

# Relating Teaching Practices to Student Achievement in the Field of Ibadah (Worship)

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This study aimed to relate teaching practices and student achievement in the field of Ibadah (worship). The subject is Islamic Education and the education facilities are two types of schools, the Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina (SJKC) and the national-type Primary School (Chinese), in the Malaysian state of Perak. The sample consisted of 30 teachers and 85 students from ten SJKCs. Questionnaires were given to teachers and students, and a special test was also conducted on Chinese SJKC students. The data was then analysed in terms of frequency, percentage, mean, t-test, ANOVA and Spearman's correlation test. Correlation tests showed a significant medium level relationship, between teaching practices and student achievement. They also show that elements of student knowledge, motivation method, teacher professionalism and personality contribute to student proficiency in the field of Ibadah. This study shows that student proficiency in Ibadah at SJKC needs to be improved further. Teachers of Islamic Education in SJKC need to improve teaching methods, student knowledge, and motivations, as well as teacher personality and professionalism, to improve student proficiency in Ibadah. The implications of this study are to determine which methods need further attention from the Islamic Education Teacher at the SJKC.

**Key words:** *Teacher teaching practices, student achievement, field of Ibadah, National-type Primary School (Chinese) or SJKC.*

## Introduction

Kamus Dewan (2007) defines *ibadah* as acts and practices that are dedicated to God. Wahbah al-Zuhayli (2005) defines *ibadah* as all kinds of human action, in the form of words, inner deeds and outward actions that please and are blessed by Allah. According to Haron Din (2002), *ibadah* is the relationship between God and his servants to control human beliefs. *Ibadah* is an important and effective value in Islamic teaching, to build Muslim character and

develop society. Based on the definition above, *ibadah* means acts and practices that encompass all aspects of life whether outward or inwardly performed by a servant, as a sign of obedience to his Lord. *Ibadah* of God is an act that pleases and is blessed by Allah, and fulfils the purpose of human creation.

## Research Background

The national-type Primary School (Chinese) or SJKC is one type of school in the Malaysian education system. This form of school was among the earliest available since British colonial rule together with *Pondok* (hut) and *madrasah* school, Malay school, Tamil school, and English school (Shahril, 1999). Chinese medium schools were formed by Chinese miners who felt obligated to educate their children (Sufean, 1993). Initially, rich tin ore merchants managed most Chinese schools. A Chinese syllabus from China was used in this school during that time. As Chinese schools grew in number, the British felt that a control system need to be established to curb the formation of a new Chinese school (Mohd Ridhuan Tee, 2010).

There were 186 SJKCs in Perak (JPN Perak, 2011). Mandarin is the main medium of instruction and has gained the attention of the Muslim community as a place for their children to get an education. In 2011, there were 2,545 Muslim students in SJKCs in the whole of Perak as indicated by the Islamic Education Sector, Perak Education Department.

Parents are keen to send their children to study at an SJKC. That hope that after six years of education, their children will be able to master Mandarin. Currently, the ability to master Mandarin language is an advantage. It is interesting to study the SJKC environment due to the existence of multiple races there; Malay, Chinese and Indian, and the various religious practices in the school. The variation of belief existed in SJKC students. Chinese are usually Buddhist or Christian, Indians are Hindus and the Malays are Muslim. This creates an opportunity for studying socialization among SJKC students.

In reality, the environment of an SJKC is not the same as in the national school. The SJKC lacks teachers, learning sessions were shortened from six hours to four hours, classes were combined for teaching and learning sessions without an area to practice prayer, and classes lacked facilities. Students do not get proper facilities as their peers in the national school (Omar, 2011). This resulted in Muslim students lagging in achievement in the subject of Islamic Education. Arip et al. (2012) conducted a study on the Inventory of Basic Religious Knowledge (IBRK), measuring an individual's fundamental knowledge of Islam based on four subscales; namely the purification of minor impurities, purification of major impurities, Adhan and Iqamah, and prayer five times a day.

## Problem Statement

In general, the problem is the level of proficiency in Islamic Education among Muslim students in SJKCs. In 2011, the Primary School Assessment (PKSR) data showed that Muslim students in SJKCs throughout the state of Perak attained a moderate and low level of proficiency. A total of 80.1% are at a moderate level and 19.9% are low or failed. According to Omar (2011), an excellent teacher who was appointed as a Floating Teacher found that there are Muslim students who are ignorant of ablution procedures, unable to verbalize the intention for compulsory prayer and unable to recite *tahiyat*. Shamsul Arifin (2011) stated that the main problem in SJKCs is the lack of Islamic Education teachers.

However, to address this shortage, teachers were appointed as Floating Teachers and Untrained Temporary Teachers (GSTT). According to Ab. Halim and Nik Mohd Rahimi (2010), effective and strategic time management in implementing Islamic Education is also related to the type of approach and method issue used in teaching and learning Islamic Education. Research in several states in Malaysia indicated that the most likeable teaching method is lecturing. Therefore, the objective of this study is to identify the relationship between teaching practices and student achievement, in the field of *Ibadah* namely the Islamic Education subject.

