

The Role of Teachers in infusing Islamic Values and Ethics

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Abstract

Values act as a standard for anything that, humans do desire and wish for, whether it can be seen, heard or felt by our senses. It shows the direction and determines the way choices are made and actions are carried out. It also tells the person what to do and what not to do in a given society. The aim of values education is to encourage young people's awareness of having values and their corresponding relationship to the world in which they live. Therefore, this paper present and discusses the values and ethics in Islam its forms and sources. The paper further shade more lights on the infusion of Islamic values and ethics in schools curriculum, the role of teachers, challenges faced in infusing Islamic values in schools curriculum. The paper concludes with some recommendations for addressing the challenges with a view to achieve the desired goals of the present day education systems.

Keywords: Values, Moral Education, School Curriculum, Ethics, Islam.

Introduction

Value education of teachers is necessary for halting the weakening of the present generation's moral fiber. Though values are traditionally believed to be best assimilated through passive observation, there has been increased clamor for a formal classroom teaching of ethical concepts. It is, therefore, imperative that teachers be prepared for the challenges presented by these movements. The teacher is in the ideal position of passing on society's cherished values. Such concepts should be taken into account in formulating the curricula for teacher education (Campbell 1997).

Values education is often controversial reflecting contradictory but deeply held beliefs by different sections of society as to what are core human values. There has also been a shift in how values education is taught in schools over the last 30 years. These changes are discussed along with recent intervention programs and the problems associated with the measurement of students' multidimensional values profiles. Education is a value-laden activity, indeed Tarlinton and O'Shea (2002) stated that values are core to a school; they come with the architecture and the furniture and decorations of the building itself. They are personified in the attributes of the teachers and in the standards of behavior expected of the students; they are made explicit in the rubrics and rituals, particularly in those that accompany tragedy or celebrate success. An examination of the values discourse suggests that there are a number of different kinds of value, such as moral, educational, aesthetic, social, political, and religious (Loyd 2004).

In Malaysia, Moral Education is a compulsory formal subject for non-Muslim pupils in the national school system from primary to secondary schooling. The subject is taught whilst the Muslim pupils attend Islamic Education. This is so as both subjects are considered to have the same aim of developing a disciplined, ethical and united society (Cabinet Report 1979). The general aim of Moral Education is to build persons with virtues through inculcation, internationalization and practices of the noble values of Malaysian society (Ministry of Education, 1988). The noble values of Malaysian society are drawn from religious, traditional and cultural values of various ethnic groups in Malaysia that are in accordance with the universal moral values. Since the introduction of Moral Education as a school subject in 1980s, various issues were raised on its effectiveness in fulfilling its goals (Chang 2010).

In many schools (e.g. IMTIAZ Schools in Malaysia) moral values are lessons that the students can learn from English literature such as the poem, short story and drama. These are usually related to daily happenings or experiences in life as we go about our business. They can be regarded as advice on how to live and interact with people and society. The poem, short story and drama may remind us of certain acts that are not quite acceptable or acts that enhance the quality of life. English literature included moral values as an important aspect of the elements of a poem, a short story or a drama.

This paper present and discusses the values and ethics in Islam its forms and sources. The paper further shade more lights on the infusion of Islamic values and ethics in schools curriculum, the role of teachers, challenges faced in infusing Islamic values in schools curriculum. The paper concludes with some certain ways of addressing the challenges with a view to achieve the desired goals of the education systems.

What are Concept of Values and Ethics?

Schwartz (1990) mentioned that according to the literature, values are concepts or beliefs, about desirable end states or behaviors that transcend specific situations, guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and are ordered by relative importance. These

five features describe the formal characteristics of human values that we incorporate in meaningful contents of values. Values are cognitive representations of three types of universal human requirements: biologically based needs of the organism, social interactional requirements for interpersonal coordination, and social institutional demands for group welfare and survival (Schwartz 1990).

Values answer the question: "Who are you?" They are deeply held convictions, priorities, and underlying assumptions that influence your attitudes and behaviors. Core values describe the unique way people in an organization work and relate to one another. In a sense you could say that core values describe the personality or character of a ministry. People and their organizations behave in ways that are generally consistent with their core values. In fact, core values can be validated only through behavior. If a person or ministry has a stated value that is not backed by behavior, it is only an aspiration or preference, not a value (Jeannette 2008).

