

THE ROLE OF HUFFAZ ULUL ALBAB IN SUPPORTING THE NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION AGENDA 50

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ABSTRACT

The 50 National Transformation Agenda (TN50) which is a continuation of the New Economic Policy (1971-1990) and the National Development Policy (1991-2020), has a clear objective to make Malaysia a top 20 country in the world in economic, social, and innovation development. The six main axes that are the government's main commitment in achieving the TN50 goals are urbanization, lack of resources, an aging population, geopolitical shifts, technological revolution, and societal change. Among the things that are a pillar of this TN50 is the birth of 125000 professional *huffaz* by the year 2050, through implementation by the National Tahfiz Education Policy (DPTN). Therefore, this paper will debate the importance of Quranic, Encyclopedic, and Ijtihadik features which are the main elements of the Ulul Albab syllabus, in realizing the noble wishes of the government based on the aspirations of TN50. A bibliographic study that involves researching literary sources, analyzing the collected data, processing the analyzed sources, and documenting the data will be done to answer the objectives of the study. The results of the research debate will have an impact on many parties both at the individual, community, and national levels. It is hoped that this study will guide the *huffaz* to develop their potential, provide awareness to the community about the importance of the *huffaz*, and help the government realize the aspirations of TN50.

Keywords: Professional *Huffaz*, National Transformation 50, Ulul Albab.

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia has enjoyed independence since 1957, the result of negotiations between the country's leaders and the British without any bloodshed (Hashimudin, Suwirta, & Awang, 2021). Since then, the country of Malaysia has experienced progress after progress under the policies introduced by the government. The New Economic Policy (NEP) which was introduced in 1971 has one main objective which is to build unity between races in Malaysia based on two main strategies, which are to eradicate poverty and Reorganize the structure of Malaysian society. As a result, the economic gap between the three main races in Malaysia, the Malays, Chinese, and Indians, can be bridged. In addition, economic growth and balance between races are more guaranteed (Mahathir, 2004).

Continuing from DEB 1971-1990, a new policy was introduced by the 4th Prime Minister of Malaysia, Y.A.B. Dato' Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad. The policy is named the National Development Policy (DPN) which is guided by Vision 2020. The main objective of the DPN is the unity between the races in Malaysia based on a more balanced development pattern that includes the following critical aspects (Malaysia, 1991):

1. Optimal balance between economic growth and equitable distribution;
2. Balanced development in the main sectors of the economy;
3. Eliminating social and economic inequality in the country;
4. Encourage and strengthen national integration;
5. Develop a progressive society;
6. Developing human resources;
7. Making science and technology an important core in socio-economic planning and development; and
8. Ensure the environment is preserved.

Furthermore, the latest agenda was drawn up and formed known as National Transformation 50 (TN50), a national aspiration inaugurated by the 6th Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak. This agenda aims to build a country that leads the top 20 worldwide in economic, social, and innovation development by the year 2050. The six main axes that are the government's main commitment in achieving the goals of TN50 are urbanization, lack of resources, an aging population, geopolitical shifts, technological revolutions, and societal changes (Kementerian Komunikasi dan Multimedia Malaysia, 2017)

In an effort to ensure the success of this TN50, the birth of the Ulul Albab generation *huffaz* is considered to be a dominant role. This statement was issued by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi in 2017. According to him, the Ulul Albab Program is one of the contributing components to the development of human capital and it coincides with the success of the government's TN50 aspirations, where TN50 aspirations require leadership and characters capable of bring the country to remain competitive in the retired world (Subapatty, 2017).

This is also reinforced by the statement of the Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki at the end of

2017 in the Millennium Empowerment Summit. According to him, by the year 2050, the government intends to produce 125,000 professional *huffaz* of the Ulul Albab style who are able to master professional fields such as engineering, doctorate, and accounts in accordance with the TN50 agenda through the implementation of the National Tahfiz Education Policy (DPTN). Until the end of 2017, 41,250 professional *huffaz* were successfully born in Malaysia (Bernama, 2017).

Therefore, this study is highlighted to debate the importance and priority of the Ulul Albab Program based on Quranic, Encyclopedic, and Ijtihadik characteristics in driving the country to achieve the aspirations of TN50 by the year 2050.

