

Integration of Islamic Values in Language Teaching

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Abstract: Quality education is an integral part of society and is crucial to mold learners into sound, Islamic-ally upright individuals. Education in Islam dates back to the first revelation to the Prophet ﷺ in which Allah commanded the Muslims to read. However, modern education has selectively excluded Islamic values and teachings from the educational system, which has led to a society devoid of core values. This qualitative desktop study investigates the importance of integrating Islamic values into modern education and the strategies that can be implemented for the successful integration of Islamic values in modern education. This paper is a combination of principles and methods, focussing more on effective strategies for the successful integration of Islamic values in education. The researcher hypothesized that incorporating Islamic values in teaching can enhance educational standards and nurture learners to be morally upright individuals with a strong Islamic background.

Keywords: Language, Islamic values, culture, curriculum

1. Introduction

Education in Islam dates back to the first revelation in which Allah commanded Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) to “Read in the name of the Rabb who created” (Al Qur’aan). Furthermore, Islam places great emphasis on language education as Allah time and again stresses that the Quran is in Arabic language: ‘In plain eloquent Arabic language’ (Ashuara, 195).

It follows that the teaching and tutoring of language goes well beyond just providing a medium for the sharing of information. Language teaching is not merely about imparting knowledge, it is about instilling morals and values in the students (Johnston, 2003). Values



refer to something valuable and useful to human beings. Values are beliefs about what is right and wrong and what is important in life (Irwan,Y,2020).

If we contemplate over the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), we realise that his teachings were based on good morals, values and character (Ahmad , 2011; Qamruzaman , 2015; Rafiki and Abdul Wahab , 2014).

Furthermore, if we take a closer look at the two core sources of Wahi (divine inspiration) ...The Holy Qur'aan and the blessed narrations of the Holy Messenger (peace be upon him), we will find that Allah SWT's choice of words and phrases in both is purposefully designed to inculcate values with an easy to remember, and easy to grasp flow of words. However , modern education has selectively excluded islamic teachings and values from the education system and thus, we have a society devoid of core values.

Allah Almighty says in the holy Quran, "And we created you in pairs." If we ponder over the creation, everything around us has been created in pairs (Ahmad ,2001). This phenomenon is known as pair production (Yousufzai , 2015) and can be seen across the creation of Allah. The existence of male and female pairs in animals, protons and electrons in atoms, cations and anions in ions is not a coincidence (Ahmad , 2001).

Likewise, there are two parts to man's creation; the soul and the body . Each have their own needs and sources of nourishment which is due to the origin of their creation. The body was created from sand and hence its nourishment comes from the earth. The soul was blown into man by Allah and hence its nourishment comes from above (Ahmad, 2007). Our current education system focuses on the nourishment of the physical body neglecting the spiritual body thus although our learners graduate school as qualified individuals , they lack the most basic human morals and values. Thus, in order to successfully incorporate morals and values in our education system, our curriculum should be in line with the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

1.1. Statement of problem

Curriculum developers across the world have excluded Islamic teachings and values from the educational system. Although research has been conducted on the relationship of culture and language education , little focus has been placed on morals and values.

The Purpose of this explorative study shall be to understand the importance of integrating islamic values in language teaching. Furthermore, realistic solutions will be provided for educators , educational policy makers and curriculum developers.

1.2. Research Aims

To realize the importance of Islamic values in language teaching as well as provide realistic solutions so that Islamic morals and values can be a part of our educational system.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To access the extent of integration of islamic Values in the curriculum
2. To discuss the importance of incorporation of Islamic values in the education system.
3. To explore practical methods of implementing these values.

Research Question:

1. To what extent have Islamic values been integrated in schools?
2. What is the importance of values and morals in education?
3. How can these morals and values be incorporated ?

2. Literature Review

A glance into Islamic history reveals that the curriculum in Islamic schools and universities included Islamic sciences along with secular sciences. The first university in the Muslim world was the Qayrawan University. Students in this university would study exegesis, sayings of the Prophet, Islamic jurisprudence along with science, mathematics, astronomy and Philosophy. This system continued until the British colonized the Islamic countries and effaced Islamic teachings, cultures, values from the Educational system (Uthmani,2012).

