

The Use of Quranic and Prophetic Teaching Methods (QPTMs) in Teaching Non-Religious Subjects in Islamic International Schools in Malaysia

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Abstract: The Islamic tradition is rich in teaching methods used historically. A number of studies have been conducted on the use of the teaching methods derived from Quran and Sunnah in teaching Islamic studies. However, the integration of Quranic and Prophetic teaching methods (QPTMs) in teaching non-religious subjects is not yet explored. Hence, this research study attempts to assess the use of selected teaching methods derived from Quran and Sunnah in teaching non-religious subjects, based on their effectiveness in teaching and their ability to engage students in learning. The quantitative data were collected from 87 secondary school teachers who teach non-religious subjects in several Islamic International Schools in Selangor, Malaysia, using a survey questionnaire developed by the researchers. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and chi-square technique to find out if there are any difference between the four subjects of Mathematics, Science, Language and Humanities in terms of using the different QPTM methods identified. The findings of the study revealed that from the teachers' perspectives, the selected QPTMs are effective methods of teaching and able to engage students in learning. However, the chi-square test shows no significant difference between the subjects in terms of using the different QPTMs. The findings from the study may steer school leaders to increase the knowledge of teachers on QPTMs, and the prospect of using these methods in teaching non-religious subjects. Additionally, the information obtained can draw the attention of curriculum developers to include the QPTMs in teaching non-religious subjects to enhance the implementation of integrated curriculum.

Key words: Islamic Education, teaching methods, integrated curriculum, teaching strategies

INTRODUCTION

Islam puts education in a prominent position and urges all Muslims to seek and pursue knowledge. From the Islamic perspective, Hassan (1989) describes education as a long life process of preparing an individual to actualize his role as a vicegerent (or 'Khalifah') of Allah on earth and thereby contribute fully to their society. Hashim (2007) stated that Islam associates knowledge acquisition with serving society. In accordance to this, Damodharan and Rengarajan (2007) suggested that education builds the human capital of any society, which consequently leads to economic growth. Therefore, in each Muslim community, some people must be proficient in the acquired knowledge that is essential to serve the society, such as medicine, mathematics and social sciences (Khamis & Salleh, 2010), in addition to the religious knowledge.

The term "Islamic Education" should not be limited to Islamic Studies and needs to preserve its existence not only by educating the learners about Islamic 'shariaa', but also by producing individuals with intellectual and social capacity sufficient enough to contribute successfully to their society and nation in all fields. Hence, the term 'Islamic Education' in this paper is defined as such. The Quranic and Prophetic Teaching Methods (QPTMs) are the teaching methods mentioned in the Quran and also the teaching methods practiced by Prophet

Muhammad in teaching the religion of his Islam. The methods selected in this study consist of 10 teaching strategies considered appropriate for the teaching of non-religious subjects.

The Importance of Teaching Methods to Islamic education

Teaching methods are the different instructional activities that are prepared and practiced by teachers and implemented in class. The Islamic philosophy of education is created based on three basic elements, which are the learner, the knowledge, and the means of instruction (Khamis & Salleh, 2010). Many studies highlighted the correlation between the use of effective teaching methods and the effective implementation of integrated curriculum. Othman and Saedon (1998) argue that Islamic integrated education can only be achieved by implementing the effective strategy, approach, method and technique in the teaching and learning process. Ashraf (1980) believed that despite the availability of carefully developed curriculum and textbooks, the objectives of the integrated curriculum will not be achieved if teachers lack the knowledge about the teaching methods that correspond to that curriculum.

Using a variety of teaching methods is essential because human beings receive and comprehend information differently and also because of the different nature of different subjects. The Islamic heritage is rich in varieties of teaching methods that is suitable for all learners. By drawing upon the effectiveness of the Quranic and Prophetic teaching methods in early times, it can be assumed that they can be similarly successful and beneficial in teaching non-religious subjects.

