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The Teaching of Islamiyat and Students' Character Building: An Analysis of Elementary School Teachers

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Abstract: *This quantitative study was designed to analyze the effects of teaching Islamiyat on students' character building at the elementary level. The proportionate sample of 817 elementary school teachers was drawn from the total population of Okara district elementary schools using random sampling. The tools' reliability was also tested using a pilot study and Cronbach's alpha on the pilot study's responses. Scale reliability was.88. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations), t-test and ANOVA to compare teachers' demographics, and regression to examine the effects of variables. The researcher used factor analysis to determine if the scale's items were gears of a common construct. The study found that most teachers agree that Islamiyat teaching is vital in developing students' character.*

Key Words: Islamiyat Teaching, Character, Character Building, Elementary Schools

Introduction

The religion of Islam is regarded as a complete code of life as believers can seek guidance on how to spend their lives according to its teachings. It teaches about all the aspects of life. Islamic Education has great significance in the National Education Policies and it has been declared as one of the compulsory subjects in the National Curriculum of 2006 for all classes from Primary Classes to Higher Classes. The students which are studying at the elementary level of school are going through different kinds of physical changes as they are in the growth phase of their lives and these physical changes also have psychological impacts on their personalities. It has been found that some students of elementary schools suffer from several kinds of psychological disorders due to which their behaviours get impacted and they become impulsive, rebellious, impolite, quiet, quarantined, etc (Rodríguez et al., 2020). The educators are responsible for helping the students so that they can cope with such issues and such content should also

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be added to the textbooks of students such as the books related to the religion of Islam e.g; Islamic Education through which students could get help and could save themselves from undergoing such kinds of situations and if anything unfortunate happens in their lives then they would have appropriate ideas for coming out of the situation and dealing with it appropriately. Islamic Education could play a critical role in this regard.

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) was a perfect man and he set an example regarding how to build the character of a nation and how to influence the whole world with it. That's why, Hart (1978), who is the author of 100 influential figures, has put the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) as the most influential person in the history of mankind because he has been able of changing the character of the public by transforming the reality of people from uncivilized to the civilized ones.

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) laid special focus on making a proper process based on which the character of a nation can get formed as the base of capital so that changes can be made for developing great civilizations. The earnest effort resulted in showing the outcomes in a very shorter period of time and through this one of the best and strong generations was formed successfully. Such a generation was formed which was ready for building the civilization in this world and has created a bigger influence for introducing some of the major changes so that he would never have to say: "the best of people is my time, then afterwards (the companions', then afterwards (tabi'in) With character building, attitudes and values that exist in man are able to be developed." That's why mainly people have the potential in their nature from the time since life has evolved in this world which leads them towards developing the potential of being kind and reflecting positive actions from their personalities.

Sofa (2018) emphasized the concept of community development that should not be misunderstood and regarded as a subject in which traditions associated with the Islamic disciplines are studied by which a diminished elementary role is occupied. According to this statement, it is indicated that traditional studies related to Islam could play a critical role to educate society. Islamic education assists in completing the growth of personalities of individuals but the instructions only provide training to an individual or group of individuals for performing particular tasks in an efficient manner. Fua et al., (2018) quoted a statement in their book Abduh and referred the religion as one of the key aspects to define the morality of individuals and communities. They wrote that it is more appropriate that Harun is considered the founder of bringing change in the traditions associated with the academics of higher Islamic Studies teacher institutions in the country of Indonesia. Almost three major changes and reforms have been established by him. First of all, he brought a change in the system of delivering lectures which followed a traditional and conventional method and into a system that is warmly humanistic because of the utilization of methods of discussing the problems and arranging seminars for this purpose.

Character building has become one of the matters to which great attention is being paid the government these days and this concept should be welcomed for formulation systematically and comprehensively. Therefore, character building should be utilized under the domain of a framework related to the national education system as a source of complete normative references which would be formulated with the help of a complete framework. The persisting condition in Indonesia is that the people of the country are in a position of continuous change for establishing one of the top civilizations in the world. Therefore, character building is one of the necessary factors for making the process of change effective.

Character building is regarded as the foundation to realize the vision of national development in which all the public morals including ethics and culture are embodied and are based on the philosophy presented by Pancasila. Supporting the realization of the standards which are set as a mandate by the Pancasila philosophy is the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution as well as a bid. Furthermore, different kinds of issues being encountered by our country are one of the encouraging factors behind the efforts being done by the government for prioritizing education as a

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main tool for the development of character building. This spirit has been entirely affirmed in the National Long Term Development Plan (RPJPN) 2005 to 2025 in which the government establishes character building as a primary program of national development.

