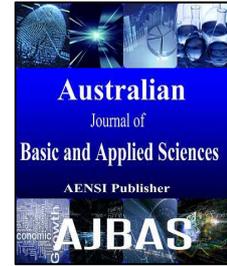




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Rabbaniyah Sources of knowledge vs Insaniah Sources of knowledge: Scenario of Islamic Education Teachers in Secondary School in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

The source of knowledge is a matter of great importance in determining a reference set of knowledge by Muslims or otherwise, especially when it involves Islamic Education teachers (IET). IET is entrusted with a very important responsibility to produce content individual students wordly and hereafter, also well-balanced physically, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually. The source of knowledge that is being referred to by the IET will decide on the teaching practice that will be displayed in class and will be the supporting environmental factor in moulding the self-concept of the students, whether it fulfils the vision and objective of the Islamic Education Philosophy or National Education Philosophy and vice-versa. Thus, the objective of this research are: 1) To analyse the level of IETs' belief on *Rabbaniyah* source of knowledge and; 2) To inculcate the level of IETs' belief on insaniah source of knowledge. The research paper uses quantitative data as the primary data and supported with qualitative data to enrich its data. The quantitative data is analysed descriptively using SPSS 2.0. The study found that IET mainly refer to human (insaniah) resources rather than Rabbaniyah resources. The result gives implication towards Ministry of Malaysian Education, Institution of teacher education and IETs.

INTRODUCTION

The source of knowledge is an important aspect in shaping a scientific civilisation. Yet, it does not stop there as this is also a source of knowledge that determines an individual's success or failure to meet with the intrinsic truth, ie. Allah s.w.t. The source of knowledge portrays our identity as a Muslim and shapes the basic

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framework to create the identity of a slave and caliph in us. If the source of knowledge does not follow basic specification as provided by Islam, it is no surprise if in many aspects we deviate from the true Islamic lifestyle.

Looking at the scenario of Muslim's lifestyle especially the teenagers, there seem to be many flaws that prevent the Islamic framework from being portrayed in their lives. This has indirectly made the role of Islamic Education teachers in schools to be more challenging. The IETs hold tremendous responsibility to materialize the main agenda of the national education as an agent to mould the students' manners and ensuring they are content in the worldly life and the life hereafter. Thus, to materialise and fulfil the vision and mission, the IET's source of knowledge must be scrutinised.

This is because the reference of knowledge will influence the way life is viewed and later implemented. (Al-Ghazali 1997). If the source of reference is the Quran and Sunnah (Rabbaniyah sources), with the intelligence (Insaniyah sources) to make them a priority, Islamic lifestyle can be enhanced as these sources lead us to ultimate truth and understand our role and responsibility as the server to Allah and as a leader (khalifa).

Problem Statement:

The influence of dualism and secularism in the national education system gives impact to the Islamic education subject (Mujamil Qomar 2002; Noor Hisham Md.Nawi 2012; Zuraidah Othman 2012) The western epistemology has successfully separated the integration of knowledge in Islam into the secular and religious knowledge (Al-Attas 1990; Al-Ghazali 1986; Syed Hossein Nasr 1989). Hence, Islamic Education only focuses on Fardu Ain and knowledge on Fardu Kifayah is dismissed in intellectual discourse (Adnin Armas 2007; Noor Hisham Md.Nawi 2012; Zuraidah Othman 2012).

The implication from such form of understanding has caused the objective and aim of Islamic Education stated in the Islamic Education Philosophy (IEP) to not be achieved holistically. Students produced from IEP mostly have high Islamic knowledge and obtain good grade but are left behind in terms of their manners (akhlak) (Ab. Halim Tamuri 2006; Khadijah Abd Razak & Zaib Ngah 2002; Shamsul Shah Tarjo 2012).

They possess high Islamic knowledge (Mahmood Zuhdi Ab Majid 2012; Zakaria Stapa 2012) but are unable to digest and practice the knowledge as they see Islamic Education from a narrow perspective that has no significant impact to the overall living system (Mahmood Zuhdi Ab Majid 2012; Zainal Abidin Bagir 2002; Zuraidah Othman 2012). This is proven from the moral issues such as baby dumping, religious discrimination through deviant culture such as Black Metal, promiscuous acts, suicide, adultery, brutal crime, property violation and such that are encroaching among the Muslim teenagers. (Ab. Halim Tamuri & Khadijah Abdul Razak 2003, Saidi Daud 2008, Syed Najmuddin *et al*. 2009, Shamsul Shah Tarjo 2012).