Education can be defined as the inner growth of human beings. Education is a process of fostering a students' psychological, moral, emotional, physical, and spiritual growth and wellbeing (Muhtar and Dalliono, 2020).

However, conventional education focuses on degrees and financial security . Curriculums of the 21st century are focussing more and more on academics rather than humane qualities and morals (Rahman, 2018). Integration of islamic values and skills in secular education resulted in luminaries who not only had islamic and secular knowledge but outshone the western scientists with their shining character (Ahmad, 2011; Uthmani , 2012).

Cultures of societies are generally defined and driven by their visible parameters like language and that is why Allah repeatedly stresses the choice of Arabic language for the Holy Quran and Muslim culture. There is a relationship between culture and language teaching and researchers maintain that language is part of culture and vice versa. (Dewi ,2017) . Among other reasons, Buttjes (1990) mentions that language and culture are inseparable because the process of becoming a competent member of society is realized through an exchange of languages. Furthermore, societies program children to participate in certain situations and this affects the form , function and content of their utterances. Like all teaching, the essence of language teaching lies in values and good morals (Johnston, 2003).

The fact that language and culture are interrelated requires that cultural knowledge should not be put aside when learning a new language. Values and culture determine an individual's behavior linguistically and non-linguistically (Umam ,2019). Furthermore, in the near future, the number of people speaking English in a population will outnumber those speaking the native language (Mckay, 2003). This calls for the integration of Islamic values and culture in teaching English so as to protect the future generations from losing their Islamic Identity .

2.1. Relationship of Islamic values and Language

The Quran identifies two fundamental laws for interaction with other human beings:

1. Facial expression: When two people interact, their facial expressions will determine their relationship . The Quran said , “And do not turn your cheek in contempt towards people” (Luqman -18) . Furthermore, the teachings of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) stress upon interacting with people with a radiant face .
2. Speech: Speaking to people kindly, using a good choice of words and a soft tone are amongst the teachings of islam.The Quran stresses : “And speak to people in good manner.” (Ahmad,2011).

These two fundamental laws are essential in language learning and teaching as they determine how well the learner interacts with others in society. Furthermore, speech is a key element of the English language and thus the correct values should be inculcated during teaching. As Umam (2014) highlights,

Teachers cannot only teach linguistics aspects of English without teaching culture at the same time. Thus teaching language structures and cultural conventions should lead students to better acquisition of linguistic and cultural sensitivity.

English language teachers and curriculum developers place great emphasis on graduating with flying colors. However, the success of their language skills will be determined from how well they interact with people and how they are able to speak or write depending on the situation; formal or informal (Johnston,2008) . Linguistic etiquette is a primary shaper of communicative contexts and human relationships . Furthermore, demonstrating respect is an important function of language (Elmes ,2013). Ahmad, (2011), has summarized human interactions in a concentric circle. Displaying linguistic etiquette during these interactions is not only a requirement of the Quran but also of language.

3. Method

The methodology used in this article was a literature review or desktop research. Research is a logical and systematic search for acquiring new knowledge and it involves diligent planning to discover and interpret the targeted information (Garg, 2016 and Goundar, 2012). The reliability and validity of a study is mainly dependent on how well designed it is. This includes factors, such as, the objective, reliability, repeatability in the methodology, data collection, as well as analysis (Garg, 2016 and Pandey, 2015). Failure to adhere to these would make the study unacceptable and insupportable. Inclusion and exclusion criteria define what can be included and excluded from the study sample (Garg, 2016). Only studies that included integration of Islamic studies in language teaching were incorporated. Studies from all disciplines were included; ranging from nursery school, to primary school, secondary school and tertiary levels.

The reading had an empirical research focus, keeping in mind that it was based mainly upon observed and evaluated phenomena, rather than only theory.

In this desktop research, each study had to meet the inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the research question is answered.

3.1. Literature Identification

The desktop research was done using the keywords ; values, morals in education and integrating character education in the syllabus. For each manuscript, initial relevance was determined by title.

Due to technological advances in the search engine, the search was limited to publications between 2007 and 2021 (articles published in the last 15 years) so that the research can be based on recent literature in this digital era. An in depth review of this study has not been conducted over the past three years, owing to the global pandemic, hence, demonstrating the great necessity and importance of conducting research on this topic.