METHOD

In general, this study will use qualitative research methods with an emphasis on bibliographic research focusing on the analysis of articles and journals, working papers, records, news information, and past studies. The literature review used for this study covers 8 main aspects, namely topic selection, searching for important information, determining the focus of the study, gathering information based on selected sources, reviewing selected sources, making research notes, processing research notes, and making a report study, as can be referred to in figure 1 below (Yaniawati, 2020).

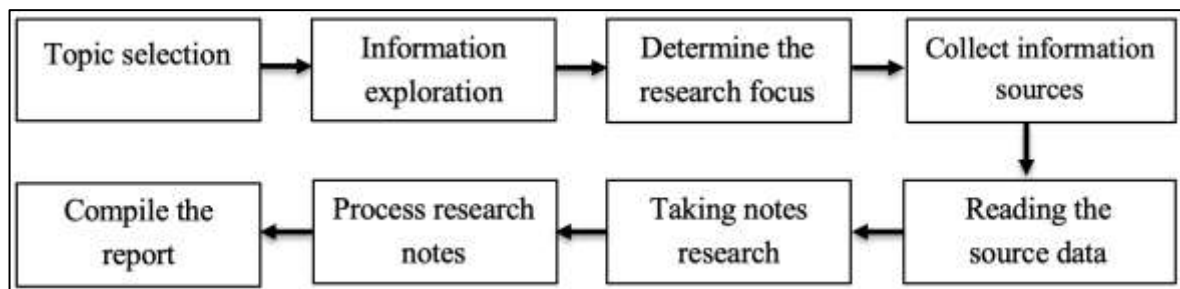


Figure 1. Research Flow (Yaniawati, 2020)

Qualitative studies generally aim to explain a phenomenon as deeply as possible through the collection of saturated data (Kriyantono & Sos, 2014). In addition, qualitative research also aims to gain an understanding of a certain phenomenon according to a certain context and situation (Moleong & others, 2014).

For this study, the researcher chose a suitable topic to analyze, which is related to the importance of the role of *huffaz* with Quranic, Encyclopedic, and Ijtihadic characteristics in supporting the TN50 agenda. Next, the main information that supports the title will be searched. Then, focus will be given to three main features, which are Quranic, Encyclopedic, and Ijtihadik. Information related to these three characteristics will be collected, and analyzed. Further, notes are taken and processed based on the analysis done. Finally, the research report will be compiled and recorded.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Aspiration of Ulul Albab

The word *ulul albab* is a term from the Arabic language that has many different meanings according to various interpretations of tafsir experts. However, it can be divided directly into three main aspects based on 16 verses in the Quran that contain the word *ulul albab*. The three main aspects are Quranic, Encyclopedic, and Ijtihadik. Five verses from the Qur'an that refer to Quranic features, namely from Surah Ar-Ra'd verse 19, Surah Ibrahim verse 52, Surah Saad verse 29, Surah Ghaafir verse 54, and Surah At-Talaaq verse 10. Two verses from the Quran refers to the Encyclopedic feature which is from Surah Ali 'Imran verses 7 and 190. The remaining 9 verses from the Quran which refer to the Ijtihadik feature are found in Surah Al-Baqarah verses 179, 197, and 269, Surah Al-Maa'idah verse 100, Surah Yusuf verse 111, Surah Saad verse 43, Surah Az-Zumar verses 9, 19, and 21 (Basmeh, 1980; Mohd Arshad, 2015)

The repetition of the word *ulul albab* in the Qur'an can be translated as the importance of this characteristic to be translated into the personality of the human race. Therefore, it is very appropriate for these three features of Quranic, Encyclopedic and Ijtihadik to be the backbone of the Ulul Albab program that was designed and applied in Imtiaz, MRSM, and schools that use the Tahfiz Model Ulul Albab (TMUA) syllabus (Haron, 2021). This is in line with the main goal of giving birth to the Ulul Albab generation in Malaysia as the leader and hope of the country's backbone by the year 2050.

The Quranic feature is the main feature in the Ulul Albab Program. Basically, this Quranic feature emphasizes students to memorize the Quran and understand the demands of the Quran as the highest source of knowledge based on the concept of read, remember, understand, think, charity, and spread (BIFFAS) by emphasizing the fluency of makhraj tajwid. In addition, this Quranic feature also aims for students to be able to memorize the entire 30 juz al-Quran within a period of 3 years (MRSM Ulul Albab and SM Imtiaz Terengganu) or 5 years (TMUA) guided by the appropriate memorization module (Mrsm Program SPRMSM Ulul Albab, 2017; Terengganu, n.d.; Yahya, 2018).