Teaching Methods and Effective Teaching/ Students' Engagement

Effective learning depends on a number of interrelated factors, among which are the teachers and the teaching methods (Al Harthy, 2013). According to Kassim and Tamuri (2010), teachers should master the knowledge in the subject they teach as well as the techniques used to deliver this knowledge during the planning and implementation of teaching (pedagogical-content knowledge, PCK). Therefore, ineffective teaching can occur if the teacher is unable to design and implement the teaching methods that can effectively deliver knowledge to students. Meaningful learning experiences can be created by the active engagement of both students and teachers in the classroom according to the learning activities (Abdullah, Bakar & Mahbob, 2012). Teachers must be prepared to deal with the diversity of their students' needs and interests (Rahman, Scaife, Yahya & Jalil, 2010). Therefore, using a variety of teaching techniques is important to attract students' interest, keep them attentive and provoke their curiosity (Hussin, Noh & Tamuri, 2014).

PRESENT STUDY

This study aims to investigate the level of teachers' awareness of the QPTMs and the extent to which these methods are currently implemented in teaching non-religious subjects. In addition, the quantitative data aims to assess from the teachers' perspectives, the level of effectiveness of using QPTMs in teaching and the level of students' engagement. Moreover, the quantitative data aims to determine the main obstacles facing the teachers when using the selected QPTMs. It also tests whether the level of use of the QPTMs are independent of the different subjects being investigated.

Al-Khalediy (2011) mentioned that most of literature written on Islamic education deals with the Islamic philosophy of education, aims, teachers and educational institutions. Many researchers conducted studies to determine the relationship between teaching methods and other factors such as teacher's gender, qualifications and years of experience (Alotaibi, 2014) and teaching methods and students' preference (Rustham & Arifin, 2012) in the field of teaching Islamic studies. Other studies were performed to assess the instructional strategies and the challenges in implementing integrated curriculum (Ljevakovic, 2013). It can be argued that in addition to the content, the methods of teaching should be considered an essential factor in achieving the goals of Islamic education and aid the implementation of the integrated curriculum in Islamic schools. The Holy Quran and Prophetic Sunnah introduced several teaching methods to suit the diversity in human nature and the way people acquire and retain knowledge. Yet, not enough systematic studies on the Quranic and Prophetic teaching methods (QPTMs) were implemented. Hence, this study focuses on the use of selected teaching methods provided in the Holy Quran by Allah, and practiced by prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

METHODS

This study employs the quantitative method of data collection using survey questionnaires. The target population of the study is the male and female teachers who are teaching non-religious subjects for secondary students in several Islamic International Schools in Selangor, Malaysia. This study utilizes the whole population as participants since the number of teachers is quite small (110) and they are all accessible. The instrument used to collect the quantitative data was a questionnaire developed by the researchers, reviewed by three experts and validated in terms of content and face.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Out of 110 questionnaires distributed, 87 were returned, with a majority of the respondents being females (57) and they constituted 65.5% of the respondents. Fifty (58.1%) respondents were bachelor degree holders, thirty three (38.4 %) were Masters' degree holders and only three (3.5 %) were PhD holders. Only 21.8% (19 teachers) earned a professional diploma in teaching. The study included teachers who teach non-religious subjects namely Language, Science, Mathematics and Humanities. The distribution of respondents according to their subjects is as follow: 37.9% are teaching languages which include English, Malay and French, 25.3% and 23% are teaching science and math respectively, and only 13.8% are teaching Humanities.

Teachers' awareness of QPTMs:

As shown in Table 1, the data revealed that overall, 71.2% and 74% of the non-religious subject teachers are aware of the teaching methods in Quran and Sunnah respectively. The highest percentage of teachers are aware of repetition (84.1%) in the Quran, while above 80% of the teachers are aware that demonstrating (81.9%), using parables and metaphors (80.7%) and practical application (80.7%) are among the teaching methods used in the prophetic Sunnah. However, the least awareness of teachers was about the use of graphic illustration as 26% and 36% of the teachers reported they are aware of this method in Quran and Sunnah respectively.

