The Role of Islamic Education Teacher in Moral Education: A Case Study of (IIS) Malaysia

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Abstract
The main purpose of this study is to investigate how the role of Islamic education teachers may influence in nurturing students' morality. Teaching and nurturing students' morality across curriculum is one of the important characteristics of the Integrated Curriculum for Secondary Schools in Malaysia. Its main drive is to enhance the potential of the individual students in a holistic, integrated and balanced manner that considers his spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical growth. The researchers purposively selected two teaching staff from International Islamic School (IIS), Malaysia. The results of Semi-structured interviews revealed that teachers were satisfied about the process of teaching and nurturing students' moral during the school hours. It was also found that negative influence of peers, some friends outside the school, parents at home had affected the students' moral behaviour to some extent. The teachers felt that there is a need for support from the school administrator, parents, as well as media in order to reduce moral decay among students at school.
Keywords: Moral education, Moral decay. Secondary level, Teacher perceptions.

Introduction
The main importance of Integrated Curriculum (IC) for both primary and secondary schools in Malaysia is to translate the concept of the National Philosophy of Education (NPE) into practice in secondary and primary schools. NPE obviously places an emphasis on the integrated approach in order to bring out individuals who are virtuous, knowledgeable, balanced and harmonious as well as motivated to achieve unity (Tamuri, 2007). The values that are expected to be nurtured through this integrated curriculum are consideration, self-reliance, humility, respect, love, justice, freedom, courage, cleanliness of body and mind, honesty, diligence, cooperation, moderation, gratitude, rationality and nationality. In theory, these values are supposed to be merged with the pedagogy across all disciplines of study in Malaysians secondary schools.

In Islamic history, the educational system started from the platform of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be up him). As a teacher, Prophet Muhammad (peace be up him) anxiety and concern about the principles of knowledge, and he also used to teach the Arabs to practice (*amal*) the principles in daily life. The Islamic worldview does not put emphasis on only the intellectual aspects but also considers and reflects spiritual aspects and moral aspects. It is because good moral plays an important role in the conveyance of Islamic knowledge. As a result, the early Muslim generation was able to undertake and achieve victory in many fields of knowledge such as military, architecture, astronomy, medicine and many more without neglecting the moral aspects. Accordingly, the aim of education in Islam is to produce a good man (Al-attas, 1979). To produce a good man here means to produce a generation with good moral behavior Hence, to produce a student with good moral development behaviour is one of important objectives of education. The teacher of Islamic education subject must play the essential role of achieving this objective.

Therefore, Muslim students are expected to show morality and righteousness in their behaviour, both of which come from Islamic teaching. In this respect, teachers play a vital role in cherishing and nurturing young people's moral behaviour, personality and character (Tamuri, 2007; Adam Adesina, et al., 2018). The study thus focuses on the role of teachers in shaping students' morality, as per the objectives of Malaysian National Philosophy of Education.

Meanwhile, being a predominantly Islamic country, Malaysia has made "Islamic education" subject one of the important components of its education system. The aim of the subject is to develop students' understanding of Islam as well as the techniques of developing and nurturing good moral behavior among the students. Founded on the Report of the Cabinet Committee on the Review of the Implementation of Education Policies, it recommended that all Muslim students be required to sit for Islamic education subject in nation examinations (Ministry of Education 1989; 2000). Why discipline problem among students still happening? Some of parents raise a concern upon the role of Islamic education subject teacher in the development of students' moral character in the schools. It also shows that some parents seeing the development of student character only depend on the Islamic education teacher. But we should consider others role such as the student themselves, family, schools' culture, peers, and media and social environment in the development of student moral. Thus, the

need to focus on the deterioration of moral behavior and indiscipline among teenagers, especially school-going children (Vishalache Balakrishnan, 2010).