Similarly, the IETs received their religious education since childhood, later furthered studies specializing in religious fields and went through practical teaching before becoming teachers. Theoretically, they should have already mastered the religious knowledge and have firm belief in the true Islamic epistemology (Ab. Halim Tamuri 2014; Mohd Farid Shahrhan 2013; Rosnani Hashim 1998).

According to Mcree and Costa (2006), the knowledge received since childhood will develop a patented thinking and belief which later influence one's behavior. Yet, looking from the aspect of teaching practices, the reality is different. The knowledge and belief of the IETs towards Islamic epistemology is still unable to be translated successfully in the teaching and learning process in the classroom, which affects the students' interest toward the Islamic education subjects. (Nik Rusila Nik Yaacob 2007; Zalmiza Zakariya 2004).

Some IETs only focus on teaching for the sake of examination and eliminate the element of understanding the philosophy in the teaching process. As a result, the teaching methodology puts forward by the teachers is not integrated and seems to eliminate the element of Fardu Kifayah from the knowledge of Fardu Ain (Mohd Farid Shahrhan 2013; Mohd Sani Badron 2013). The teaching only focuses on memorization method, lecture, note taking and lacks thinking process among the students (Rosnani Hashim 1998, t.t; Zuraidah Othman 2012; Noor Hisham Md. Nawi 2012; Syed Najmuddin Syed Hassan *et al* 2009).

Realizing the importance of the source of knowledge as the main component of Islamic epistemology in the development of worldly Islamic views on life, this study will observe the IETs level of trust on the source of knowledge as it is believed to influence their actions and teaching practices in the classroom (Al-Ghazali 1997, Nurul Asiah Fasehah 2015).

Methodology:

This study will use survey method through quantitative approach to answer all research questions. The researcher uses deductive descriptive survey method (Neuman 1993). The survey used is cross-sectional survey of collecting data once on each sample at one time (Creswell 2008, Noraini Idris 2010).

According to Fraenkel & Wallen (1993), this method is suitable to be carried out on large population such as on teachers and students. The research findings of this survey can be generalized into population study due to the large sample used (Babbie 2001; Creswell 1994). Besides that, the researcher also obtained qualitative data through semi structural interview to further enrich and elaborate the quantitative data findings to fully understand and summarize the context of the research (Creswell 2005, Muijs 2004, Bogdan & Biklen 1998,

Reichardt & Cook 1979). The qualitative data are collected after the quantitative data is obtained and analyzed. This study involved 525 Islamic Education Teachers in Peninsular Malaysia. The sampling technique used was multi-stage cluster sampling. Twelve (12) teachers were interviewed.

Research Findings:

Knowledge source construct contains 11 items, namely BS1 – BS 11. The overall mean for knowledge source construction is 3.85(SP=0.421). This shows that the trust level of IETs on the aspect of the source of knowledge is at a high level. According to the IETs, they refer more to Insaniah sources compared to Rabbaniyah source through mean acquisition of Insaniah source of 3.99 (SP=0.375) and Rabbaniyah source of 3.67 (SP=0.592), of which both are at a high level. The IETs refer to Insaniah source through the senses, for instance, BS 11 referred to natural events to explain certain concept (M=4.37, SP=0.590) and co-teachers opinion of BS 9 “refers to other teachers to ease teaching process” (M=4.31, SP=0.529). Both items obtained a mean value of being at the highest level. IETs also referred to Rabbaniyah source to understand the knowledge and its use during teaching, for example item BS 2 on “stories from the Quran to explain certain concepts(M=3.68, SP=0.847) , BS 1 “referred to Quran to solve confusions” (M=3.89, SP=0.631), and item BS3 “referred to Hadith to encourage thinking process” (M= 3.68, SP=0.814). Nonetheless, item BS 5 which is “the hadith of the Prophet SAW eased understanding of knowledge” obtained a mean value of 3.25 (SP=1.097) average level. Six other items are placed at high level. The table below provides details of each score for item BS 1 to BS 11.

Table 4.1: Percentage, mean and standard deviation for knowledge source (N=525).

