

Challenges of Non-Option Teachers in Teaching Arabic: A Study on Islamic Education Teacher

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ABSTRACT

This paperwork aims to identify the level of challenges for Islamic education teachers in teaching Arabic language subject as non-option teachers in Primary Religious School (SRA) in the Hulu Langat district. The research samples in this pilot study comprised of 32 respondents which involves 6 Primary Religious Schools in Hulu Langat. The findings of this study are gathered using survey method which utilizes questionnaire as the study instrument. Alpha value for reliability of the questionnaire is high with Cronbach Alpha value over 0.960. A number of 32 items were tested and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The result of the study shows 28 items are at high level with mean between the range of (3.01 to 4.00), meanwhile 4 items are at moderate level (with the mean of the range between 2.01 to 3.00). Overall findings shows that the level of challenge of Islamic education teachers whom are teaching Arabic language as non-option is at moderately high level which is (mean=3.30, sp.=0.619). In detail, challenges related to teachers (mean=3.27, sp.=0.663), challenges related to Arabic language curriculum (mean=3.37, sp.=0.692) and challenges related to school climate (mean =3.27, sp.=0.710). It is hoped that the findings of the research will shed new suggestion and action needed to be done by Islamic education teachers and related institutions in training non-option teachers of Arabic language in teaching the subject even though Arabic language is not the teachers' option of training.

RATIONAL OF STUDY

According to Shamshinar et. al. (2014), among challenges identified either directly or indirectly that is faced by non-option teachers in teaching Arabic language are; Arabic language is a very complex language to be studied and understood. Then, it is also stated that low mastery of Arabic language grammar and vocabularies becomes the hurdle in mastering the language. Also stated is that there is no confidence in teaching the subject, the school climate is not conducive and helpful, the factor of inability to work independently in mastering Arabic language and that the teachers feel to be in their comfort zone.

Based on the factors above, researchers plan to conduct a research towards the Islamic education teachers. The result of this research is hoped to be giving an input in uplifting the standard of Islamic education teachers in teaching Arabic language at school level especially at Primary Religious School in the state of Selangor. Apart from that, it is also hoped that the findings of this research will be able to upgrade the quality of Arabic language mastery amongst the Islamic education teachers and enhance the effectiveness in teaching Arabic language.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

Identify the level of challenges of Islamic education teachers whom are teaching Arabic language as non-option subject in Primary Religious School (SRA) in the district of Hulu Langat.

Making this research as platform in presenting appropriate suggestion in order to help non-option teachers to be ready to teacher Arabic language.

METHODHOLOGY OF STUDY

This research is a pilot study that has been conducted in six selected primary religious schools in Hulu Langat district, in Selangor. It involves 32 Islamic education teachers whom are teaching Arabic language in school at random. Analysis findings shows that the alpha value for the reliability of the set of questionnaire used was high which is over 0.8. it also shows that the instrument of questionnaires is suitable to be made items for the main study.

Table 1: Reliability of Alpha Cronbach Value

Part B	Number of Item	Alpha Value
Teachers' Challenges	42	0.960

Source: Pilot Study, 2015

The design of the study is in quantitative nature which used survey method. Instruments that are used in this study include a set of questionnaire which is divided into two sections. Part A is the Teachers' Demographic Background and Part B is the Level of Challenges of Islamic Education Teachers in Teaching Arabic Language as Non-Option Subject in Primary Religious School (SRA) in the district of Hulu Langat, in Selangor. The questionnaire is build based on Likert scale between 1 to 5 which has been categorized and interpreted to four levels such as in the table below;

Table 2 : Interpretation of average score (Likert Scale 5)

Average Score	Interpretation
1.0 to 2.00	Low
2.01 to 3.00	Moderately Low
3.01 to 4.00	Moderately High
4.01 to 5.00	High

Source: Azhar Ahmad (2006) and Ahmad Munawwar (2009)

PILOT STUDY

Questionnaire instrument for challenges of Islamic Education teachers in teaching Arabic language as non-option subject in Primary Religious School (SRA) in six schools in the district of Hulu Langat, in Selangor was distributed on November 9 to 11, 2015. The instrument was verified by three experts in the field of Arabic language teaching. Table 3 shows the distribution of respondent teachers. Based on gender, 4 respondents are male teachers with the value of teachers' challenge of 3.21, mean value of challenge related to Arabic language curriculum is 3.53, mean value of school climate is 3.15. on the other hand, for female teachers, there are 29 respondents with the mean value of teachers' challenge to be 3.28, mean value of challenge related to Arabic language curriculum is 3.34, mean value of school climate is 3.29. As the conclusion, the number if male respondents are lesser than female respondents. (Table3)