Table 1: *Teachers' Awareness of QPTMs*

Methods	Quran		Sunnah	
	Yes Frequency (%)	No Frequency (%)	Yes Frequency (%)	No Frequency (%)
Parables and Metaphors	69 (82.1%)	15 (17.9%)	67 (80.7%)	16 (19.3%)
Narrating Stories	66 (78.6%)	18 (21.4%)	61 (74.4%)	21 (25.6%)
Creating Dialogues	56 (69.1%)	25 (30.9%)	60 (73.2%)	22 (26.8%)
Repetition	69 (84.1%)	13 (15.9%)	63 (77.8%)	18 (22.2%)
Practical application	67 (79.8%)	17 (20.2%)	67 (80.7%)	16 (19.3%)
Gradual Teaching	62 (74.7%)	21 (25.3%)	62 (74.7%)	21 (25.3%)
Demonstrating	62 (75.6%)	20 (24.4%)	68 (81.9%)	15 (18.1%)
Graphic Illustration	26 (31%)	58 (69%)	36 (43.4%)	47 (56.6%)
Problem Solving	62 (73.8%)	22 (26.2%)	63 (76.8%)	19 (23.2%)
Study Circle	53 (63.1%)	31 (36.9%)	63 (76.8%)	19 (23.2%)
Mean (%)	71.2%	28.81%	74%	26%

The Current Implementation of QPTMs:

Table 2 presents the overall frequency of the current implementation of QPTMs in teaching non-religious subjects, and detailed comparison of the current use of QPTMs between the four subjects. As an example, mathematics teachers seemed to prefer repetition, gradual teaching and problem solving in teaching their subject, which are not that popular among the Language teachers. On the other hand, Graphic illustrations are most popular among science teachers than Language, Mathematics and Humanities teachers. Also, it can be verified that Humanities teachers are more in favor of using the study circle than the other three subjects. There is another evidence to suggest that teachers of Languages and Humanities are more successful in applying the method of narrating stories in teaching their classes, in contrary to teachers of Science and Mathematics. The evidence was derived from Table 2 that denotes that the mean of teachers using narrating stories in teaching language and Humanities are 93.7% and 91.7% respectively. It is noteworthy to examine whether the regularity of using each QTPM is dependent on the four non-religious subject investigated. For this purpose, a chi-square test of independence was run for each of the ten methods, to find out whether there were significant differences between the 4 non-religious subjects and the frequency of using QPTMs in teaching. However, the results of chi-square tests shows that there is no significant association between the frequency of using QPTMs and the different subjects, although it can be observed that certain QTPMs are preferred by certain subject teachers.

QPTMs and Effective Teaching/ Students' Engagement

From the teachers' perspective, the most effective method according to Table 3 is practical application. Whereas, the least effective method from the teachers' perspective is the study circle. However, all methods are scored highly by the teachers (greater than or equal to 4.07), which show that they "agree" and "strongly agree" on the effectiveness of all the methods. The findings in Table 3 also revealed that teachers "strongly agree" that demonstrating method is the most engaging method in class as it scored the highest mean of 4.56 (SD = 0.604).

Table 2: Comparison between the Frequency of Using QPTMs in 4 Non-Religious Subjects