The efforts for establishing the character according to the national culture are specifically not undertaken in the school with the help of a series of activities associated with the processes of teaching and learning but are also conducted in the activities being performed out of the school so that it can be made habituation for different aspects of life including the religion, honesty, discipline, tolerance, hard work, love, peace, responsibilities, etc. The concept of habituation does not only involve the methods of teaching knowledge regarding different things so that right and wrong things can be distinguished from each other but it is also taught for making the individuals capable of feeling the value associated with good things so that they can be made willing to do the good things ranging from families at a smaller scale and the entire communities at a larger scale.

Such values are required to be cultivated among the learning individuals who will ultimately reflect the life of the Indonesian country. That's why there is a major role played by schools regarding the development of character building as schools play a civilized role in being a centre for adopting the approach of cultural development.

Different persons have different characters. The character of an individual is greatly influenced by the life background of that person. In the current case, character building has become one of the solutions that are capable of giving changes and contributions to reducing the degrading quality of morals. The image of a country is depicted by the characters and is the markers and identifiers of that country which distinguish a country from other countries. The treading of a nation regarding an era is provided by the characters and also delivers it to a specific extent. Great nations are those which are capable of building great civilizations which influence the world in the later time.

The Rationale of the Study

Being a teacher of Islamiyat, the problem of teaching this subject as one of the tools to build character in public sector schools persuaded the researcher for studying the entire process associated with character building by undertaking a research study under the title "Teaching of Islamiyat and students character building: an analysis of elementary school teachers".

Statement of the Problem

It is mentioned by different writers and critics that the character of the upcoming generation is not according to the level of standard expectations as the aspects of obedience and respect are not found in those students as compared to the students of the past. Pakistan is an Islamic society that has been subjected to different changes. Some of these changes are negative in nature and some are positive as well. The status of the country of Pakistan has got transformed from a small and conservative-natured society where people used to conserve their ethical values, traditions, and morals and now this country has become an open society where changes are being introduced in a rapid manner. There are various factors which are involved in bringing those changes due to which the character building of the young generation gets impacted. The statement of the problem is the teaching of Islamiyat and students' character building: an analysis of elementary school teachers.

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the teaching of Islamiyat's effects on the students' character building at the elementary level.
2. To analyze the effects of the teaching of Islamiyat on the students' character building at the elementary level on the basis of demographics i.e., academic qualification, professional qualification, area, and gender.

Research Questions

1. What are the effects of the teaching of Islamiyat
   on the students' character building at the elementary level?

2. What are the effects of the teaching of Islamiyat on the students' character building at the elementary level on the basis of demographics: academic qualification, professional qualification, area, and gender?

Significance of the Study

Education is a tool which can be used for bringing change and the purpose of education cannot get fulfilled if a change is not created in society and in the mindsets of people as well. The actual purpose of education can only be achieved if it helps in building the moral character of the students along with developing their personalities as well. Islam guides us about all those values which are beneficial for humanity and are advantageous for human beings as well. Therefore, it is important that we should give awareness about the values of Islam with the help of education and it can only be made possible if the curriculum of textbooks is designed on the basis of Islamic concepts and values and the role of teachers and parents can also prove to be very effective in this regard so that the personalities of students can get developed appropriately. Pakistan is a Muslim country with its own religion, ethical values, political system, and social culture. As a Muslim country, the education system of Pakistan can help in transferring all these values to the new generation and the curriculum is required to be determined for the classes of all levels and it should be designed on the basis of Islamic values, particularly the curriculum for Islamic Studies for an elementary level because this is the stage where ethics and morals of students get developed and a crucial role is played by these values for developing the factors of respect and responsibility in the individuals.

Methodology

The details of the methods used for carrying out the current research study have been provided in the following section:

Research Design

The research design refers to the framework which is undertaken by the researcher for studying the phenomena of interest on a scientific basis. There are three main types of research designs which include qualitative research, quantitative research, and mixed method research. According to Creswell (2014), a sweeping statement can be established by the researcher on an immediate basis for making a generalized statement in the quantitative research method. But the results of qualitative research cannot be used for making a generalized statement because it is used for describing reality and is not given after conducting tests. On the other hand, mixed method research is used by the researcher where both qualitative, as well as quantitative research techniques, are involved. A survey research design was used in the current study.