Table 3: Distribution of Respondent of Islamic Education Teacher with Arabic Language Non-Option

Respondent Composition	Teacher	Curriculum	School Climate
Male (4)	3.21 (sp.=0.599)	3.53 (sp.=0.457)	3.15 (sp.=0.933)
Female (29)	3.28 (sp.=0.680)	3.34 (sp.=0.722)	3.29 (sp.=0.694)
Total (33)	3.27 (sp.=0.663)	3.37 (sp.=0.692)	3.27 (sp.=0.710)

Source: Pilot Study, 2015

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

This section will explain the research findings that were analyzed descriptively towards items in instrument according to the following elements: teachers' challenge (12 items), Arabic language curriculum (10 items) and school climate (10 items).

Table 4: Descriptive Analysis of Challenges of Islamic Education Teacher with Arabic Language Non-Option

Code	Item	Mean	Sp.	Interpretation
CA01	I think Arabic language teaching is an easy task.	3.15	0.972	Moderately High
CA02	I have good Arabic language mastery.	3.03	1.074	Moderately High
CA03	I have high confidence in Arabic language teaching.	3.03	0.897	Moderately High
CA04	I have good Arabic language foundation.	3.00	0.829	Moderately High
CA05	I have large number of Arabic language vocabularies in teaching Arabic language.	2.88	0.927	Moderately Low
CA06	I always make preparation in teaching Arabic language.	3.63	0.929	Moderately High
CA07	I allocate huge amount of time in teaching Arabic language.	3.36	0.929	Moderately High
CA08	I make revision prior to teaching Arabic language.	3.88	0.781	Moderately High
CA09	I interact in Arabic language during teaching Arabic language.	2.79	0.927	Moderately Low
CA10	I have no obstacles in teaching Arabic language.	3.24	0.902	Moderately High
CA11	I vary the learning activities during teaching Arabic language.	3.82	0.769	Moderately High
CA12	I enrich the Arabic language vocabularies other than those contained in the textbook.	3.39	0.827	Moderately High
	Total	3.27	0.662	Moderately High

Source: Pilot Study, 2015

Findings in Table 4 above shows the total mean value for teachers' challenge is at a moderately high level (mean=3.27, sp.=0.662). Overall, 10 items are at a moderately high level. Three items that shows highest mean value is CA08 "Saya melakukan ulangkaji terlebih dahulu sebelum pengajaran bahasa Arab", CA11 "I vary the learning activities during teaching Arabic language" (mean=3.82, sp.=0.769) and CA06 "I always make preparation in teaching Arabic language." (mean=3.63, sp.=0.929). On the other hand, two items are at a moderately low level which are item CA09 "I interact in Arabic language during teaching Arabic language" (mean=2.88, sp.=0.927) and CA05 "I have large number of Arabic language vocabularies in teaching Arabic language." (mean=2.79, sp.=0.927). Thus, the findings of this research shows that Islamic education teachers with non-option in Arabic language need to improve their vocabulary mastery and interact more in the language in order to enhance the teaching process of Arabic language.

Table 5: Descriptive Analysis of Challenges of Arabic Language Curriculum

Code	Item	Mean	Sp.	Interpretation
CB13	I have sufficient Arabic language reference books.	2.91	0.843	Moderately Low
CB14	I can access the internet easily in getting references in teaching Arabic language.	3.06	0.998	Moderately High
CB15	I utilize current technology in teaching Arabic language.	3.03	1.031	Moderately High
CB16	I teach Arabic language according to students' mastery level.	3.73	0.840	Moderately High
CB17	Arabic language curriculum content helps me during teaching process.	3.70	0.770	Moderately High
CB18	Arabic language curriculum content helps me to increase my Arabic language mastery level.	3.70	0.810	Moderately High
CB19	Arabic language curriculum content is suitable with my Arabic language competency.	3.64	0.929	Moderately High
CB20	Arabic language textbook design assists Arabic language teaching and learning process.	3.36	1.084	Moderately High
CB21	Teaching aids are provided to teachers in teaching Arabic language.	3.15	1.202	Moderately High
CB22	Curriculum provided is suitable to students' mastery level.	3.36	0.895	Moderately High
	Total	3.37	0.692	Moderately High

