memorisation, the absence of teaching aids and comprehensive guidelines limits their ability to maximise the potential of HOTs in their instructional practices. A tailored HOTs module could bridge this gap, ensuring teachers are better equipped to foster critical thinking, creativity, and application skills in their students.

### 3.2 Module Content

The Tahfiz HOTs Activities Module contains nine HOTs activities: Activity 1 – *Tasa'ul al-Tafa'ul*; Activity 2 – *Kapsul Zaman*; Activity 3 – *Qalam Terpilih*; Activity 4 – *Menyusun Kepingan*; Activity 5 – *Peta i-THINK*; Activity 6 – *Imam*; Activity 7 – *i-Eksplorasi*; Activity 8 – *i-Kuiz*; and Activity 9 – *Sambung Bacaanku*. The module is in Malay, comprises 59 pages, and includes a front cover, back cover, table of contents, foreword, introduction, module development pillars, glossary, module functions, module guidelines, and appendix. Each activity consists of an introduction, objectives, teaching methods, list of teaching aids, allocated time, preparation before implementation, level of implementation, steps of implementation, graphical representation of the steps, and a checklist form for the teacher. Table 3 below presented a description of the activities in the module.

Table 3. A preview of HOTs Activities, Objectives, Teaching Methods and Allocated Time (Four out of Nine Activities)

| No. | HOTs Activities | Objectives | Teaching Methods | Allocated Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | *Tasa'ul al-tafa'ul* | a) Apply Quranic verse memorisation with proper *tajweed*. b) Analyse the meanings of the memorised Quranic verses | Collaborative learning, question-and-answer sessions, peer assessment, interactive learning and mastery learning. | 60 minutes |
| 2 | *Kapsul Zaman* | Achieve memorisation targets within the specified timeframe. | Collaborative methods, goal-based learning, reflective learning and authentic assessment. | 50 minutes + six month later + 50 minutes |
| 3 | *Peta i-THINK* | a) Critically and creatively analyse the interpretation (*tafsir*) of memorised verses. b) Create a mind map related to the *fiqh al-ayat* of the memorised verses. | Visual-based learning methods, active learning, brainstorming, digital technology and collaborative learning. | 80 minutes |
| 4 | *i-Eksplorasi* | Provide a different experience in memorisation activities during self-memorisation sessions using a mobile application. | Digital learning methods, self-directed learning and interactive learning. | 50 minutes |

*(Source: Parts of the Content from Tahfiz HOTs Activities Module in the Studies)*

### 3.3 Content Validation by Expert Panels

The expert panel conducted a thorough review and evaluation of the module, rating its content using a scale of 1 to 4, where 3 and 4 indicated relevance. All items in the module received ratings of 3 or 4, establishing its content validity. To calculater the Item-Level Content Validity Index (I-CVI), scales 3 and 4 were grouped, as they reflected relevance, with minor revisions suggested for items initially rated 3. The improvement implemented to refine the specific aspects of the module. The enhancements included: (1) rephrasing ambiguous instructions to improve clarity, (2) adding supplementary instructions for better guidance, (3) integrating digital elements into all HOTs activities, and (4) refining the overall design of the module. These revisions were undertaken to ensure the module met the required standards of quality and usability.

The module's content was evaluated for nine HOTs activities, achieving I-CVI scores of 1.00 for eight out of ten items. This indicated an excellent level of agreement among the experts for those particular items. In contrast, item numbers 4 and 6 received I-CVI scores of 0.75, as shown in Table 4. Items with I-CVI scores between 0.70 and 0.79 require revision, while items scoring below 0.70 must be eliminated. The revisions related to improving the clarity of objectives (item number 4) and the suitability of time allocation in Activity No. 2. The overall CVI scores for the module was 0.99, indicating that the content of the HOTs activities was appropriate. At the conclusion of the evaluation, the experts were invited to provide general feedback on the module, which guided additional refinements to enhance its effectiveness and usability.

Table 4. Content Validity Index (CVI) for HOTs Activities Content by Expert Panels (*n=4*)

| No. of Items | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | S-CVI/Ave | Overall CVI | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Activity 1 | Coded Rating Scale | E1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | Appropriate |
| | | E2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | I-CVI | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Activity 2 | Coded Rating Scale | E1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.95** | | *Need revision **Appropriate |
| | | E2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | I-CVI | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.75* | 1 | 0.75* | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Activity 3 | Coded Rating Scale | E1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | Appropriate |
| | | E2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | I-CVI | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Activity 4 | Coded Rating Scale | E1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | Appropriate |
| | | E2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | I-CVI | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Activity 5 | Coded Rating Scale | E1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.99 | Appropriate |
| | | E2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | I-CVI | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Activity 6 | Coded Rating Scale | E1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | Appropriate |
| | | E2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | I-CVI | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Activity 7 | Coded Rating Scale | E1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | Appropriate |
| | | E2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | I-CVI | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Activity 8 | Coded Rating Scale | E1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | Appropriate |
| | | E2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | I-CVI | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Activity 9 | Coded Rating Scale | E1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | Appropriate |
| | | E2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | | E4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| | I-CVI | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |

*(Source: Data Analysis of the Studies (E1: Expert 1, E2: Expert 2, E3: Expert 3, E4: Expert 4, 1= coded rating scale of 3 and 4 score, 0= coded rating scale of 1 and 2 score)*

In addition to content validation, other aspects of the module were assessed, including overall module validation and graphic design. Both categories received a perfect CVI score of 1.00, reflecting unanimous agreement among the experts regarding the module's quality, as shown in Table 5. This excellent level of agreement confirmed the module's readiness for use as a validated teaching resource. The content validation process revealed no significant issues, with only minor adjustments required, such as correcting spelling errors and standardising terminology for consistency.

Feedback from the experts, based on open-ended questions, further supported the module's alignment with the criteria of the 21st-Century Learning Model (PAK21). The first expert highlighted the module's emphasis on digital integration, critical thinking, and active learning, while the second expert confirmed that the module met the criteria of PAK21. The third expert described the module as "the best," underscoring its potential for impactful use in Tahfiz education.

Additional recommendations were also provided to enhance the module. The first expert suggested incorporating peer-based learning strategies, such as mentorship or peer learning, to promote student collaborative engagement. Another emphasised the need for a more appealing and catchy module title to attract users. Improvements to the activities were encouraged by the third expert. In contrast, the fourth expert recommended aligning the duration of activities with the allocated time for the Hifz al-Quran subject in school schedules. These recommendations were considered to refine the module further.

The finalised module fulfilled all the essential criteria of a comprehensive teaching guide and was deemed suitable for supporting Tahfiz teachers in implementing the HOTs-based PdPc process. The inclusion of digital elements and a user-friendly design enhances

its practicality and relevance in modern Tahfiz education. The module is recommended as a reliable reference material for Tahfiz teachers, equipping them with the tools necessary to foster HOTs integration in teaching the Hifz al-Quran subject.

Table 5. Content Validity Index (CVI) for Overall and Graphic Designs Module Validation by Expert Panels (*n=4*)

| Criteria | Items | Rating Scale (*n=4*) | | | | I-CVI | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Relevant (Rating 3 or 4) | | Not Relevant (Rating 1 or 2) | | | |
| | | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| Overall Module Validation | The module content aligns with the goals of Tahfiz education. | 4 | 0 | | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| | This module effectively integrates the concept of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs). | 4 | 0 | | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| | The activities provided are relevant to achieving HOTs teaching and learning objectives. | 2 | 2 | | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| | The module glossary is clear and appropriate for teacher use. | 3 | 1 | | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| | The function of the al-Fa'izin Module is well-explained. | 2 | 2 | | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| | The module usage guide is easy to understand and user-friendly. | 3 | 1 | | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| | The checklist form assists teachers in monitoring student progress. | 3 | 1 | | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| | | | | S-CVI/Ave | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| Graphic Designs Module Validation | The module design is engaging and user-friendly. | 2 | 2 | | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| | Instructions for conducting activities are transparent and systematic. | 3 | 1 | | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| | Illustrations in the activities aid teacher understanding. | 3 | 1 | | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| | The module content arrangement is consistent and professional. | 4 | 0 | | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| | The module structure is logical and easy to understand. | 3 | 1 | | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| | | | | S-CVI/Ave | | 1 | Appropriate. |
| | | | | Overall CVI | | 1 | |

*(Source: Data Analysis of the Studies)*

## 4.0 Discussion

Previous studies have highlighted the lack of documents or specific modules under the Tahfiz Integrated Curriculum (KBT) that focus on the implementation of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs) in the Tahfiz teaching and learning process (Islamic Education Division, 2021). According to a comparative analysis of the Standard Document for Curriculum and Assessment (DSKP) conducted by Mohd Faizulamri et al. (2024), HOTs elements are mentioned as essential and they can be explicitly identified in the Content Standards (SK) and Learning Standards (SP), regarding the cognitive levels outlined in the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy. These levels include the abilities to apply, analyse, evaluate and create (Curriculum Development Division, 2014).

Based on interview findings, the teachers admitted to the inherent presence of HOTs elements in Hifz al-Quran subject, particularly in analytical and application-based tasks. Teachers also expressed the need for standardised modules or guidelines that could help formalise HOTs practices in teaching and learning process. Moreover, a research report by Islamic Education Division (BPI) (Islamic Education Division, 2021) highlighted a research gap for future studies about developing teaching aid for tahfiz teachers specifically to conduct HOTs-based teaching. Therefore, the urge to step in and develop a HOTs activities module was fulfilled by the current studies to facilitate Tahfiz teachers.

