

The influence of *Tawhidic* paradigm in sustaining the Training of Soul Preachers (*Murabbi*)
for Harmonious Society (*Ummah*)

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the influence of *Tawhidic* paradigm in sustaining the training program for producing *Murabbi* of the *Ummah*. In Islamic terms, *Murabbi* plays the roles of teachers, preachers, shapers and moulders of their students to execute the fundamental roles as servants and vicegerents of Allah. The traditional methods of training through small study circle (*halaqah*), group seminar (*ijtima' am*), practicum (*tamrin*), annual boot camp (*mukhayyam*), and so forth need an adjustment to align with the contemporary situations. The contents and the delivery methods of training also require contemporary social and globalization need. The *Tawhidic* paradigm remains as the fundamental belief system despite the adjustment in the methods of training and the contemporary curriculum to train individuals to be *murabbi* for the *ummah*. This study interviewed selected academicians who had undergone Islamic preaching training as *Murabbi* from secondary school era at home country until postgraduate studies in overseas. The results showed that there are changes and modifications in the training module for *murabbi* to reflect different situations and level of commitments that the *murabbi* faced at different stages of life. The study could be improved in terms of contents validity and reliability with it involves more informants and the use of quantitative instruments.

Keywords: *Tawhidic* paradigm, Training for Trainers, Harmonious society, *Murabbi*.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, human capital development topics received enormous interest from academics and practitioners. While the academics are trying to understand the relationship between human capital development and economic performance of individual companies and their contribution to the overall well being of the economy, practitioners are using the concept to enhance the existing human resource development and management function for efficiency and effectiveness in achieving goals (Mellander & Florida, 2014; Wright, Coff, & Moliterno, 2014; Usher, 2009). Likewise, the issue of sustaining human capital or talent is equally essential (Stam, Arzlanian, & Elfring, 2014). Some people have strong concern on the issue of spirituality aspect of organization. The spiritual aspects have been neglected due to its complexity. No matter how difficult, this spirituality aspects deserved an attention. When we forget to include spirituality, that is the time we are ignoring the main components of human being (Lo, 2014; Mok, 2014). Companies use incentives and punishment to shape the behaviour of employees for the sake achieving financial performance. A harmonious society is a result of harmonious relationship among members of the society or the

stakeholders of the society, which include business companies, consumers, suppliers, the natural environment, government, pressure groups, individuals, and so forth. The process of harmonize individuals begin from home by the parents, other family members, and also the society through educational system and institutions in the economy and the society. When individuals are not harmonize in terms of knowledge, virtue and behaviour, these individuals would cause instability in the society. Everyone should play the role of soul preacher that educate, nurture, influence and shape individuals' mind, feeling and behaviour of individuals on continuous basis. From Islamic perspective, the soul preachers are known as the murabbi, the used the authentic sources of Islam (Al-Quran and the Sunnah) through various education and training programmes to influence the mind, feeling and behaviour of the stakeholders (Bensaid, Machouche & Grine, 2014).

This study aims to explore the influence of Tawhidic paradigm, a thinking that guides cognitive, affective and behaviour of individuals toward a single direction, which is to worship Allah and to seek His pleasure. The main argument for this study is that mankind is created with the only purpose, that is to worship Allah according to His will and pleasure. In other words, this is about the primary obligation of mankind is to worship Allah. However, the contemporary world is not using the Tawhidic paradigm way in providing education and training to the teachers who are supposed to be the agents of influencing, moulding and shaping the thinking, feeling and behaviour of the society. The training for teachers in many parts of the world is based on the contemporary, rational and localized political and economic agenda. Teachers are expected to train students to equip with knowledge, skill, ability, competency, willingness and readiness to join the workforce with high impact of contribution particularly to the economic parameters. This approach leaves a big gap and vacuum in the thinking, feeling and behaviour of students for the way forward in their life. A simple question the students would ask "is it all for my creation, just to be economic workers, produce goods and provide services to the society, in return the society gets all the material benefits?" If this is just merely a baseless assumption, the creation of mankind would be beyond merely trained to be knowledge workers for the economy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides the critical examination on the main constructs of the study. The study argues that the influence of Tawhidic paradigm in the mind, feeling and behaviour of teachers will make them true teachers with soul to educate, mould and train the society to be good citizens and significant contributors to the society for prosperous and harmonious society and nation. In doing so, the Tawhidic paradigm is able to sustain the training of soul preachers (murabbi) to harmonize and make the society united and prosperous. The analysis begins with the Tawhidic paradigm, characteristics and attributes of teachers with soul, methods of training and features of sustainability in training for trainers.