Source: Pilot Study, 2015

Table 5 shows the finding for challenges of Arabic language curriculum towards non-option teachers of Arabic language is at the total mean of a relatively high value which is (mean=3.37, sp.=0.692). Three items are at a moderately high level especially item CB17 "Arabic language curriculum content helps me during teaching process." (mean=3.70, sp.=0.770), CB18 which is "Arabic language curriculum content helps me to increase my Arabic language mastery level." (mean =3.70, sp.0.810) and item CB19 "Arabic language curriculum content is suitable with my Arabic language competency." (mean =3.64, sp.=0.929). On the contrary, three items are at a relatively low level which are item CB20 "Arabic language

textbook design assists Arabic language teaching and learning process.” (mean=3.36, sp.=1.084), followed by item CB22 “Curriculum provided is suitable to students’ mastery level.” (mean=3.36, sp.=0.895) and item CB 21 “Teaching aids are provided to teachers in teaching Arabic language.” (mean=3.15, sp.=1.202) which is at a moderately high level. The lowest mean score is for item CB13 “I have sufficient Arabic language reference books.” (mean=2.91, sp.=0.843). The result of this study shows that Islamic education teachers with non-Arabic language option still lack Arabic reference books and the Arabic teaching aids provided are also insufficient at school.

Table 6: Descriptive Analysis of School Climate

Code	Item	Mean	Sp.	Interpretation
CC23	Surrounding factor assists me in teaching Arabic language well.	3.42	1.031	Moderately High
CC24	I utilize the space in class in conducting language activities.	3.27	0.840	Moderately High
CC25	My colleagues share ideas in teaching Arabic language.	3.67	0.817	Moderately High
CC26	My colleagues share teaching materials related to Arabic language teaching.	3.42	1.032	Moderately High
CC27	The school culture strongly helps me in teaching Arabic language.	3.06	0.966	Moderately High
CC28	School administrators fully support me in organizing activities of Arabic language.	3.28	1.170	Moderately High
CC29	School administrators encourage me in participating in courses/training of Arabic language teaching.	3.30	1.045	Moderately High
CC30	School administrators prepare sufficient facility in learning Arabic language.	2.94	0.998	Moderately Low
CC31	I inculcate Arabic language environment in order to ease the teaching and learning process.	3.21	0.893	Moderately High
CC32	School administrators assist me teaching Arabic language.	3.15	1.064	High
	Total	3.27	0.710	Moderately High

Source: Pilot Study, 2015

Table 6 above shows the total mean value for challenges from the aspect of school climate which is at moderately high level which is (mean=3.27, sp.=0.710). There are nine items at moderately high level. Three items that show the highest mean is item C25 “My colleagues share ideas in teaching Arabic language” (mean=3.67, sp.=0.817), item CC23 “Surrounding factor assists me in teaching Arabic language well” (mean=3.42, sp.=1.031), followed by item CC26 “My colleagues share teaching materials related to Arabic language teaching” (mean=3.42, sp.=1.032). on the other hand, there are three items with low level which are item CC30 “School administrators prepare sufficient facility in learning Arabic language” (mean=2.94, sp.=0.998) followed by item CC27 “The school culture strongly helps me in teaching Arabic language” (mean=3.06, sp.=0.966) and lastly item CC32 “School

administrators assist me teaching Arabic language.” (mean=3.15, sp.=1.064). The result of the findings shows that the facility in learning Arabic language at school need to be upgraded, the climate and culture in school need to be inculcated with biah arabiyah (Arabic environment) such as Arabic language words around the school compound, communicative activity in Arabic language and suchlike.

