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BUILDING CHARACTER THROUGH ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL

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Abstract

Islamic Studies contribute to shaping the moral attitudes, values, and behaviours of primary school students. This study was conducted to assess the influence of Islamic studies on students' moral development at the primary level, and to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching methods in Islamic studies Limited focus on other subjects. Students' personalities are greatly influenced by the lessons and values they learn in primary school, when they are still in the early phases of psychological, emotional, and social development. As a result, Islamic Studies has the capacity to greatly impact young students' moral compass at this point. Qualitative research methodology was used, and semi-structured interviews from primary-level teachers were conducted. Thematic analysis was applied to interpret interview responses and identify the key themes related to the moral development of students at the primary level. Findings revealed that Islamic studies contribute significantly to the moral development of students. Also, teachers use different methods to convey their moral lessons. This study shows that Islamic Studies is not only a subject but a way to build a good personality in students from an early age. Further studies can involve a strengthened Parent-Teacher Collaboration, the use of technology to enhance moral teaching and the development of character educational activities. These findings can guide curriculum designers and policymakers in integrating moral development modules into primary-level Islamic Studies in Pakistan.

Keywords: Islamic, studies, Moral, development, character

Introduction:

In this study, was explored how much students learn about Islam and can also understand /identify what's wrong and what's right was explored. By studying the impacts of Islamic education on Students' personality shaping, especially focusing on primary level students and investigating how much Islamic studies play an important role in individual character building.

The first verse of the Holy Quran indicates the significance of education in Islam: "Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created (everything). He created man from a clot of blood. Read, and your Lord is the most gracious. Who imparted knowledge by means of the pen? He taught men what he did not know." (Quran 96:1)

The Almighty Allah stated in Surah Zumar: "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?!" (Quran 39:9), According to Anas bin Malik, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Seeking Knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim, and he who imparts knowledge to those who do not deserve it, is like one who puts a necklace of jewels, pearls and gold around the neck of swine".

This research aims to look at whether and how Islamic Studies contribute to shaping the moral attitudes, values, and behaviours of primary school students, and to identify factors that enhance. Through our findings achieved a path to build a positive character in students and gained a lot of information about religious education, and how much it is helpful for teachers in their teaching. By investigating whether and how the religious material taught in classrooms decodes into observable moral actions and ethical understanding among young learners, this study aims to investigate the impact of Islamic Studies on the moral development of primary school children. Islamic Studies is required to be taught in schools in nations like Pakistan starting in the early grades. Make sure kids not only learn about Islam, they also apply its moral precepts to their everyday lives. But even with this emphasis, problems like student disrespect, dishonesty, and lack of discipline still exist in many schools. This

has sparked questions about how well Islamic Studies' moral lessons are impacting students' conduct.

Goals

- To explore how Islamic Studies shapes the moral development of primary-level students.
- To assess teachers' methods for instilling moral values.
- To identify challenges in implementing moral lessons in Islamic Studies.

Research Questions

- How does Islamic Studies contribute to the moral development of primary-level students?
- What teaching methods are most effective for moral instruction in Islamic Studies?
- What challenges do teachers face in promoting moral education through Islamic Studies?

Innovation

This study provides qualitative, teacher-based evidence on how Islamic Studies influences moral behaviour in Pakistan—a gap in most existing quantitative or curriculum-focused research.

Literature review:

Islamic studies will have a major impact on students' moral behaviour and their ability to justify moral principles in the classroom. Teachers at the elementary level participated in a self-structured interview to help gather primary data. To instill more positive moral values, the study suggested, among other things, that Islamic Studies teachers recognize that good instruction can lead to the achievement of both academic and moral goals; that schools provide sufficient reference Islamic studies textbooks for students to use; and that parents encourage but do not mandate that their children study Islamic Studies.

Giving humanity knowledge and wisdom that establishes standards for human value and judgment that apply to all aspects of human endeavours and activities is the primary goal of Islamic studies. This was further emphasized by Islamic scholars like Imam Ghazali, who believed

that philosophy would not be able to satisfy new generations and protect them from the intrusion of divided rationales of any paralyzing doubles unless it successfully expanded its scope of application and integrated Islamic concepts in all fields of knowledge. Therefore, the objectives of any educational institution should be to psychologically prepare its members in society so that they can learn things, not just to fulfill their curiosity or for material gain. (Abdulazeez M.A. 2020)

Moral education is an essential part of a child's overall development, especially during the primary school years when foundational values and behaviours are being formed. In Muslim societies, Islamic Studies plays a key role in imparting ethical guidance based on the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah. This study investigates the influence of Islamic Studies on the moral development of primary level students, with a focus on how religious teachings shape their attitudes, behaviour, and character formation. (Halstead, 2007).