4. Results and Discussion

Culture influences language teaching in two ways ; Linguistically and pedagogically . Linguistically, it affects the pragmatic and semantic level of language . Pedagogically, it affects the choice of material used to teach the language (McKay, 2003). Islamic values can be integrated linguistically and pedagogically.

4.1. Role modeling

In order to integrate Islamic values in English language learners, the teacher would have to uphold these values (Johnston , 2008). The teacher is like a river while the students are like rivulets . It is evident that what the river holds will flow into the rivulets. Hence, it would be very important for the teacher to uphold these values and morals in order to pass them on to students (Ahmad, 2008). The Prophet (peace be upon him) states , ‘I am a teacher .’ He was the best teacher and he neither ridiculed any of his students nor shunned them. Instead he displayed compassion and role modeled (Ahmad, 2003) . There are many examples in the life of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) where he role modeled. Waldorf teacher education also stresses greatly on role modeling as students tend to emulate their teachers (Rawson, 2020). Through role modeling, teachers reflect several characteristics of personality through which the students give importance to both learning materials and personality (Coskun,2019).

4.2. Some of the values and qualities present in an English language teacher should be:

Humility :The teacher should imbibe in himself humility and stay away from pride even though he or she may be an expert teacher . It is stated in a Hadith (saying of the Prophet): ‘Just the way an affluent person becomes proud and arrogant due to his wealth, a knowledgeable person also becomes arrogant due to his knowledge’ (Qamruzaman, 2017). If a teacher is humble, the students will naturally learn from his or her ways and adopt humility. Our pious

predecessors were such humble teachers despite being prominent scholars having a lot of knowledge. One great scholar by the name of Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (May Allah have mercy on him) actually carried the shoes of his students whilst it was raining . When asked why he did so, he replied saying that he was a lowly servant (Ahmad, 2003).

Compassion: English language teachers should be compassionate towards their students . This will teach them to be kind and compassionate towards those under them (Ahmad, 2003). Compassionate teachers are able to reflect the characteristics of passion, inspiration, motivation, and openness to the students. With the aid of these, the teachers are likely to make the lesson happen with positive outcomes (Coskun,2019). Also, a positive classroom environment is likely to help students grow as socially responsible individuals in society.

Furthermore, the teacher should refrain from criticizing or ridiculing students who may be weak in the subject. As Ahmad, (2003) implicates, ‘ Criticizing students is like making a hole in the bucket you wish to fill .’

Passion: The English Language teacher should be passionate about his/ her subject . This passion should be reflected in his language , actions and teaching . When a teacher is passionate, the students not only learn the subject matter , but the passion is also passed on to them. These students will show passion in their careers and abstain from any worldly financial motives (Coskun, 2019). A great Scholar of the 18th century by the name of Ashraf Ali (May allah have mercy on him) wrote,