The Population of the Study

All the elementary school teachers from district Okara were the population of the Study. Public schools were the accessible population.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The subset of the population is known as the sample. The process through which a group of subjects is selected for conducting a particular study in such a way that a larger group is represented by a single individual who is a part of that larger group is termed sampling (Creswell & Clark, 2017). In this study, the technique of stratified random sampling was implemented. The teachers from the elementary school in the Okara district were selected. The sample was drawn on a proportionate basis out of the total population from the elementary schools in the district of Okara by using the technique of random sampling by considering the strata of the study. 817 elementary school teachers were selected for collecting data. So the total sample collected from the Okara district constituted 817 teachers from elementary schools.

Instrumentation of the Study

A Likert-scale questionnaire was used in this survey. It

has 5 options from strongly to very little agree.

As the validity of the tool had already been considered in the study in which this tool was developed yet researcher consulted education experts and experienced researchers in order to add or remove items to make the tool applicable for usage in the Pakistani scenario.

Furthermore, the reliability of the tools was ensured with the help of a pilot study and checking Cronbach's alpha on the responses of the pilot study. The reliability value of the scale was .88.

Data Collection

The data were collected by Google form, email, Whatsapp etc. by the researcher. All relevant online sources were used for data collection. The questionnaire was shifted on google forms and the link was forwarded for fill. The online data collection was used due to COVID-19. The questionnaire feedback was 83%.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed with the help of means scores and standard deviations for descriptive statistics, a t-test for checking the difference in demographics among teachers', and regression analysis to check the effects of the variables.

Results

Q 1: To analyze the teaching of Islamiyat's effects on the students' character building at the elementary level.

Analysis of Data by Using T-Test

Table 1. The teaching of Islamiyat affects the students' character building at the elementary level using regression statistics

Variables / Predictors (Model 1)	β (Beta)	t-value	R^2	Df	F	p-Value (Sig.)
Teaching of Islamiyat	.461	7.745	0.362	814	62.321	0.000

Table 1 above shows that the regression statistic technique was applied to check the effects of Islamiyat teaching on the character building of students at the elementary level. The calculated value significance value (0.000) showed that teaching Islamiyat has significant effects on students' character building.

Q2: To analyze the effects teaching of Islamiyat on the students' character building at the elementary level on the basis of demographics: Academic Qualification.

Table 2. Respondent 'Mean Score Difference on the Basis of Academic Qualification by using a t-test

Academic Qualification	N	M	SD	t	Sig.
M.A/M.Sc	576	4.12	1.913	1.255	.270
M.Phil/PhD	102	4.17	1.423		

In table number 2 t-test statistics were applied to find out the difference between M.A/ M.Sc. and M.Phil./PhD teachers means. There was no significant difference in perception was found in the mean scores of teachers regarding their academic qualifications. The mean score showed that all teachers thought that teaching Islamiyat has significant effects on students' character building.

Q2: To analyze the effects teaching of Islamiyat on the students' character building at the elementary level on the basis of demographics: Professional Qualification.

Table 3. Respondents 'Mean Score Difference on the Basis of Professional Qualification by using a t-test

Professional Qualification	N Mean	SD	t	Sig
B.Ed	546	3.03	1.63	0.312
M.Ed	132	3.11	1.34	

In table number 3 t-test statistics were applied to find out the difference between M.A/ M.Sc. and M.Phil./PhD teachers means. There was no significant difference in perception was found in the mean scores of teachers on their professional qualifications. The mean score showed that all teachers thought that teaching Islamiyat has significant effects on students' character building. The M.Ed teachers were more agreed than the B.Ed teachers.

Q2: To analyze the effects teaching of Islamiyat on the students' character building at the elementary level on the basis of demographics: Area

Table 4. Respondents' Mean Score Difference on the Basis of Area by using a t-test

Gender	N	M	SD	t	Sig.
Rural	271	4.14	1.59	1.69	.134
Urban	407	4.09	1.27		

Table number 4 revealed that a t-test was used to find out the difference between rural and urban school teachers' mean scores. There was no statistically significant variation found in the mean scores of teachers according to their area (P= .134). No significant difference in teachers' perceptions was found.

Q2: To analyze the effects teaching of Islamiyat on the students' character building at the elementary level on the basis of demographics: Gender

Table 5. Respondents' Mean Score Difference on the Basis of Gender by using a t-test

Gender	N	M	SD	t	Sig.
Male	407	4.08	1.43	1.12	.08
Female	271	4.01	1.78		

Table number 5 revealed that a t-test was used to find out the difference between male and female school teachers' means. There was no statistically significant variation found in the mean scores of teachers according to their gender (P= .08). No significant difference in teachers' perceptions was found in other factors.