Item No	Item	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	S.D.
BS1	Al-Quran can solve confusion.	0.4	6.5	4.4	81.5	7.2	3.89	0.631
BS2	Stories from the Quran ease understanding of specific concept.	4.0	16.6	5.0	70.9	7.2	3.68	0.847
BS3	The Hadith of the Prophet p.b.u.h helps thinking process.	0.6	14.9	6.5	72.6	5.5	3.68	0.814
BS4	The Hadith of the Prophet p.b.u.h. can solve factual confusion in teaching.	0.2	7.6	5.1	78.3	8.6	3.88	0.673
BS5	The Hadith of the Prophet p.b.u.h eases understanding of knowledge.	5.5	29.3	4.6	55.8	4.8	3.25	1.097
BS6	Printed media like books could explain certain facts.	0.8	5.0	5.5	79.8	9.0	3.91	0.636
BS7	Electronic Media like internet could explain certain facts.	0.4	6.3	4.8	79.4	9.1	3.91	0.646
BS8	Discussion eases understanding of knowledge.	0.6	5.5	5.0	80.0	9.0	3.91	0.636
BS9	Opinions of other teachers ease teaching process.			3.2	62.3	34.5	4.31	0.529
BS10	Intuition helps to solve dead lock		7.2	40.6	44.8	7.4	3.52	0.737
BS11	Natural event can explain certain concepts.			5.7	51.4	42.9	4.37	0.590
Total							3.85	0.421

Source: Survey 2013

This finding is further supported by findings from interviews. In which case, all IETs believe that the sources of the Quran and sunah are the main source of knowledge. But in reality they refer more to Insaniah sources as the main source when teaching. According to their understanding, text books, established reference books, reference to Islamic scholars, discussions with colleagues and information gathered through internet access are easier and faster(P8LB4, P5LB1, P6LB2, L1B1, P2B2, P4B4).

P8LB4's opinion:

"To get the right information, it is easier to ask friends and search the internet."

P2B2's opinion:

"I always refer to books to enrich knowledge as the details gathered from books are adequate, though we still have to see who the authors are".

P6LB2's opinion:

"It's a bit difficult to read other books, time is not much to spare, so I refer to textbooks to teach".

Meanwhile, L1B1 stated:

"If there are questions I am unable to answer, I would contact my teacher, he is an ulama' so we refer to him".

In addition, IETs also feel they lack expertise on the sciences of the Quran and Hadith (L3B3, L2B2, L4LB2) as stated by L4LB2:

"We lack skills so we refer to much easier to understand books already simplified by the ulama".

Study participants also felt that the elaboration in the book alone would be enough (P2B2, P7IB3, L1B1) as stated by P7LB3:

"Adapting the Quran into the issues being discussed has enabled us to see the bigger issue of the whole matter."

In addition, L3LB1 felt that the existing knowledge is sufficient to teach ordinary secondary schools, which according to him,

"To obtain certain knowledge to teach ordinary schools, the existing knowledge is adequate as the issues raised are not too large and deep".

Similarly, sources from inspiration and senses have barely noticeable functions as a source of knowledge to the IETs especially when teaching. This is because according to the IETs, they rely heavily on text books when teaching (P6LB2, L4LB2).

L4LB2 stated:

"Just look at the things being taught usually they do not use sources of inspirations and senses as many of them use videos and textbooks as reference when teaching."

However, all IETs agreed both are important sources of knowledge while teaching, primarily to interact with students (P2B2, A3B3, P5LB1, P8LB4). This is because according to A3B3:

"Referring to the intuition to identify students' problem and the use of eye-contact while teaching allows us to predict whether students can follow or not the lesson we teach."

In addition, both sources namely inspiration and senses are important to bring in students' appreciation (A1B1, P7LB3) as stated by P7LB3:

"For me teaching the last class with the use of inspiration and senses is very important to give understanding to the students and to gain their attention to the teaching."

Participants also thought, inspiration and senses can help IETs choose the appropriate method to describe the syllabus (P4B4, P8LB4).