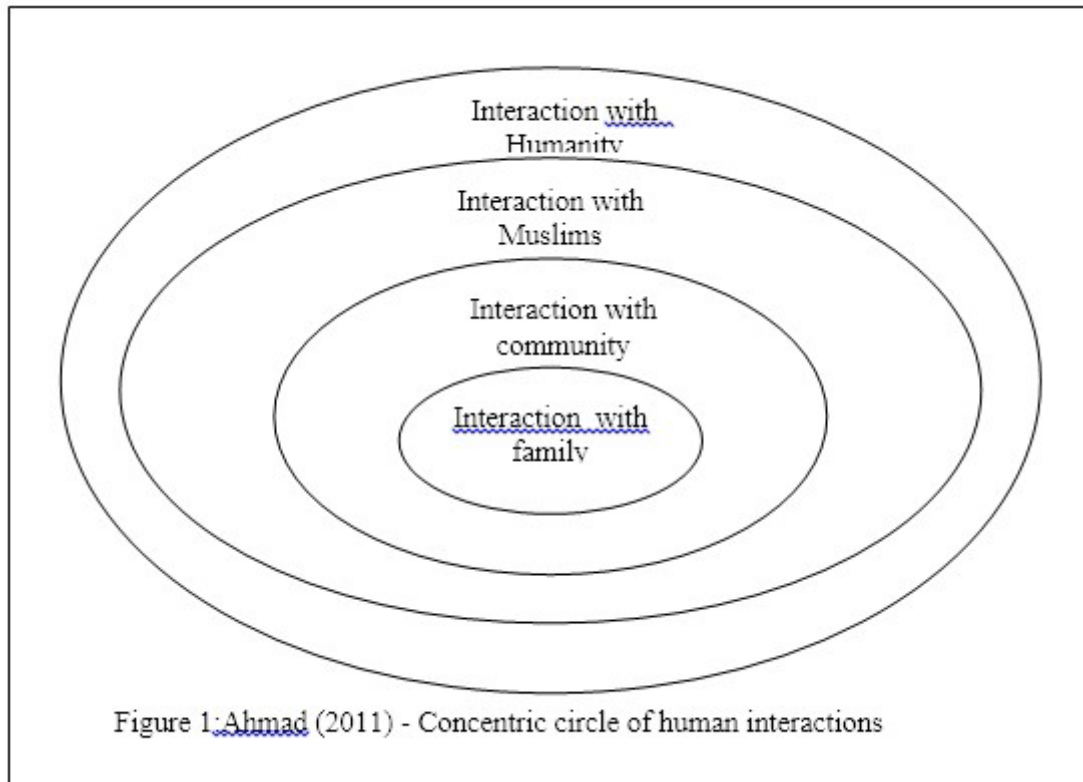
“The teacher should make a concerted effort to explain the subject matter in their simplest of terms . He should also explain different components of speech and phonemes in the easiest way possible and once students have understood the concept properly , the teacher should explain it again using technical terminology and he should not speak more than what is necessary or give the students more information that that which is necessary.”

Passion makes a teacher like a learner forever. This approach keeps up the teachers with the latest developments and teaching techniques. This shows the enthusiasm and dedication of the teacher towards the subject matter. It is worth noting that enthusiastic teachers are always remembered by students (Coskun, 2019).

Time management : The English teacher should always come to class on time. Additionally, he or she should refrain from missing any classes (Ahmad, 2003). Many English language teachers emphasize the importance of time management when writing essays , or engaging in debates and speech contests. However, few are able to demonstrate this practically.

4.3. Pedagogical integration of Islamic Values

Every curriculum developer has an ideology which he wishes to instill in the child. The student will only focus on improving his English and language, but the originator of the syllabus seeks to instill an entire ideology, philosophy and mind-set within the student (Kajee, 2019). Thus the next step would be to revise the curriculum.



Teaching and learning material can be designed in a way that not only are students learning the English Language, but they are also gaining knowledge regarding Islamic values and teachings. This way, these values will be deeply ingrained in each student and they will not only graduate in English language, but they will also graduate as good human beings.

Reading Materials: Narratives and parables are excellent teaching tools; as mentioned in the Holy Qur'an: "We have put forth for men, in this Qur'an. Every kind of parable, in order for admonition." [39:27]. In a research carried out by Dewi (2017), it was noted that teachers mostly used storytelling and questioning towards the stories or other text given. They also asked learners to read a text loudly (e.g. reading stories) or to read poetry with dramatization. Such language learning strategies contribute to the communicative competence of students.

Rather than having reading materials with fairy tales and false stories, reading material could have Islamic content (Umam, 2014). In the past, children would read stories about the bravery, truthfulness and compassion of the companions of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) and this in turn would nurture these values in the children. Thus, if the reading material contains lessons with Islamic values and characters in the stories are non other than the heroes of Islam, then the learners will also become flag bearers of Islam. Madkur et al (2017) suggest that if Islamic reading material is not easily accessible, then teachers can be creative and invent their own material suiting the needs of their classroom and learners.

Textbooks: Textbooks are the nucleus of any language teaching process or curriculum (Umam, 2014). They provide organized units of work which helps the students and teachers to understand the work in line with the curriculum. Furthermore, if no curriculum is present, then textbooks serve as a curriculum. (Johnston, 2008).

Thus, textbooks can be embedded with Islamic character education and morals such as tolerance, gratitude, compassion, affection, honesty and teamwork (Rohmana, 2020). Muhtar and Dallyono, (2020) maintain that character education is more effective when it is integrated into the curriculum rather than teaching it as a separate subject.

Umam (2014) proposes that general Islamic content can also be included such as; How to ablution and how to pray. These Islamic values could also be conveyed indirectly via pictures or names.