	Language					Mathematics					Science					Humanities					Overall Frequency (%)				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Most of the time	Always	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Most of the time	Always	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Most of the time	Always	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Most of the time	Always	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Most of the time	Always
Parables F	0	1	19	9	3	1	4	9	6	0	0	5	11	4	2	0	2	7	1	2	1	12	46	20	7
%	0	3	57	27	9	5	20	45	30	0	0	23	50	18	9	0	17	58	8	17	1	14	54	23	8
Stories F	0	2	13	14	4	0	6	9	3	2	1	5	13	2	1	0	1	6	3	2	1	14	41	22	9
%	0	6	39	42	12	0	30	45	15	10	4.5	23	59	9	4.5	0	8	50	25	17	1.1	16	47	25	10
Dialogue F	0	5	13	7	8	1	3	10	3	2	0	2	10	7	3	0	1	6	2	3	1	11	39	19	16
%	0	15	39	21	24	5	15	50	15	10	0	9	45	32	14	0	8.3	50	1.7	25	1.2	13	45	22	19
Repetition F	1	1	8	17	6	0	0	4	6	10	0	0	7	6	9	0	1	5	4	2	1	2	24	33	27
%	3	3	24	52	18	0	0	20	30	50	0	0	32	27	41	0	8.3	42	33	17	1.1	2.3	28	38	31
Practice F	1	1	1	17	13	0	1	5	4	10	0	2	5	5	10	0	1	1	7	3	1	5	12	33	36
%	3	3	3	52	39	0	5	25	20	50	0	9	23	23	45	0	8.3	8.3	58	25	1.1	5.7	14	38	41
Gradual F	0	2	7	14	10	0	0	4	8	8	0	0	6	8	8	0	1	6	2	3	0	3	23	32	29
%	3	6.1	21	42	30	0	0	20	40	40	0	0	27	36	36	0	8.3	50	17	25	0	3.4	26	37	33
Demonstrating F	1	1	10	13	8	1	0	5	4	10	0	0	5	6	10	0	0	3	6	3	2	2	23	29	31
%	3	3	30	39	24	5	0	25	20	50	0	0	23	27	45	0	0	25	50	25	2.3	2.3	26	33	36
Graphics F	1	2	13	10	7	1	1	7	4	7	0	0	6	8	8	0	2	4	3	3	2	5	30	25	25
%	3	6.1	39	30	21	5	5	35	20	35	0	0	27	36	36	0	17	33	25	25	2.3	5.7	35	29	29
P. Solving F	0	3	9	15	6	0	0	7	7	6	1	0	7	10	4	0	0	5	4	3	1	3	28	36	19
%	0	9.1	27	46	18	0	0	35	35	30	4.5	0	32	45	18	0	0	42	33	25	1.1	3.4	32	41	22
S. Circle F	2	7	18	4	2	0	4	10	5	1	1	2	12	5	2	0	0	7	3	2	3	13	47	17	7
%	6.1	21	55	12	6.1	0	20	50	25	5	4.5	9	55	23	9	0	0	58	25	17	3.4	15	54	20	8

The means of the other nine QPTMS indicate teachers' agreeing that these methods engage students in class.

Table 3: *Teachers Perception on the Level of Effectiveness of QPTMs and Levels of Students' Engagement in Teaching Non-Religious Subjects*

	Effectiveness of QPTMs		Students' Engagement	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Using Parables and Metaphors	4.14	.809	3.87	.887
Narrating Stories	4.21	.809	4.11	.882
Creating Dialogues	4.17	.852	3.94	.840
Repetition of Statements	4.47	.662	3.99	.814
Practical application	4.62	.575	4.38	.740
Gradual Teaching	4.41	.691	4.28	.742
Demonstrating	4.56	.642	4.56	.604
Using Graphic Illustrations	4.40	.754	4.42	.833
Problem Solving	4.53	.644	4.27	.693
Study Circle	4.10	.836	3.98	.840

DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study revealed that the teachers' responses according to the quantitative data indicate that these methods are currently implemented by the teachers in non-religious classes, even though they are not referred to as methods derived from Quran and Sunnah. The extent of implementation of these methods depends on the nature of the subject being taught. QPTMs were found to be effective in teaching and can improve the academic level of the students.

CONCLUSION

Islamic education tends to develop human beings in a comprehensive manner, taking into account the intellectual, spiritual and moral development of the person. Many Islamic schools made efforts in developing integrated curriculum that integrates Islamic goals into their subjects, which requires integration between various elements. Among these elements are the teaching methods. The quality of teaching methods is determined by the extent of its ability to achieve the educational goal. Since the Islamic revelation is the foundation of all matters related to Muslims, the teaching methods as well ought to be derived from Quran and Sunnah. Collectively, the findings of the present study indicate that QPTMs are believed from teachers' perspectives to be effective in teaching non-religious subjects. Thus, the study presents a practical contribution to Islamization of curriculum by considering the (QPTMs) as new concepts in Islamic education.

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