According to P8LB4:

"Inspiration comes from my experience as well. Inspiration from experience can help teachers adapt their teaching methods to suit to the situation. While the gestures help us during teaching. "

In conclusion, the findings from interviews revealed that all IETs believe that the main source of knowledge is the Qur'an and Sunnah. However, in reality they think they are more worldly resources such as books, internet, talking to other Islamic Education teachers and reference from specialists. This is because they feel that these activities become easier and faster. In addition, they also felt lacking the expertise on the interpretation of the Quran and hadis limit them from further refer to the two main sources of it. IETs, through this study, also stated that the description contained in the existing books is sufficient to handle the discussions at the level of daily secondary schools. When asked about the source of inspiration and senses, they all agreed the two sources are important when teaching but in reality is less used because textbooks are most commonly used.

Discussion:

According to al-Ghazali(1962, 1997), Syed Hussein Nasr(1989), al-Attas(1978) and Ibn Khaldun(2006), a source of knowledge in Islam should be guided by two main sources, namely the Quran and Sunnah, without setting a side intelligence as secondary source that helps the process of obtaining knowledge. Indirectly, the relationship between the two is seen as integral to prioritize Rabbaniyah resources as a primary source to gain knowledge.

However, the scenario that occurs in school among IETs is different. They refer to Insaniah sources rather than to Rabbaniyah sources to gain knowledge. This shows that IETs depend more on relative source of non-authentic sources compared with Rabbaniyah sources that are authentic. The researchers think this affects the validity of the knowledge presented to the students, especially when it comes to religious knowledge. This was acknowledged by the GPI during an interview conducted, according L1B1:

"There are cases of this school, where the IETs provided maudhuk hadith as a reference for students. Thus, the result is the acquisition of knowledge without proper epistemology"

The researchers felt these things happen because many IETs refer to resources which origin and authenticity, such as internet, as a main source. Thus, science and faith are what ultimately given to the students during the teaching process in the classroom. The researcher believes these things should not happen especially to the teacher who holds the title of "religious teachers". They are the reference to religious issues that arise not only in schools but also in the larger social level as neighbors and the general public. So if reference were pegged to

acknowledge that is relative references, definitely will affect the entire community on their religious understanding.

There is no doubt that the sophistication and modernity of information systems facilitating provides access to knowledge; however, the existence of this technology should be seen as the main tool to get a more authentic science rather by many IETs in this study. In addition, the findings from interviews, found all IETs agreed sources of the Qur'an and Sunnah are as the primary sources but its practice does not happen that way. According to the IETs, this happens due to lack of time, less proficient language skills and knowledge of the Quran and Hadith. Thus they prefer to choose reading materials that have been summarized, internet publications and discuss with other colleagues. However, this situation gives rise to problems in terms of the appreciation of the science presented and this can be observed in the classroom. Most IETs only delivered physical syllabus compared to putting more emphasis on what will be included in the exam compared to the soul and spiritual education that should be born through the Islamic Education.

In explaining this scenario, the researchers argue that the view given by Syed Hussein Nasr (1989) and was agreed by Mohd Sani Badron (2013) is the most accurate. He mentioned that the science that is not based on the Quran and the Sunnah is the science that promotes chastity and hard to touch the hearts of the people. Thus, according to his faith must be accompanied by an in-depth knowledge as well as understanding. The process of seeking knowledge is a process for him to meet with al-Haq and was named as a holy activity. While science that diverts and not based on the Quran and the Sunnah, is the science that has lost its purity and far from the truth. Thus, to restore the sanctity of science, he believes people should go back to the Qur'an and Sunnah. This is because the revenue contributed by the people through the knowledge of the holy is the inspiration of divine revelation from Allah.

In addition, the IETs only decipher certain sciences through the understanding of other people who may have different epistemology and understanding. In facing students of this era where the ocean of information is at their fingertips, source taken to answer a question or to explain a concept has to be balanced, when IETs only refer to internet source, which students to can access, there should also be other sources added. Most of the stories of the Prophet and the Companions, when faced with similar cases and the verses of the Quran describe the same concept with a deeper understanding of the verses could capture the hearts of the students to be closer to the Quran and understand its contents, to love the Prophet and to follow his actions and gestures as this matter should be the expertise of the IETs.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the IETs have to balance the two sources of this knowledge appropriately in order to show a more convincing teaching practice, integrative and touching the hearts of students. Further, it is expected that the teaching practice that abides by the proper source of knowledge will bring students to understand their existence as servants of Allah and leaders of ummah (khalifatullah). This study gives implication to the IETs education provider to emphasize more on tools to take out the knowledge from Quran and Sunnah as this is the major hitch to IETs to use the *Rabbaniyah* source especially in their teaching.

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