Ethics on the other hands are the set of moral principles that guide a person's behavior. These morals are shaped by social norms, cultural practices, and religious influences. Ethics reflect beliefs about what is right, what is wrong, what is just, what is unjust, what is good, and what is bad in terms of human behavior. They serve as a compass to direct how people should behave toward each other, understand and fulfill their obligations to society, and live their lives (Sadia 2015).

Ethics involves the definition and achievement of what is good or bad, right or wrong, in relation to moral duty and obligation. It also includes the need to act in accordance with the principles of right and wrong governing the conduct of a particular group, such as doctors and lawyers (Oliver 1992).

Are Values different from Ethics?

Paul (2001) frequently asked, "What are the differences between values and ethics?" his short answer to the question is usually, "Values motivate and ethics constrain." In other words, values describe what is important in a person's life, while ethics prescribe what is or is not considered appropriate behaviour in living one's life. "Generally speaking, value refers to the relative worth of a quality or object. Value is what makes something desirable or undesirable" (Shockley-Zalabak 1999). Through applying our personal values (usually unconsciously) as benchmarks, we continually make subjective judgments about a whole manner of things. Values, therefore, become part of complex attitude sets that influence our behaviour and the behaviour of all those with whom we interact. What we value guides not only our personal choices but also our perceptions of the worth of others.

What then of ethics? Ethics are the standards by which behaviours are evaluated for their morality - their rightness or wrongness. The latter dimension is a matter of ethics. Clearly our values influence what we will determine as ethical; "however, values are our measures of importance, whereas ethics represent our judgments about right and wrong" (Shockley-Zalabak, 1999). This close relationship between importance and right and wrong is a powerful influence on our behaviour and how we evaluate the behaviour of others (Paul 2001).

Values and Ethics from the Islamic Perspective

Islamic manner or *adab* is one of Islamic educational goals. It contains a comprehensive code that will result in good practitioners (Marawan 2000). Loss of *adab* causes the Muslim dilemma which foster confusion and error in knowledge and later on, it could lead to the rise of unqualified leaders in Muslim community (Al-Attas 1979). Therefore, in the process of

Islamization of knowledge and being good Islamic person, *adab* as well as Islamic principles, values and norms are emphasized to be guided and influenced through the process of education in all aspects including curriculum, co-curricular activities, methods of teaching, relationship between teacher, educator and student and the relationship between the educational institution and society (Ali Adam 1997). In the Islamic education process, a teacher or educator has an important role in training Muslim youths to behave ethically as the first step. According to Ibn Miskawayh (Nadia 1994), in his book *tahdhib al-akhlaq* (refinement of character), teacher as trainer must make an impact on the young educator in terms of desirable knowledge, moral, customs and behavior, in moulding them into becoming role models within Muslim community which make them the acceptable human model within the Muslim community. Therefore, the training of *adab* has been considered as an important duty for Muslim teachers as well as educators (Mohd 2013).

The Concepts of Values and Ethics in Islam

The Arabic word '*Al-Qiyam*' (values) is a plural from the word '*Al-Qimah*' (the value) (Al-Firozabadi, *Al-Qamus Al-Muhit* 168). In fact, the word '*Al-Qimah*' includes the letter *Al-Waw* that is why Arabs say (*Qawwamtu Ash-Shay Taqwiman*) "I straightened something" since you put something in the place of another thing (Ibn Al-Faris, *Mu'ajam Maqayis Al-Lughah* 1392 A.H, 43). The word '*Al-Qimah*' (value) has been used in Islamic thought within the limits of its connotations in Arabic language, denoting the value of something and its importance, whether in a material thing or in an immaterial meaning. The value of a thing means its worth, and the value of the goods refers to its price. In Arabic, it is said: '*Ma Li Fulanin Qimah*' (So and so has no value) i.e. he has no stability and durability on matter. (Al-Mu'ajam Al-Wasit 768)

There are some examples of the usage the word *Al-Qimah* (the value) in the Holy Qur'an. Allah (G.B.T.H) says in the Glorious Qur'an: (وذلك دين القيمة) "And that is (*Deen Al-Qayyimah*) the correct religion." (*Al-Bayyinah* 98: 5). The word *Al-Qayyimah* in this *A'ya* denotes the straight religion. And the blessed words (G.B.T.H) in the Holy Qur'an: (رسول من الله يتلو صحفا مطهرة* فيها كتب قيمة) "A Messenger from Allah, reciting purified scriptures within which are (*Kutubun Qayyimah*) correct writings." (*Al-Bayyinah* 98: 2-3). The word *Qayyimah* means fair, straight and firm (At-Tabari, *Jami'a Al-Bayan Fi Tafseer* 169)