Table 7: Comparison of Teachers' Challenges Mean

TEACHERS' CHALLENGES	MEAN	Sp.	Interpretation
Teacher	3.27	0.662	Moderately High
Curriculum	3.37	0.692	Moderately High
School Climate	3.27	0.710	Moderately High
TOTAL	3.30	0.619	Moderately High

Source: Pilot Study, 2015

The table above shows the comparison of mean value for challenges of Islamic education teachers in teaching Arabic language as a non-option subject in Primary Religious School (SRA) in Hulu Langat. In general, result findings shows that overall challenges is at a moderately high level (mean=3.30, sp.=0.619). All types of challenges which achieved highest score is challenges related to curriculum with the values of (mean=3.37, sp.=0.692) followed by challenges related to the teachers themselves which is (mean=3.27, sp.=0.662) and challenges of school climate (mean=3.27, sp.=0.710).

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

A teacher has been nurtured with courses organized in Training in Service (LDP), Islamic Education Unit as well as Islamic Education Department. Teachers with quality are those who make an effort in achieving desired goals and have the competency in aspects such as knowledge, mastery and attitude (Jill Brooke, 1995). Nonetheless, challenges that occur are those that came due to circumstances such as lack of teachers which results in teachers to be given subjects that are non-option such as Islamic education teachers to be asked teaching Arabic language. Overall findings found that the level of challenge is at moderately high level with mean value=3.27, sp.=0.710. among the things that requires improvement in Arabic language curriculum is in the item CB13 “I have sufficient Arabic language reference books.” (mean=2.91, sp.=0.843). Apart from that, item CB 21 “Curriculum provided is suitable to students' mastery level” (mean=3.15, sp.=1.202). Result of finding shows that Islamic education teachers with non-Arabic language option still lack reference books in Arabic language and teaching aids that are provided seems to be insufficient. This finding is parallel to Ab Halim et. al. (2013), which shows obvious lacking in the aspect of teaching aids utilization, small class condition which results in discomfort to large number of students, less conducive school ambience and uncomfortable staff room condition.

Next is the discussion on challenges related to the Islamic education teachers themselves. Items to be given attention would be item CA05 “I have large number of Arabic language vocabularies in teaching Arabic language.” (mean=2.79, sp.=0.927). Apart from that, item CA09 “I interact in Arabic language during teaching Arabic language.” (mean=2.88, sp.=0.927). hence, the result of findings in this research shows that Islamic education teachers

with non-option in Arabic language teaching should improve their vocabularies and interact more in the target language in order to enhance Arabic language mastery. The result of this finding is parallel to Ab. Halim et. al. (2013), there exists lacking and weaknesses in the aspect of interaction in precise Arabic language among students in SRA.

Teachers' challenge towards school climate that needed to be given attention is as recorded item CC32 "School administrators assist me teaching Arabic language" (mean=3.15, sp.=1.064). The findings shows that the facility in studying Arabic language in school needs to be upgraded, the ambience, climate and culture in school need to be cultured and nurtured with biah arabiyyah or Arabic environment such as having Arabic language words in the school surrounding and effective Arabic language communication among the teachers in school.

CONCLUSION

The aim of education is to produce Muslims with knowledge, noble characteristics and practising good practice that have the al-Quran and al-Sunnah as the guidance in life (IPGM) because Islamic education teachers do not only master knowledge of the subjects taught but also many other knowledge in this world (Ahmad Salleh:1997). The aim of teaching and learning Communicative Arabic Language at low level is to inculcate interest among students in learning Arabic language so as to master the expertise in language, apart from enabling the students to communicate easily and correctly. This is parallel with the objectives of Islamic education, Selangor Islamic Religious Department (JAIS) which plays the role in adding values to curriculum that is carried out in JAIS schools, adding values to the evaluation of JAIS students, enhancing curriculum program, adding values to the quality of JAIS education management, preparing opportunities to study Islamic based education, producing murobbi teachers and lastly upgrading schools.

The role of Selangor State Arabic Language centre (PBANS) is established in the effort of fulfilling the need of Islamic education at the state of Selangor in making Arabic language as the core language in the teaching and learning of religious schools under the operation of Selangor Islamic Religious Department (JAIS). The function of PBANS is to produce professional Quranic generation, produce expert teachers in Arabic language who is professional and holistic as well as making Arabic language centre labs as referring point in upgrading professional Arabic language expertise, facilitating and training the society to understand, love and practise Arabic language as the language of ibadah and profession. The result findings of this pilot study is hoped to be giving suggestion of action that is needed to be done by Islamic education teachers and related institutions in training non-option Arabic language teachers in teaching the subject even though Arabic language is not the teachers' option.

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