As moral education is an indispensable and vital part of human progress and develop, one of the significant aspects of the moral education is to nurture and promote students' moral values. Today, for example, students are taught the principles of Akhlaq Islamiyyah at the primary level and Islamic Moral Code based on Islamic ethics at the secondary level of education from Form 1 to Form 5 (Malaysian Ministry of Education 2002, cited in Tamuri 2007). Essentially, the teaching of morals is intended to implement one of the main principles of the formulation of the Integrated Curriculum for Secondary Schools in Malaysia, which are common in all subjects of the curriculum. Of the numerous objectives that have been drawn for the secondary schools, two in specific are directly correlated to development of individual morality in society namely, "to acquire, appreciate and practice accepted moral values, and to develop a deep sense of responsibility and to be prepared to serve the religion and nation" (Malaysia, Ministry of Education, 1989).

In Malaysian schools all activities related to moral education are based on the 1979 report of the Cabinet Committee on Education to review the implementation of education policy. In this report, it was stated that: "To build a disciplined, cultured and united society, it is recommended that students should study Islamic Religious Knowledge in which aspects of moral must take consider. All pupils who study this subject titled, "Moral and Ethics Education", must attend the examination. Students must have "respect for individual, freedom to embrace any religion in a multi-religious society must be cultivated" (Report of the Cabinet Committee, 1979, cited in Vishalache B. 2010). In short, the prioritized aspects of moral values are spirituality, humanity, respecting society and culture.

Since the introduction of the Integrated Curriculum for Secondary Schools in Malaysia in 1979, the subject titled moral education has been obligatory for all students in schools irrespective of their religious backgrounds. It means that the subject is catering for the non-Muslim students as well who are either Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, Taoists, Sikhs and believers of animism and paganism (Vishalache B. 2010).

The influence of families and friends are important for developing a child's moral values. As a matter of fact, the social development and progress in the infant who is at first completely self-concerned, but then with successive stages of maturity concern from family. Moreover, during preschool years, one becomes attracted in playmates outside the family. At that time, he acquires some new models for his moral character behaviour. At certain level, teachers and schoolmates assume an importance that sometimes rivals that of his family. Many young people are more prone to taking their cures from their peers, classmates or schoolmates than from their families (Langgulung, 1999). For this reason, cultivating moral education in school premises is very important for developing and nurturing students' moral behavior.

Furthermore, moral education included in self-development are belief in God, trustworthiness, honesty, self-esteem, responsibility, humility, tolerance, self-reliance, diligence, love, justice, rationality, and moderation. Whereas, the moral values related to family are love for the family, respect and loyalty towards family members, preservation of family traditions, and responsibility towards family. Moreover, the values relating to the environment are love and care for the environment, harmony between man and the environment, sustainability of the environment, and sensitivity towards environmental issues. The values included in the learning area related to patriotism are love for nation, loyalty to the King and nation, and willingness to sacrifice for nation. The values included under democracy are respect for rules and regulations, freedom of religion, participation in nation-building, and open-mindedness. As for learning area, which emphasizes and focuses on peace and harmony, the values are living together in harmony, mutual help and cooperation, and mutual respect among nations. However, the learning areas and the values are the same; the scope and emphasis on each form are different because the moral issues that are discussed become more complex according to the needs and maturity of the students. In addition, emphasis is also placed on students acquiring various skills, such as generic skills, critical and creative thinking skills, conflict resolution skills, and social skills. The hope is that these skills will prepare students to face the world of information technology and communication with confidence and have social and moral responsibility. The skills are also expected to help develop resistance among students to the pressures and challenges of student life (Vishalache B. 2010).

With regard to the roles of Islamic education teacher in imparting good qualities of moral in student's personality, the Islamic education teacher has to face some challenges in the development of student's moral. Many researchers accept the perception which saying that delinquent behavior is not only arises because of one factor. Meanwhile, in her study, Azizah found that there are four prominent factors which lead to the deterioration of student's moral which are, parents' attitudes, student's attitudes, peer influence and social environment including influence of the mass media (as cited in Mardzelah. 2003). Likewise, Berk, (1998) elaborates further that teenagers spend less time with family members and peers become more important to them. In industrialized nations, young people spend the majority of each weekday with same aged mates in schools. As a result, students who are not matured enough in facing difficulties and problems involved with peer are easily lured by negative activities either at their home or in schools. Some of the peers influence them to commit bad

deeds such as cheating, backbiting, showing disrespect to other and being dishonest. Hence, teachers' role in developing students' moral beahviour needs more exploration.