The Arabic term: *Akhlaq* (singular, *khuluq*) is laterally translated into English as "ethics". *Khuluq* comes in the Qur'an, two times, (*al-Shu'ara*: 137, and *al-Qalam*: 4). According to the Muslim exegete of the Qur'an, al-Qurtubi (d.1273 C.E), the word *khuluq al-awalin* as mentioned in the Qur'an means: "their ancient customs and it includes religion, character, ideology, or doctrine." Another Arabic word which is employed as a literally interchangeable to *akhlaq* is *adab*. As such, these two terms are complementary terms, and in some cases serve as interchangeable words, that describe what man out to do (Abdurezak 2011).

Ethic in Islam refers to the religion including its provisions, instructions and etiquettes, as well as, it refers to the dealings with people. The ethic in Islam refers to the religion as was reported by *Ibn Abbas* in the words of Allah (G.B.T.H) about the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) wherein Allah the Almighty says: (وانك لعلی خلق عظیم) "And indeed, you are of a great moral character." (*Al-Qalam* 68:4). *Ibn Abbas* (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "The great moral character" here refers to a great religion that is Islam. This is the opinion of *Mujahid* and a group of *Salaf* (predecessors) (*Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Azeem* 402). Islamic ethics is the ethical system formed by the teachings of the Qur'an and explained by the prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) through action and words. In another words, Islamic ethics based on the Quran and Sunnah (Abdurezak 2011).

Categories of Values and Ethics in Islam

According to Abu Shariah (2001) Values and Ethics can be categories as follows:

(1) *Religious and Spiritual Values*: they refer to the interest of the individual in affairs in his own religion, such as follows; Faith in Allah, Angels, Apostles and Heavenly Books; Faith in Fatalism and Occult such as Doomsday, Expiration Age and Resurrection, and Worship such as Fasting, Prayer, Zakat and Hajj.

(2) *Moral and Behavioral Values*: they refer to a set of values and morals that reflect the individual's behavior toward others according to religion, habits and social norms and which through we can judge the behavior of the individual and considered as the controller and the standard for the individuals' behavior such as follows: Arts of entry and sitting (living), arts of dialogue, good manners, tell the truth, avoid lying and show justice; Equality, , avoid perjury etc

(3) *Knowledge and Scientific Values*: they refer to the individual's interest in education and knowledge such as knowledge of scientific facts and things that help the individual to learn and gain knowledge, they are as follows: The point of view of the individual in education, types of education and people's need for education, benefits of education, the importance of respect for science and scientists, and the importance of seeking for knowledge etc.

(4) *Family and Social Values*: they interest in everything that is going on within the family and form part of desires of the individual that help to achieve his ambitions, such as follows; The importance of the role of parents in the family, the importance of raising children and their education, the importance of the role of sons and daughters within the family, importance of the opinion of the individual within the family and naming names of the children well; charity to relatives (kinship) etc.

(5) Other forms of values includes; Human Values, Political Values, Economic Values, Aesthetic and Biological Values and Emotional Values.

The Sources of values and Ethics in Islam

1) The First Source (*al-Quran*): the first supreme source of Islamic values and ethics is the Holy Qur'an, which is "the book containing the speech of Allah, revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) in Arabic and transmitted to us by continuous testimony (*tawatur*) (Mohammad Hashim Kamali 1995).The Qur'an is Allah's book, its words and meanings represent god's command and the proof of the prophecy of Muhammad (P.B.U.H), the most authoritative guide for Muslims. The Qur'an provides sacred guidelines (*dustur*) for mankind in this life and in the hereafter. Studies in the sciences of the Qur'an show that it comprises fundamentals that are related to articles of belief (*iman*), morals and actions and this is known as the laws of practice (*ahkam 'amaliyyah*). The laws of practice have a relationship with every action performed by a person who has reached the age of accountability (*mukallaf*). These laws of practice are divided into two divisions; *ibada* and *muamalah*.

2) The Second Source (*al-Sunnah*):- The second source of Islamic values and ethics is the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). To the hadith scholars (*muhaddithun*), Sunnah refers to "all that is narrated from the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H), his acts, his sayings and whatever he has tacitly approved plus all the reports which describe the physical attributes and character." It is a source of *Shariah* and legal evidence after the Qur'an. While the Qur'an lays down the injunctions of what is permitted and prohibited, the Prophet elaborates, explains, expands and declares in great detail on almost all aspects of the qur'anic verses (*ayat*). The qur'anic verses (*ayat*) come in the form of general and specific statements, so the

responsibility of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) was to clarify and provide clear operational guidelines for Muslims (Mohammad 1995).