To develop a qualified and reliable activity module, expert evaluation is crucial as it provides evidence-based assurance of the module's content validity. The Content Validity Index (CVI) is a widely recognised parameter for quantifying content validity, offering a robust method for expert assessment. In this study, the HOTs Activities Module achieved an overall CVI score of 0.99, indicating strong validity as a teaching resource. While the ideal CVI score for a panel of four experts is 1.00 (Polit et al., 2007), this slight deviation highlights specific areas for improvement. The reduced CVI is attributed to the I-CVI scores of two items in Activity 2: Item 2, which evaluates whether the activity's objective is clear and measurable and Item 6, which assesses the realism of the allocated time. Both received a score of 0.75, indicating a need for refinement to align with expert expectations and enhance the module's overall applicability.

However, the I-CVI, S-CVI/Ave and overall CVI for the content and graphic design categories achieved perfect scores 1.00, further demonstrating the module's relevance and alignment with expert evaluations. Experts also proposed minor refinements, including integrating digital elements into the activities to enhance practicality and alignment with national education policies. The inclusion of digital components aligns with the priorities outlined in the Digital Education Policy (DEP) issued by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2023). The DEP aims to transform the digital education landscape to produce a digitally literate and competitive generation by enhancing the knowledge, skills and values of students and teachers.

Integrating digital elements into the Tahfiz HOTs Activities Module aligns it with the objectives of the DEP and enhances its relevance for Tahfiz teachers under the KBT. These digital components help foster student's critical thinking and creativity while promoting responsible use of technology as one of the key elements of 21st-century learning (Mat et al., 2024). Additionally, the module provides structured resources to support teachers in seamlessly incorporating technology into their instructional practices, thereby contributing to both HOTs implementation and the national digital transformation agenda.

While digital integration is essential for aligning with the demands of 21st-century education, it is equally important to preserve the traditional essence of Tahfiz teaching and learning. The module incorporating digital tools and platforms to enrich learning, including apps like *Tarteel* for recitation checking and memorisation accuracy, Kahoot and Quizizz for interactive learning and self-assessment and Delima 2.0, a digital learning platform that aggregates educational apps for teachers and students. Another tool suggested in the module is Canva, which supports digital mind-mapping activities.

The incorporation of technology should complement rather than replace the foundational practice of *talaqqi*, a core element of Tahfiz education that emphasises face-to-face learning under the guidance of qualified teachers. This method, deeply rooted in Islamic pedagogy, ensures the accuracy and sanctity of Quranic memorisation and recitation, fostering a personal and spiritual connection between teacher and student (Nordin et al., 2018). While digital tools enhance learning through interactive content, structured tasks, and increased accessibility, they cannot replicate the immediate feedback and mentorship embedded in the *talaqqi* approach.

The challenge lies in striking a balance between tradition and innovation, ensuring that digital integration does not undermine the core values of Tahfiz education. Instead, technology should be used strategically to support and enrich traditional practices for example, by supplementing lessons with visual aids or offering platforms for revision and reinforcement. By harmonising traditional and modern approaches, the module upholds the integrity of Tahfiz education while equipping students with the critical skills needed in contemporary learning environments.

## 5.0 Conclusion & Recommendations

This module envisioned as a valuable resource to support Tahfiz teachers in effectively integrating Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs) into their teaching and learning practices, particularly in the Hifz al-Quran subject. By focusing on key components such as *murajaah* (revision), memorisation and *Fiqh al-ayat* (understanding jurisprudential verses), the module aims to enhance student's cognitive engagement and comprehension. It is hoped that the structured activities within the module will provide teachers with practical strategies to foster critical and creative thinking while maintaining the sanctity and traditional values of Quranic learning. Moreover, the module is designed to encourage reflective and meaningful connections between Quranic teachings and contemporary life, equipping students not only with memorisation skills but also with the ability to understand and apply Quranic wisdom. By facilitating a harmonious blend of tradition and innovation, this module aspires to empower Tahfiz teachers to nurture students who are not only proficient in Hifz al-Quran but also capable of engaging thoughtfully with its teachings in a modern context. However, this study is limited by its qualitative design, small expert sample and lack of classroom implementation, which affects the generalisability of its findings. Future research should include pilot testing and impact evaluation of the module. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education and relevant stakeholders develop standardised resources and training to support HOTs integration in the Tahfiz Integrated Curriculum (KBT). Further studies should also explore Quranic-based cognitive frameworks and examine HOTs implementation across various Tahfiz institutions to identify effective practices and address contextual challenges.

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## Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study

This paper contributed to studying educational module development in the education field.

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