The study explores the roles of Islamic education teacher in developing moral behavious of the student and finds out the challenges faced by teacher in nurturing student's moral. The next section of this present study elaborates the method the researchers employed for knowing about teachers' perceptions regarding their roles in teaching moral education at IIS, Malaysia.

Methods

Strauss and Corbin discourse that qualitative research is "any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification. It can refer to research about person' lives, lived experiences, behaviors, moral, emotions and feelings". Likewise, also clarifies that, there is difference between quantitative research designs compared to qualitative research design in the form of verbal research data. To reach the objectives of this study, the researcher employed qualitative data collection methods which are interview analysis that produces comprehensive information and data from the participants (Strauss & Corbin 1998). The population of interest in this study consists of Islamic education subject teachers in International Islamic School (IIS) Malaysia. The researchers purposively selected two teachers with long time experience in teaching Islamic education subject at lower and upper secondary school level. The semi-structured interview questions mainly focused on the roles of teacher in making the students morally upright. In conducting the interviews, the researcher gave a clear statement of confidentiality and made a request for honesty to ensure the anonymity of participants and enhance the validity of their information. And the results from the interview summarized in three sections which correspond to the research objectives: (1) the roles of Islamic education teacher, (2) the challenges faced by teacher in nurturing student's moral. The term most commonly used by qualitative researchers to refer to this characteristic is credibility. Thus, credibility in this qualitative research concerns the truthfulness of the inquiry's finding (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 2002).

According to Creswell, J. W. (2000). Establishing trustworthiness and credibility means that the researcher decides on the accuracy or credibility of the study findings through strategies such as member checking or triangulation. Meanwhile, the main focus of this study is to discover and understand the research phenomenon from the participants' opinions, only the participants" can conclude whether the data from the interviews is exactly and accurately presented or not. Consequently, the researcher had accompanied member checking as a form of "validity check" by returning to the participants' to decide and conclude if the essence of the interviews has been appropriately "captured" (Hyener, 1999). The participants of the study, checking is the process in which the researcher requests the participant of the study to check the accuracy and truthfulness of the findings by taking the findings of the study back to the participant (Creswell, J. W. 2000). During the member checking process, participants of this study supported the data and confirmed its accuracy and truthfulness. After completing the process of transcribing and coding, it is very essential to ensure the reliability of the coded interviews. At this stage, the researcher applied an inter-rater reliability to check the accuracy of the initial coding of the discourse units. Inter-rater reliability is a procedure made by two or more individuals of an individual's or several individuals' behaviours or response by recording their scores of that behavior or response and then comparing their scores to see if their scores are similar or different (Creswell, J. W. (2005).

Findings

The informants of this study shared the view that they were aware of their role in the nurturing students' moral behavior. As education seeing as *tarbiyyah* which aims at nurturing the students' behaviour, then the teacher must give full effort and attention to mould the students' personality in line with Islamic guidance. From the interviews, it was clear that the teachers agreed with the same view that Islamic education teachers must be good role models for the students by showing them good moral behaviour in both the school premises and outside. By treating the pupils softly and kindly, disciplining pupils who have irregular behaviours and do not listen to teachers' advice, caring for the students' interests and treating them like the dearest sons with kindness, courtesy, benevolence, and patience on probable alienation. As teachers play the role in developing students' moral behaviour at schools, the teacher must identify his students' backgrounds. It could help the teacher in handling and controlling bad attitudes and moral decay among students. To curb the outside negative influences on students, the teacher sometimes may visit the students after school time. It is not only can create good relationship between the teacher and student, but also it can create positive perceptions among students that the teacher takes care and is concerned about them. As a result, the students feel uncomfortable to commit bad attitudes and show more respect to the teacher. At the same time, it can build good relationship between the teacher and the parent. Moreover, the teacher can discuss various aspects related to the students' achievements and morality with the parents. These efforts may reduce the moral decay and disciplinary problems among students as the teacher puts every effort to prepare a good atmosphere for the student to behave well (Carol 2004).