Other sources considered to be Secondary Sources include:

(i) **al-ijma** which means “the unanimous agreement (consensus) of all qualified Muslim scholars and experts at a certain time after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) on certain issues related to the Shariah.” (Muhammad Abu Zahrah, *Usul al-Fiqh*, 198).

(ii) **al-maslahah al-mursalah an** Arabic words which means consideration of public interest. It refers to the public good in which its status has not been stated clearly in Islamic law, and there is no textual authority or indicator of its status and validity.

(iii) **al-urf** (the custom) which means “something that is either from their saying or doing accepted openly and practiced comfortably by a certain community” (AbdulKarimZaidan 1987).

(iv) **al-istihsan** (juristic preference) Muslims scholars have different opinions on the definition of *Al-Istihsan* and they disputed on determining the meaning of this word. It was said that it means grading something as good by a Muslim jurist through his personal opinion (Al-Ghazali, *Al-Mustasfa*, 2/174).

The School Curriculum

A curriculum can be defined as a plan for action or a written document that includes strategies for achieving desired goals or ends (Tyler 1949). A curriculum usually contains a statement of aims and specific objectives. It indicates some selection and organization of content; it either implies or manifests certain patterns of learning and teaching finally it includes a programme of evaluation of the outcomes (Taba 1962, p. 10). A plan for providing sets of learning opportunities for persons to be educated (Saylor 1981). Curriculum is an organized set of formal education and/or training intentions (Pratt 1980). Curriculum is the planned experiences offered to the learners under the guidance of the school (Wheeler 1983).

The curriculum of a school is the totality of the experiences that a school plans for its pupils. It is not restricted to courses; extracurricular activities and auxiliary services such as guidance and health services are also part of the curriculum. On the other hand the curriculum does not include everything the students learn in school (Clarke and Starr 1981)

The Role of Teachers in Infusion of Islamic Values and Ethics in School Curriculum

In the Islamic education process, a teacher or educator has an important role in training Muslim youth to behave ethically as the first step. According to Ibn Miskawayh (Nadia 1994), in his book *tahdhib al-akhlaq* (Refinement of character), teachers as trainers must make an impact on the young educators in terms of desirable knowledge, moral, customs and behavior, in moulding them into becoming role models within Muslim Community which makes them the acceptable human model within the Muslim community.

Therefore, the training of *adab* has been considered as an important duty for Muslim teachers well as educators. However, it questions are raised on what they can do about this issue, especially their thought and perception towards correlation between Islamic manner and Islamic work ethic. Hence, an understanding of how educators or teachers are motivated towards a positive work ethic within school structure and tasks, will not only effect the performance outcome of the teachers and educators, but will also influence on the extent in which the school encourages a positive work ethic of the individual to benefit the organization (Mohd 2013).

In the same way, the cultural self-representation theory can be associated with what Kreitner and Kinicki (1992) pointed out on ethical behaviors in work place. They suggested that religion and belief or cultural influences have a prospective to enclosure individual's ethical codes in work place which, subsequently, leading to the ethical behaviors. In other words, self-concept of individual correlates with the culture and their work practices, and it affects their work behaviors accordingly (Mohd 2013).

Rafiq (1996) stated that individual factors which individuals come to work with different values. Factors affecting one's ethical behavior include: stages of moral development, personal values and morals, family influences, peer influences, and life experiences. According to Rice (1999), Islam contains its own ethical system which offers specific guidelines for conducting business and work. These guidelines, in turn, relate to the noble concepts of unity, justice and trusteeship. Islamic work ethics, the focus of this study, constitutes Islam's expectations with respect to one's behavior at work which 3 includes his or her effort, dedication, cooperation, responsibility, social relations and creativity.

Essentially, when one has a close relationship with God, one's attitudes and behaviors would tend to be consistent with the rules and stipulations of the religion (NikMu'tasim, Nordin and Sanusi 2006). Hence, on this basis, a person's commitment to his or her work ethics would be expected to be significantly related to their beliefs and behaviors to the organization (Sidek 2013).

Teaching Values and Ethics in Secondary Schools Curriculum: The Malaysian Example

In recent years, moral education has become a subject that is tested during the school year and students must sit for a national Moral Education Exam at the end of Form V. According to Ministry of Education Guidelines, all teachers should be teaching the prescribed values across the curriculum. The form IV students interviewed had definite ideas about moral education class and two major themes arose from the data. Moral was seen as useful since students said it was important to know right from wrong in daily life. Malaysian teachers also felt that infusing moral values across the curriculum was a part of their role although in practice this was not always done (Thomas 2003).