Tawhidic paradigm

Tawhidic paradigm refers to monotheism in believing the oneness of Allah after a sacred declaration or *kalimah shahadah* that testify no God but Allah and Prophet Muhammad as the messenger of God. The declaration may sound very simple, but they have very strong message conveyed to the World. According to Mohd Kamal Hassan (2010, p.187), this declaration of kalimah reflects the thinking, feeling and behaviour of individuals to devote as true servants of Allah, the vicegerents of Allah and the believers with the main objective to seek pleasure from Allah which in turn translates into betterment of the society and the mankind. The declaration requires the believers to make effort to make a better society or

harmonious society. The term *khayra umma* refers to harmonious society that uphold rule of law, implement ethical values and observe code of conduct is a privilege status to the selected mankind or *ukhrijat lil-nas* as mentioned in the Qur'an 3:110. The obligation to bring harmony to the society for a balanced community (*ummatan wasatan*) is a testimony of the privilege of the selection (*li-takunu shuhada 'ala al nas*) as the vicegerent and servant of Allah as mentioned in Qur'an 2:143. Al-Faruqi (1992, p.5) argued that Tawhidic paradigm is about confirmation to adhere to the obligations to worship Allah and execute all duties and responsibilities entrusted on them. Prior to the declaration of *shahadah*, one has to demonstrate a readiness through knowledge and willingness through drive, motivation and devotion to uphold the essence of the *shahadah*. Based on the analysis by Mohd Kamal Hassan and Al-Faruqi, the qualities for teachers and preachers with soul must fulfil the terms and conditions of *kalimah shahadah* so that they will be able to execute the obligations, duties, and responsibilities as required upon their creation as mankind. Prior to the declaration of *kalimah shahadah*, one needs to possess knowledge about the meaning, essence, impact and immediate requirement from the *kalimah*. In reinforcing the knowledge, one has to strongly believe and certain with any doubt (*al yaqin*) in the *kalimah* and its consequences. The belief is out of the need and desire to seek truthfulness (*al haqq*) with utmost sincerity (*ikhlas*). The essence of sincerity is about being absolute in doing something as an obligation. The immediate consequence is the adherence to the obligations and ready to face challenges and difficulties with full acceptance (*redha*). From the prerequisites, one will execute the Tawhidic wording and paradigm into individual and collective tasks. The tasks are obligatory and trust (*amānah*) that have to be performed with full adherence to uphold justice (*al adl*) and integrity (*al Ihsan*). Figure 1 summarizes the qualities of teachers and preachers with soul from the prerequisites, terms and conditions of Tawhidic paradigm.