The Encyclopedic feature is a feature that wants students to be highly knowledgeable and skilled and can be a point of reference in various disciplines and be able to master various languages of knowledge to facilitate the mastery of knowledge and reference of the community. Among the methods used to achieve the objective are; 1) provide classes in Arabic, Mandarin, and Japanese; 2) provide complete and up-to-date ICT facilities; and 3) Provide basic skills such as Basic Skills Level 1 (KAT 1), Practice Learning Skills (KAB) and Thinking Skills Course (KKB) (Mrsm Program SPRMSM Ulul Albab, 2017; Terengganu, n.d.; Yahya, 2018).

Lastly, the Ijtihadik feature is designed so that students are able to provide insight into solving personal, family, community, country and ummah problems by maximizing the ability of the brain and mind, thinking creatively and innovatively and being able to apply high technology for the purpose of building human civilization and contributing to the prosperity of

Allah SWT's earth in accordance with humans as caliphs on this earth with the Qur'an as a guide and instruction. This goal can be achieved by providing leadership and co-curricular training, in addition to recommending students to be active in the field of entrepreneurship (Mrsm Program SPRMSM Ulul Albab, 2017; Terengganu, n.d.; Yahya, 2018).

The three characteristics that underlie the elements of Ulul Albab have actually been formulated and designed very well, integrated, holistic, and balanced. If the *huffaz* implement and take advantage of the mixture of the three characteristics of Quranic, Encyclopedic, and Ijtihadik that have been compiled, then the birth of *huffaz* that is able to move the country towards a developed and competitive country at the global level is not impossible.

Huffaz Ulul Albab's Role in Making TN50 Aspirations Successful

Based on the three main components that underlie the Ulul Albab Program, the role of Ulul Albab *huffaz* will be discussed based on the relevant elements.

The Qur'anic treatise is one of the greatest treatises of all time. Even this al-Quran is a very great Kalamullah and rich with various miracles (Fattah & Nadia, 2022; Miftahul, 2022; Murdianto, 2021; Safiratunnisa'ansari, 2022; Wahidin & Maulana, 2022). The miracle of this al-Quran is proof that this al-Quran is really a message from God to be used as a guide and guideline for all people. Due to the importance of the existence of the Qur'an in the human environment as a whole, the authenticity of the Qur'an needs to be preserved and maintained from any distortion and abuse. The responsibility of maintaining the authenticity of the Qur'an is borne by the *huffaz* or memorizers of the Qur'an (Termizi, Ajmain, Ansar, Muiz, & others, 2022). Therefore, the *huffaz* need to be aware of their very big and heavy responsibility in ensuring the authenticity of the Qur'an is guaranteed. Al-Quran memorizers should continue to repeat their memorization even if they have graduated from their tahfiz study institution, or are already working. This is because it is a lifetime recitation that is a privilege from Allah SWT for memorizing the Quran (Ulum & Hasan, 2020).

Many scholars insist that forgetting the Qur'an on purpose is a sin. This is based on the views of many scholars, such as Sheikh Zakariyya al-Ansari, Imam al-Ramli, Imam al-Syaukani, Ibn Husamuddin al-Rahmani, Ibn Rushd, and many more (al-Anshari, 2003; Al-Qari, 2002; al-Ramli, 1983; Al-Syaukani, 1973; 2009, الأسيوطي & سعد). However, this sinful law does not apply in all situations. If someone who has memorized the Qur'an has tried to read and repeat his memorization, then the law has been lifted from him. This point reinforces the fact that the responsibility of safeguarding Kalamullah is not a responsibility that can be taken lightly and needs to be taken care of well by the *huffaz*.

Next, the *huffaz* should be aware and understand that the community looks up to these al-Quran memorizers. Bearing the title of 'al-hafiz' is not something to be proud of, rather it is a responsibility to keep the Qur'an in

one's heart as best as possible. It is feared that this will lead to feelings of arrogance, pride, and arrogance. This is in line with the warning from Imam Az-Zahabi that feeling proud of the knowledge given by Allah SWT is the worst form of arrogance (Zuhri, 2022). The fact is, this al-Quran memorization study should educate its memorizers to be more humble, to fear the warnings of Allah SWT, and to always guard against doing forbidden things. Therefore, if the memorizer of the Qur'an feels proud of himself and looks down on others because of the title of 'al-hafiz' that he has earned, then the act is not a perfect fulfillment of the purpose of memorizing the Qur'an itself..