Moral Education (ME) in Malaysia is a core subject in the secondary education system. The focus of the subject is on cultivating, appreciating, and practicing the "noble virtues" of Malaysian society (MOE, ME Syllabus for Secondary School 2000, p. v). It is hoped that the subject will deliver students who are knowledgeable, have noble personalities, and who are polite and willing to contribute productively towards their society and their country. Moral Education in Malaysia is defined as a subject that is compulsory for all non-Muslim students studying in government and private schools. While non-Muslim students study ME, Muslim students are taught Islamic studies. Students study ME from Standard One to Form Five following which they sit a formal examination conducted by the Examination Board, Ministry of Education (MOE) (Vishalache 2009).

A lot of academics in the field of ME have, for more than a decade, been critical of formal assessment for ME arguing that morality cannot be assessed just by grading cognitive development; it also involves emotional development and transformation in the action of the students within their own capacity of moral growth. However, while it is a government policy, construed in an act of parliament, that teachers and the Examination Board are required to assess ME, vigorous debate by educators has had an effect; now multiple methods are used to assess students in the ME exams that are not testing just cognitive ability. Formal and informal strategies are used to assess. Formal strategies include written examinations, project

work, assignments, and report writing. Informal assessments include observation, anecdotal reporting, and conferencing with students and parents. In preschools, ME is combined with Socio-Emotional Education and taught to all preschool students. Students are taught in isolation or integrated into other core subjects like Mathematics and language (Vishalache 2009).

In the pioneer syllabus, Moral Education (ME) emphasizes the spiritual, humanitarian, and social aspects of the total development of the individual. It stresses the inculcation and internalization of the noble values found in Malaysian society, based on the various religions, traditions, and cultures of the different communities and also consonant with universal values. The general objective of ME in primary and secondary schools is the development of an individual who recognizes, accepts, and internalizes his/her role as a responsible decision-maker regarding moral values in a democratic society, such that his/her actions are governed by moral principles in all situations (Vishalache 2010).

The teaching of ME as static, compartmentalized, and predictable made students of ME unhappy and complaints flowed in from different parties to the media and Ministry of Education. With all these challenges and complaints, the CDC decided to revise the ME syllabus (Vishalache 2010).

Challenges Facing Teachers in Infusing Values and Ethics in Schools

There are some pedagogic challenges regarding values education in schools they are as follows;

1- *Describing the nature and sources of values:* I sense that we are still grappling with the problem of moving the student from “knowing the good to be desirable” to “desiring to do the good.” I’ve often quoted the chastened observation made by Oliver and Bane, researchers who had worked with Kohlberg that although they seemed to be able to stimulate mature classroom reasoning about justice and cognate values, there was little observable flow on into behavior in the school playground.

2- *Identifying the teaching domains:* the definition I have proposed has several significant implications for the way we view the teaching of values. First, it implies that there is a cognitive component, because clearly, value priorities can be described in propositional terms, and are accessible to good reasons being given for holding them. Commitment to a value is not merely a socially conditioned habit.

3- *Applying complementary strategies:* So far, I have continued to refer to values without using any adjectives to qualify what kinds of value I have in mind. We tend to relapse into associating such remarks primarily with moral values. But my comments to this point have been intended to apply just as much to other realms of value, such as the intellectual, aesthetic, technical, religious and social. This validates the claim that every Curriculum area is implicated in values education (Brian 2015).

Conclusions

In an ideal society individual should have many skills, among them the skill to deal with conflicting values and to take independent decisions. It demands a critical faculty as well as competence to judge based on your moral principles. Schools system must therefore take an interest in those skills to be encouraged. In order to build a disciplined, cultured and united society, it is recommended when implementing values in education, teachers need to understand constructivist notions of teaching and learning, as mentioned. As Terwel (1999:198) asserted, “constructivism is not a robust concept: it seems to flourish under

relatively ideal educational circumstances". This issue could impact on the implementation of values in education. Similarly, There is need for more empirical to establish the extent to which teachers' perceive values and ethics as it relates to the school curriculum as well as level at which the teachers integrate values and ethics in their teaching in the classroom. Considerations must be made which contribute towards conveying such fundamental understanding and allowing teachers to both justify their own behavior rationally in the context of school and to critically examine it

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