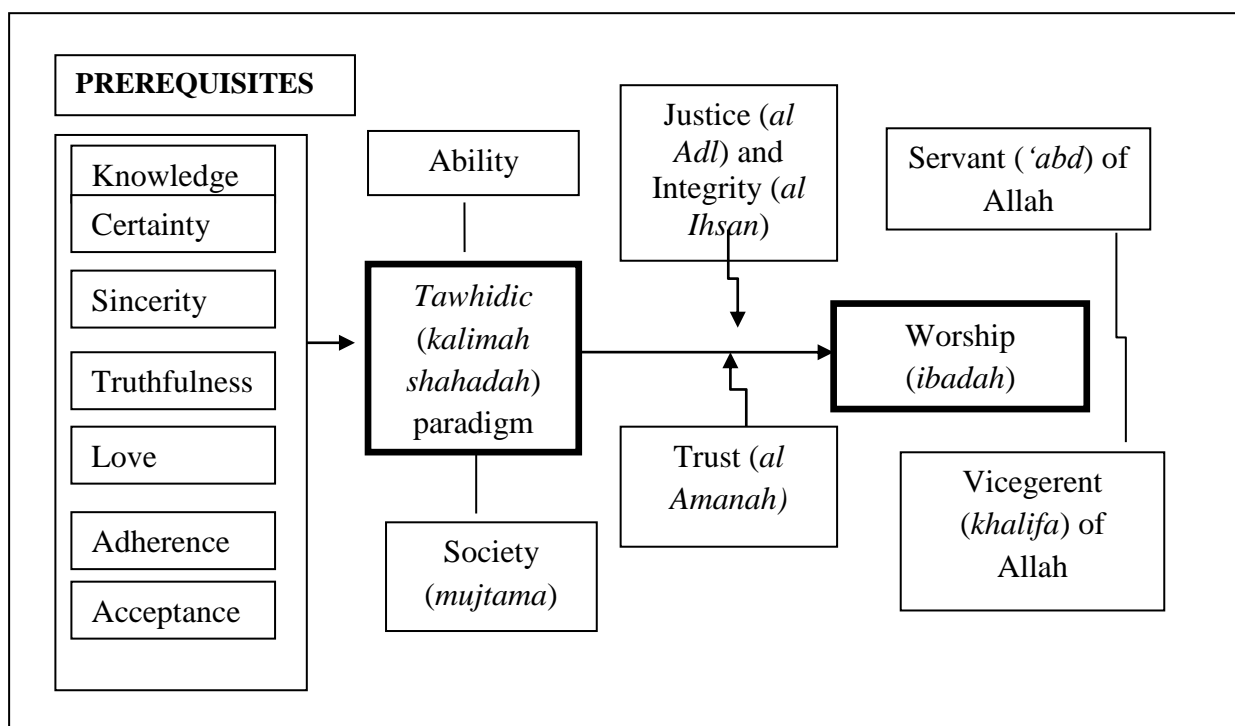


Figure 1: The Qualities of Soul Preachers and Teachers in the integrative role of *Tawhidic* paradigm on executing worship with trust and justice

Sarif, Ismail and Sarwar (2013) argued that trainers should have strong personality with soul to guide them in the process to shape, train and mould the young people to be more equipped and ready to bring prosperity and harmony to the society and the nation. The ummatic thinking is necessary as the basis for the trainers, teachers, educators to develop training module and assessment that are able to develop human capital and asset for the society and the nation. A lot of cases, business practitioners could not cope with the challenges in business such as bribery, misleading, cheating, manipulation, insider trading, conflict of interest and so forth. With the *ummatic* thinking, one will imagine of the consequences to the *ummah* if one decides to involve in bribery, cheating, misled customers, and so on. In a corporate setting, business partners and executives that are equipped with knowledge that imbued with knowledge on legal, ethics, norms, religiosity and spirituality, would be able to resist to the challenges. If not so, they would contribute to the high criminal breach of trust, bribery, and so on.

Characteristics and attributes of teachers with soul

Malaysia's education is guided by its Federal Constitution that emphasizes on the religiosity, spirituality, and social norms. The philosophy of education or known as National Philosophy of Education says:

Education in Malaysia is an on-going effort towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards and who are responsible and capable of achieving a high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the betterment of the family, society and the nation at large. (MOE, 2014).

The philosophy of education in Malaysia allows religiosity and spirituality aspects to be part of the education. The human capital development is based on a wholesome or holistic approach. The same spirit remains essential in the national education policy that based on science education. The policy says:

In consonance with the National Education Philosophy, science education in Malaysia nurtures a science and technology culture by focusing on the development of individuals who are competitive, dynamic, robust and resilient and able to master scientific knowledge and technological competency.