In addition, another role of the *huffaz* is to try to master and understand the content of the Quran, as well as to master knowledge related to the Quran. Actually, this role is not the most important role for the *huffaz*, but as it should be when a person bears the title of 'al-hafiz' then he will be a community reference (Ahmad Termizi & Abdullah, 2021). Therefore, whether they like it or not, the *huffaz* need to master this knowledge related to the Quran.

This leads to another role of the *huffaz*, which is to guide the community with knowledge sourced from the Quran. Due to the skills that Allah SWT has given to the memorizers of the Qur'an, the memorizers of the Qur'an should not hide those advantages without spreading them to the community. This prohibition is as Allah SWT says in Surah Ali 'Imran verse 187 which means, "...For verily! You should explain the contents of the Book to mankind, and you should never hide it...". Indeed, the nature of hiding the truth is the nature of the people of the book as quoted in Surah Ali 'Imran verse 71 which means, "O People of the Book! Why do you mix the right with the wrong, and you hide the truth when you know it?" Because of that, the *huffaz* have an important responsibility in society which is to spread knowledge based on the Quran.

In addition to being interested in guiding the community, these *huffaz* are very worthy to be icons for the country's youth in Malaysia. In fact, that is what should be done instead of making western or eastern figures as icons or followers. Actually, the infidels really want Muslims all over the world to follow their way of life in various aspects. This matter is no longer a secret as it is recorded in the Quran in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 120 which means, "Jews and Christians will never agree or like you (O Muhammad) until you follow their religion (that which has been distorted)..." The desire of these infidels is understandable because they fear that if the Muslim community follows a perfect religious way of life, then the strength of the Muslim community can no longer be overcome (Tamuri & Ismail, 2021). Fashion, image and way of life that may be held in high esteem globally, but if it is not based on the comprehensive Islamic Shari'a, then it should be set aside. Therefore, the *huffaz* need to be bold and bring positive, creative and innovative change to the country so that it can become the new icon of today's youth.

In an effort to guide the community, as well as become an icon for the youth in the country, it is certain that the personality and morals of the

huffaz need to be preserved. Imam An-Nawawi advises al-Quran memorizers regarding this issue (Nawawi, n.d.). He said "He (an Al Hafiz) must be in the most perfect condition and the most noble behavior. He should stay away from everything that is prohibited in the Qur'an." If viewed from one angle, the Qur'an is often associated with something very holy, clean and beneficial. Therefore, the memorizer of the Qur'an should not pollute the Qur'an that is in his chest with uncivilized acts. In addition, the importance of *huffaz* to have commendable character is so that it can be the cause for people to approach the Qur'an, and then assimilate the Qur'an in their daily lives. If this happens, then it is certain that all the problems that hit will be solved easily because the whole society is centered on the Quran as a practical way of life.

Breaking down the roles of the *huffaz* to the country of Malaysia in particular, the *huffaz* need to try their best to maintain their memorization, as well as understand and appreciate the content of the Quran. Furthermore, they should guide the surrounding community with the teachings of knowledge from the Quran. The *huffaz* also play a role in becoming an icon for many teenagers in the country by trying to make commendable morals as the main container. In conclusion, if all the *huffaz* play their role as much as they can, then the progress of the country will be guaranteed. This is because the progress of a country is based on the development of human capital, the result of al-Quran education.

CONCLUSION

The country's aspiration to achieve TN50 is a pure aspiration. One of the most important aspects in achieving these aspirations is the construction of a comprehensive and holistic human model. In ensuring the formation of community identity that meets the needs of TN50, both from various walks of life and ages, the role of the *huffaz* is very dominant. These *huffaz* are the people responsible for taking care of Kalamullah, thus making them people who understand the content of the Quran very well. Because of that, they play a role in educating and guiding the community in Malaysia towards education according to the holistic and balanced perspective of the Quran. It is hoped that in the end, the formation of a developed country that successfully reaches the 20th highest level in the international arena will be able to be realized as a result of the efforts and cooperation of the *huffaz* in this country.

As a conclusion, this study hopes that it will be able to provide positive values to all readers. It is also hoped that this study is able to knock on the door of awareness for all the *huffaz* that they have a very dominant role, not only in guarding the Quran itself, but even in building a developed country of international standard. Finally, the researcher places the highest hope in the form of a reward from Allah SWT, in addition to so that all readers also get a reward from Allah SWT.

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