As Madkur et al (2017) allege, 'The selected values are necessary for the accomplishment of goals and behaviors of learning, both in general lesson and in learning English as a foreign language.'

Furthermore, it is necessary to ensure that pictorial illustrations represent core Islamic cultural values such as the family being the nucleus of human society, Islamic dress code and salient features of Islam (Kabah, Quran, Mosques etc). Material conveying evil messages and messages of Kufr (disbelief in Allah) should be avoided at all costs (Kajee, 2019).

Despite the advantages of using textbooks with Islamic literature, many teachers have failed to apply these practices to their classrooms. This could be due to limited resources available or due to lack of knowledge on how to integrate Islamic values in their teaching practices (Rohmana, 2020). However, many textbooks are now available online and continual professional development courses are also available for teacher training.

Speech: Language in the classroom can be centered around basic Islamic language such as the Islamic way of greeting and thanking as opposed to the western way. Furthermore, students can be encouraged to engage in dialogues or play centered around Islamic values and teachings. Role play is also encouraged.

Passages can be used to enhance reasoning, thinking and cognitive skills (Johnston, 2008; Umam, 2014). For example, in a passage about a boy who was hungry, the teacher can ask questions such as:

Teacher: Why is Rasheed sad

Student one: Because he is hungry.

Teacher: Is it okay for Rasheed to take some bananas while the shopkeeper is not looking?

Students: No

Teacher: What does Islam teach us?

Student 2: We have to be honest.

Such informal conversations not only enhance speaking and reasoning skills, but they also instill values necessary for survival in society.

Speech contests can also be held with Islamic values being the theme. This will nurture seeds of love and respect for Islamic teachings in the hearts of the learners.

Debates regarding contemporary issues in the Muslim world can be carried out. This will improve their English speaking skills during difficult situations.

Activities: Activities and class exercises can also be based on Islamic values and ethics. The teacher can ask students to derive lessons from comprehension with Islamic content. Furthermore, activities can be centered around Islamic values. Islamic values can practically be taught by engaging in social

work such as visiting the orphanage or helping the elderly after which students can be asked to write an essay or report on this topic.

Classroom rules and regulations: English language teachers can set standard rules which would be applicable in their classes (Johnston ,2008). Additionally, these rules can be centred around basic human values and islamic teachings such as respecting one another, being kind, being honest and helping one another. However, care should be taken to ensure rules are not directed at any one student and are not confrontational.

5. Conclusion

After conducting the research, carrying out the analysis, and presenting the results, this chapter presents the conclusion and offers some suggestions. It aims to conclude this research to identify the integration of the Islamic education curriculum into English Language curriculum.

The current curriculum implemented in schools is the curriculum under the management of the Ministry of Education. The syllabus is in accordance with the modern day curriculum specifically designed by teachers relating to the students' needs. The integrated curriculum of Islamic educations aims to develop the whole potential of students in a comprehensive and balanced manner which encompasses intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical aspects as well.

In the applications of integrated Islamic education, the curriculum is defined as the school implementing management approach combining Language education and religious education into the combinations of one curriculum.

The results of such education will be yielded in the form of youth who will graduate as doctors, engineers, computer scientists who will simultaneously be Islamic scholars like Ibne Sina and Khuldoon.

If the teachers include the Islamic material in the Language lesson, where the material discusses the pillars of Islam, introduction to prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his noble character, etc through narratives these young children will grow into adults who will take the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as role models and not football players and pop stars.

Furthermore, this research aims to encourage the Curriculum developers as well as Educators to equip themselves with sound Islamic knowledge and values in order to embellish the future generations with the same. If the curriculum developers and educators are devoid of Islamic culture and knowledge they will not be able to transfer the illumination of the religion into the little hearts.

Just as we have witnessed the development of the English language into a global medium of learning to the extent that most applications now give you many versions of the English language including "English Indian"... Let us strive to bring forth our version... "English Islamic"

Future Implications

Based on the result and discussion of this research, there are some limitations to this study. As such, the writer recommends some critical suggestions for future researchers. There is a need

for curriculum developers who are well versed with the knowledge of Islam and Quran as well, to come together and merge their ideas in order for a revised and suitable curriculum to come in to the school system.

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