Islamic education has a beneficial impact on students' lives and helps them develop into decent citizens. Without a question, Islamic education has a significant influence on students' lives and makes them extremely valuable members of their communities. It also aids Pakistan's youth in their educational endeavours. (Khan, H. M., Khan, W., Farooq, S., Aleem, A., Mann, M., & Akhtar, S, 2021).

Islamic teaching aims to know the meaning of the Holy Quran, the Exposed Law (Sharia), the Sunnah, Belief (iman), mystical information, understanding (hikmah) and Gnosis (manifah), also usually mentioned as Light, Understanding, Science Education, and the remarks of Hadith. The Islamic system of Education resides the idea of religion (din), man (insan), information (ilm), understanding (hikma), fairness ('adl), correct act (amal as adab) (Dr. Mujibul Hasan Siddiqui, 2012)

Lickona explains how character education is most effective when moral values are integrated into daily school life. Though not Islamic-specific, this framework supports how Islamic Studies can shape moral behaviour at the primary level when

applied properly the United States, "character education" has been a popular name for school initiatives aimed at implementing moral values, ethics, and citizenship education programs in recent years. Eleven guidelines are outlined in this article to help schools plan their character education programs. A definition of character, a thorough and deliberate approach to cultivating good character, the development of the school as a caring community, the relationship between character education and the academic curriculum, and evaluation are some of these topics (Lickona, T. 1996).

This study discusses the urgent need to revitalize the curriculum offered in Pakistani higher education institutions. The rise in hate crimes, racism, sectarianism, and religious intolerance is ascribed to a lack of knowledge of the core Islamic principles of forgiveness, tolerance, equity, and peace. The success of modern counterterrorism strategies and conflict resolution ideas is further examined in order to highlight the significance of religion in promoting peace and resolving disputes. According to the research, a Character Development Program (CDP) tailored to Muslim students might be incorporated into the core university curriculum. The CDP's material should be derived from the Quran and Sunnah in order to raise young people who are cognizant of religion, morality, and spirituality. (Nayab Nasir, 2022).

This study found that character education is a specific quality that exists in an individual and ethics or personality that separates one person from another (Roihatul Jannah 2023). This study recognized the main supporting factor in the implementation of teacher strategies in Islamic education in akhlaq building within learners was the institute discipline, co-curricular actions of Islamic school, students, and teachers as a role model, as well as paternal participation in akhlāq building (Linda Sari BulanSiregar 2021).

Methodology:

The study focuses on the qualitative nature. Throughout the qualitative research method, the aim is to explore and uncover the impact of

Islamic studies on student moral development. The study uses of qualitative research design to explore and examine student ethical behaviour, and also know about which type of challenges teachers can face during the implementation of Islamic education in the classroom. The study helps out why Islamic studies are important in a learning environment and are better for students.

Research design:

- Qualitative research design
- Interviews
- Open-ended questions from teachers
- Focusing on how Islamic studies help shape the student's character.

Population:

The population of this study consisted of Islamic Studies teachers working in primary schools. Qualitatively collect the data. This study expresses the participant's point of view.

Sample:

In this research, data was collected from 10 teachers who they studying Islamic studies. Because they answer our question as well, they also collect data from primary-level school teachers.

Sampling criteria

- Female teachers
- Teaching Islamiyat (Islamic Studies)
- Primary level

Location

- Sialkot, Pakistan (specific city)

Interview questions

- How are Islamic studies helpful for building a positive character
- Which methodologies can teachers use for student character building?
- How can students learn from Islamic incidents in their lives?
- Which type of challenges can teachers face during the implementation of Islamic education in the classroom?

Instrument of the study:

This study contributes to be part of Semi-structured interview of participants to prepare the interview guide throughout the questionnaire to fulfill all our study objectives.

Data analysis:

We analyzed the data by using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was used to identify the common themes and patterns from the responses. The interviews were transcribed, and meaningful answers were generated to help organize the data.

Procedures of data analysis:

- Understand the collected data
- Decode the data.
- Draw a theme by naming some similar responses

Results and discussion:

Teachers said Islamic Studies helps students become better human beings. It teaches them about good behaviour, ethics, and how to treat others with respect. Islamic Studies provides a comprehensive framework for character development. Instructors have a variety of techniques to convey moral principles, such as serving as role models, recounting stories, presenting the biography of the Prophet Muhammad, and providing examples. Teachers share their experience that they use the role play method to act out moral scenarios for better understanding, and some teachers said they use the method (teaching for real-life examples), they relate the lesson to a real-life example, some emphasize that the storytelling method is also helpful in their teaching. They all mention that stories from Islamic tradition, especially about the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), help to effectively convey a moral and inspire character building. Islamic education helps teachers by giving them moral guidance. They use the Quran and Hadith to teach children how to behave and live properly. Islamic education supports teachers by strengthening their ethics, patience, purpose, and ability to build meaningful relationships with students. Teachers can use Islamic stories, Hadiths, and Quranic teachings to instill values like honesty, responsibility, and respect in students. Teachers agreed they said that the Quran and hadiths provide moral guidance for students, and they agreed that evidence-based moral lessons are provided, and religious texts give authenticity

and clarity to the values guided. Teachers share their experience, they said that Islamic education is not only for students it is also helpful for teachers to reinforce their own ethical practices and behaviours in the classroom. Teachers said they face problems like students having different beliefs, mindsets, and understanding levels, which makes it hard to teach the same values. Islamic Studies promote respect, cooperation, and responsibility. This helps to make the school environment positive and friendly. With proper Islamic character education, students develop a sense of right and wrong. Islamic studies are more than just religious information.