Besides, studies also found that parental attitude and problematic family backgrounds are the major challenges faced by Islamic education subject teachers in nurturing students' moral. This is because as a child is born with an *ftrah*, which is like a white cloth, so, the parent must color him in such good way. Home is considered as the first institution for every child and that is why we may find that most of the students who commit discipline problems at schools come from problematic families. It is a big challenge for Islamic education subject teachers to mould their characters, as they cannot see their parents and family as their role models. Therefore, the interviewees of the study stated that one of the teacher's counselled a student to give advice that such thing is bad, the student immediately respond to the teacher by declaring that his father at home does not care or worry whether he did good or bad thing. The participant explained further that, lack of praises and compliments from the parents, the society and negative influence of the social media.

Also, the teachers opined that students' attitudes and peers influence the development of their moral. Students are found to be completely depended on others for judging which is good behaviour and which is not. With regard to this, the student possesses low-self-esteem, unmotivated as well as less confident in formulating good moral. In addition, student is easily influenced by peers' bad attitude. It is because the students spend most of his time at school and with peers, therefore they follow their peers. Berk (1998) viewed that social environment plays an important role in the development of student's moral behaviour. Consequently, this factor may also lead to challenge the role of the teachers in nurturing student's moral in school.

Nowadays, due to demand of career and lifestyle, society plays fewer roles in the development of student's moral and become a selfish society. Society members are tending to take care and concern upon their own children, own life as well as own family. It is different from what we have during last time ago where the society members assumed other children as their own children by giving advice care and helps whenever the children need. With regard to this, Islamic guides drawn us proper way with ask us to take care of other. Allah mentions in the Holy book (al-Qur'an) "You are now the best people brought forth for (the guidance and reform of) mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. Had the People of the Book believed it were better for them. Some of them are believers but most of them are transgressors" (Q 3 V 110). It shows us that Islam asks the believer to enjoin what is right and forbidding wrong. Therefore, to be a good believer, the society members also have their own role in moral development of the young teenagers. Thus if the society could not maintain the stability of good environment it can affect the youths moral and it became a challenge to subject teacher in development of student's moral character.

Similarly, one of participants shared that social environment plays important role in drawing student's moral behavior. For instant, if the student comes from a good neighborhood, they are tending to behave in such good manner. The second interviewed teacher viewed that; the found problematic student come from bad neighborhood environment. As an example, student who live in selfish area are more aggressive to commit bad attitudes and wrong deeds. It is because the student found it is common in his neighborhood and nobody cares if he commits wrong. This research question shows that there are several factors may challenge the Islamic education subject teacher role in nurturing student's moral behavior.

Conclusion

This study highlights the role of Islamic education subject teachers in nurturing students' moral behavior and the challenges faced by teacher in nurturing student's moral. The data gathered from the in-depth interviews show that the Islamic education teachers play an important role in the development of student's moral. In fact, the requirements to be a teacher are not only based on true academic and intellectual capacity, but a teacher should also have a good grounding in Islamic education and should be well-read in the general culture of Islam. Teachers should also have the ability to educate their pupils in such a way that they are able to follow teachers', advice to become upright human beings. Furthermore, the teachers claimed that the parents must contribute their time and efforts for developing their children's moral at their homes. Therefore, the contribution of parents, teachers, school culture/climate, as well as mass media and social environment can build young peoples' moral character.

Conclusively, the successful implementation of Integrated Curriculum under the National Philosophy of Education Malaysia can only be achieved through the combined the efforts of teachers parents and students. This study guides teachers to be actively involved in developing students *akhlaq* (moral) through Islamic teaching. Such education attempts to provide guidance for a holistic life for everyone through teaching the fundamentals moral in Islam in relation to Allah, His Prophet, parents, teachers, and society as well as the whole universe.

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