Findings

Following were the findings of the study:

1. The calculated value (p,0.000) showed that teaching Islamiyat has significant effects on students' character building.
2. There was no significant difference in perception was found in the mean scores of teachers regarding their academic qualifications. The mean score showed that all teachers thought that teaching Islamiyat has significant effects on students' character building.
3. There was no significant difference in perception was found in the mean scores of teachers regarding their professional qualifications. The mean score showed that all teachers thought that teaching Islamiyat has significant effects on students' character

building. The M.Ed teachers were more agreed than the B.Ed teachers.

4. There was no statistically significant variation found in the mean scores of teachers according to their area (*P*= .134). No significant difference in teachers' perceptions was found.
5. There was no statistically significant variation found in the mean scores of teachers according to their gender (*P*= .08). No significant difference in teachers' perceptions was found in other factors.

Discussion

As a result of these findings, it is a great tragedy for our education department that we are unable to develop good character in our students after they complete secondary and higher secondary education. That we're all aware of the issues and challenges facing the current Islamic world is also very alarming, and so we develop a well-organized curriculum for Islamic Studies to help develop the character of our young people. However, this well-organized curriculum only exists in words and isn't followed in letter and spirit. Our educational institutes teach from books that are superb because they were written using an outdated curriculum (2006). The books published today do not follow this practice. As a result of the findings, the questionnaire results are incredibly alarming. We must approach it with a positive outlook in order to instil good character in the next generation for the benefit of our society, as well as for the betterment of everyday life and, ultimately, for the afterlife. While some teachers claimed to be masters-level Islamic Studies scholars, the vast majority said they were simply teaching the subject to students. Is it possible to operate on a patient in the operating room without having an MBBS degree or without being familiar with the operation's procedures?

Or we could ask: Is it possible for someone to fly an aeroplane without first learning how to fly it? There are numerous unanswered questions in today's world to help us comprehend it. If the answer to the above questions is "no," how is it possible that a different teacher taught Islamic Studies to the students?

Most teachers then asked if they could see if the students had changed at all. It's also extremely hazardous. The following findings are alarming in light of the character development of the young generation. We must approach it from a very positive perspective if we are to instil good character in our children for the sake of our society, as well as for their own well-being in this world and in the afterlife.

After that, nearly all teachers were asked if they had seen any changes in their students' behaviour as a result of being exposed to Islamic Studies. The teachers' acceptance of this is also extremely risky. It means that teachers aren't doing their jobs well because one of their primary responsibilities is to change students' behaviour in order to build a role model society. We'll have to give it some thought.

When asked if their students were religious, 50% of the teachers said they were, which shows that our educational system has a lot of flaws. After the data was analysed, we discovered that almost all of the students were impacted by their use of the internet. As a result, the government must take steps to protect our young people from the harm of the media and the internet.

Conclusion

A deficient educational system, including an assessment system, resulted in the failure to instil moral character traits in students. School assessment is widely criticized for failing to evaluate higher-order learning. Students in Pakistan's education system can now enrol in four-year undergraduate programmes. Early entry into colleges or universities requires social, moral, and emotional maturity and character building in order to maximize academic learning during the university period, but school education does not meet the target.

The Holy Quran, Hadith, and Nazira Quran translations do not receive adequate attention in the educational program. Islamic Studies is only regarded as a compulsory subject, but it does not receive the weight it should. Recruiting Islamic

Studies teachers who aren't qualified or who don't know how to teach Tajweed-o-Qirat or moral education have been a problem. There are no provisions for providing teachers with opportunities for higher education, either in the country or abroad, in the Islamic education field.

Recommendations

1. We must educate and train Pakistan's current and future generations with confidence, courage, and tolerance, keeping in mind the challenges of the twenty-first century.
2. Teachers of Islamic Studies in Elementary Schools must teach Islamic Studies alongside the Holy Quran and Hadith as an integral part of the curriculum to help students become responsible citizens. And the government should offer Islamic Studies students the chance to adapt to global changes.
3. Teachers of Islamic Studies should receive training to help them meet their responsibilities in the modern world.
4. The government should provide opportunities for Islamic Studies teachers to conduct research into the teaching of Islam in light of the current era and the modern world, rather than just in writing.
5. There should be an elective course in Islamic Studies at the secondary and high school levels, which includes the study of the Holy Quran, Hadith, Fiqh and other aspects of Islamic law.

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