According to Liaw & Goh (2003), the teaching effectiveness is based on the execution of the national policy on education. The following items

- Implementation of teaching and learning activities in accordance to course pro-forma
- Provide awareness on human capital development
- Commitment and professionalise displayed when conducting teaching and learning activities

- Monitor and give feedbacks on student mastery of learning. Motivate students to pursue learning activities.
- Effective management of teaching and learning activities
- Implementation of the course assignment according to topics taught
- Active student participation in teaching and learning activities
- Provision of learning activities that stimulate thinking
- Clear presentation of course content

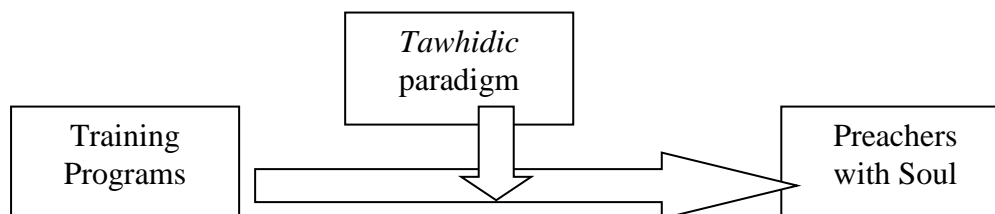
Methods of training

There are several training for teachers, lecturers, and educators in Malaysia. For teachers, right from kindergartens until higher secondary school levels, they are trained professionally by the Institute of Teachers' Education Malaysia under the Ministry of Education Malaysia. The compulsory training for two years provides them the philosophy of education and the execution of education according to the national policy and philosophy of education.

The gap of the study

The ideal philosophy of education is driven by religiosity and spirituality and there are various levels of training, right from the compulsory to progressive training session to reinforce the educational philosophy. However, the assessment of training is not directly towards sustaining a training for teachers and preachers with soul. Since the country is based on Islam as official federal religion, the *Tawhidic* paradigm is essential. Figure 2 illustrates the framework of the study.

Figure 2: Framework of the Study



METHODOLOGY

This study interviewed selected academicians who had undergone Islamic preaching training as *Murabbi* from secondary school era at home country until postgraduate studies in overseas. The main question was “how did you include *Tawhidic* values into your teaching contents?” The inclusion of *Tawhidic* values not necessarily in the forms of specific Islamic terms into the subjects. In fact, nurturing value works effectively in a subtle way. For instance, students can be exposed in the real field work to experience the creation of Allah.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides the findings and discussion from the findings.

Murabbi 1 says “*Islamic training includes seminar, study circle, weekly gathering, sports and recreation on a periodical basis and so forth. The seminal and study circle provide the students some concepts and philosophy of life according to the Quran and Sunnah. From*

here, the students will be coached to face life in various activities such as soccer, jogging, outing, and so forth. The annual camp for three nights for example is the effective mean to educate or tarbiyyah the students with real life.”

Murabbi 2 contends that “*you have a few categories of students, just like school system – novice, beginner, intermediate, advanced, and super advanced levels. The novice will go through daily rites and rituals like after performing prayers to recite the Qur’an and try to understand the contents of the Qur’an. On weekly basis, they will attend the weekly study circle that led by a naqib of usrah to deliver a short lecture before deliberating in the study circle.”*

Murabbi 3 argues that teachers and lecturers are having different setting of education. For teachers, the classroom and extra curriculum activities are done with the schedule given by the school. Murabbi 3 says “*the classroom environment is very much of chalk and talk approach with some small discussion. The insertion of Islamic values is more on reminders or takzilah. The study circle is formed based on various levels of students’ understanding about the curriculum and life according to Islam.”*

Murabbi 4 says that the national philosophy on education is great, but it does not have sufficient trainers that can train fully the teachers on how to implement it. Murabbi 4 argues “*in teaching and learning, we are expected to follow the guidelines by the Ministry of Education. In general, the operations are not fully on the spirituality aspects.”*

CONCLUSION

The results showed that there are changes and modifications in the training module for *murabbi* to reflect different situations and level of commitments that the *murabbi* faced at different stages of life. The study could be improved in terms of contents validity and reliability with it involves more informants and the use of quantitative instruments.

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