Teachers believe Islamic Studies is better than other subjects for moral development because it includes faith-based lessons and real-life examples from Islam. Some teachers emphasize that other subjects focus only on general ethics, while Islamic studies provide a deeper understanding of Islam. Learning Islamic Studies at a young age helps children understand faith, values, and how to live a good life. It shapes their character early. Early childhood is the best time to instill values like honesty, kindness, patience, and respect. Teachers can see how students' attitudes have changed by observing their words, behaviours, interactions, and reflections. Teachers are better able to observe how Islamic lessons actually affect students' character and thought processes when they combine value-based activities, student feedback, and classroom observation. Teachers use stories about prophets, companions, good behaviour, truthfulness, bravery, and duties. These stories help in moral and religious development. Use stories that show children and young people being brave, generous, or loyal to Islam. Teachers highlight some noticeable changes in their students' behaviour when they learn about the Islamic values then teachers encourage them to apply them in their daily life.

Discussions:

The findings of this research suggest that Islamic studies are not only helpful for students' character building. It also supports teachers by providing moral guidelines and Islamic stories

that are helpful for teachers to interpret the content.

Our study finds that Islamic studies are not just an academic subject; it's a moral framework that helps to shape a student's character, while other subjects teach general ethics. Islamic education aims to understand the meaning of the Holy Quran, the Revealed Law (Sharia), the Sunnah, Faith (Iman), spiritual knowledge, wisdom (hikmah) and Gnosis (manifah), also generally referred to as Light, Thought, Science Education, and commentaries of Hadith. The Islamic system of Education consists of the concept of religion (din), man (Insan), knowledge (Ilm), wisdom (hikma), justice ('adl), right action ([Dr. Mujibul Hasan Siddiqui, 2012](#)).

Our studies find that Islamic education supports teachers by strengthening their ethics, patience, purpose, and ability to build meaningful relationships with students. If teachers are educated, then they guide students as well. Parents and educators perform an active and important role in the character building of children, and before this, they have to modify themselves. ([Niwarz, A., Ishfaq, U., & Attaullah, 2018](#)).

Teachers noticed that some positive changes in their students' behaviour occurred when they presented Islamic education. In our findings by learning Islamic Studies at a young age helps children understand faith, values, and how to live a good life. It shapes their character early. Early childhood is the best time to instill values like honesty, kindness, patience, and respect.

The development of moral values during early childhood is fundamental to shaping an individual's future character and behaviour. In Muslim-majority societies such as Pakistan, Islamic Studies is a compulsory subject introduced at the primary level with the dual aim of imparting religious knowledge and promoting moral and ethical behaviour. ([Halstead, 2007](#)).

According to our findings, the subject of Islamic studies helps to build the values that make a good citizen, like social behaviour such

as truthfulness, patience, cooperation, humanity, respect and responsibility. Islamic Studies serves as a foundational pillar in shaping students' moral values and ethical behaviour, especially at the primary level, where moral development is most critical. This subject introduces children to the teachings of the Qur'an, Hadith, and the Seerah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), nurturing qualities such as honesty, patience, respect, kindness, and responsibility. (Halstead, 2007).

Conclusion:

This study has demonstrated the significant impact Islamic studies have on the moral development of primary school kids in Sialkot, which in turn improves their academic and moral performance. The findings indicate that kids attempt to follow regulations, be polite, and show respect for their parents and teachers after learning about Islamic values. This demonstrates that teaching Islamic Studies to pupils at a young age is not just a subject but also a means of helping them develop positive personalities.

Recommendations:

Strengthen Parent-Teacher Collaboration

Recommend regular parent-teacher meetings focused on character development, so both parties can support each other in reinforcing Islamic values at home and school.

Use Technology to Enhance Moral Teaching

Suggest the use of Islamic educational apps, digital stories, and multimedia tools to make learning values more interactive and relatable, particularly for younger learners. Develop video-based Islamic stories or animations that highlight values like truthfulness, kindness, and obedience.

Develop Character Educational Activities

Schools can establish Moral Development Circles, where students engage in activities, discussions, and service projects that reinforce Islamic values in practice.

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