## Methods

This study is a descriptive and inference study that examines the relationship between teaching practices and levels of student achievement. The data was obtained through a questionnaire method conducted on teachers and Muslim students at SJKC in the Kinta district of Perak and then subjected to quantitative analyses. A total of 85 samplings were done from a population of 100 selected subjects. Students from Year Five and Six were assumed to have a high level of proficiency in the field of *Ibadah*, learned in the Islamic Education syllabus from Year One to Year Five.

There were a total of 30 teacher respondents from the same school as the student respondents. The teacher respondents consisted of Floating Teachers, Trained Temporary Teachers and Untrained Temporary Teachers (GSTT). Collected data were analysed using a descriptive method. Statistical Package for Social Sciences V20 software was used for data analyses. Spearman ( $r$ ) statistic correlation analyses were used to measure the correlation between two quantitative variables.

## Findings

Findings related to student achievement in the field of *Ibadah* are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Levels of Student Achievement

Achievement Level	E	D	C	B	A	Mean	S.D	Interpretation
Score	3 3.5%	31 36.5%	40 47.1%	11 12.9%	0 0%	2.69	0.74	Medium Low

A detailed description of the above data shows that none of the students received an ‘A’ (0%), 11 students (12.9%) scored a ‘B’, 40 students (47.1%) scored a ‘C’, and three students scored a ‘D’ (3.5%). This data shows that the number of students receiving B and C score is 51 students (60%). Also, 61 students scored a ‘D’ and ‘E’ (40%). This data provides the impression that the majority of students scored a moderately low level of proficiency in the field of *Ibadah*.

Relationship analysis in this study was conducted to identify the correlation between the elements of teaching practice and student achievement. The elements are the teaching and learning objectives, student levels, induction settings, teaching and learning methods, teaching aids, praise and reinforcement (motivation), formulation and assessment, and teacher personality and professionalism. Spearman's correlation analysis ( $r$ ) was used for inferential analysis in this study. The relationship between teacher teaching practices and student achievement in the field of *Ibadah* are as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Correlation Between Teacher Teaching Practices with Student Achievement in the Field of *Ibadah*

	$r$	Sig. P
Teaching and learning objective* Student achievement	0.173	0.114
Student level* Student achievement	0.250	0.021
Induction set* Student achievement	0.316	0.003
T&L (P&P) Method* Student achievement	0.341	0.001
Teaching aids* Student achievement	0.057	0.603
Praise and reinforcement (motivation)* Student achievement	0.325	0.002
Formulation and assessment* Student achievement	0.268	0.013
Teacher personality and professionalism* Student achievement	0.332	0.002
Teaching Practices (Overall)* Student achievement	<b>0.313</b>	<b>0.004</b>
** Significant correlation at the level of $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed)		
N=134		

Table 2 shows the results of Spearman's correlation analysis ( $r$ ) between teaching practices and student achievement. The findings indicate that there is a moderately low relationship between six of the eight constructs of teaching practices and student achievement. The teaching practices construct which gains the highest correlation was the teaching and learning method construct ( $r = 0.341$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) followed by teacher personality and professionalism ( $r = 0.332$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The following were praise and reinforcement constructs ( $r = 0.325$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), induction set construct ( $r = 0.316$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), formulation and assessment elements ( $r = 0.268$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and construct with the lowest correlation values was the student level construct ( $r = 0.250$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

The above analysis indicates that each of the teaching practice constructs has a significant relationship with student proficiency achievement in the field of *Ibadah*. The overall analysis of the whole construct indicated non-significant differences in the mean correlation values for each teacher teaching practices construct ( $r = 0.313$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) with low correlation values.

## Discussion

The level of student proficiency in the field of *Ibadah* refers to the ability and capacity of students to master the skills in the field of *Ibadah*, learned at elementary school. The test is built upon the Schedule of Test Specifications, using the Islamic Education syllabus with the question set at a various level including low, medium and high. The level of question is based on Bloom's and Anderson's Taxonomy (Exam Board, 2013) which includes cognitive constructs.

The data obtained show that the level of proficiency of Muslim students in SJKCs in the field of *Ibadah* is relatively moderately low. The data analyzed indicated that 60% of students received Bs and Cs. Another 40% of the students received a D or E. None of the students scored an A in this field of *Ibadah* skills testing.

The study found that a significant relationship between teaching practices and student achievement, in the field of *Ibadah* among Muslim students in SJKC. Six of the eight constructs of teaching practices show a significant relationship namely student levels, induction settings, teaching and learning methods, praise and reinforcement (motivation), formulation and assessment, and teacher personality and professionalism. This shows that teaching practices have a direct impact on student proficiency of a particular subject.

## Implication

The findings of this study show that the level of student achievement or student proficiency in the field of *Ibadah* is relatively moderately low. This gives the impression that students do

not fully acquire the skills taught by the teachers. Nevertheless, many other factors influence student proficiency achievement in the field of *Ibadah*, other than the teaching method (Mohd Fadzli et al., 2012). They include, for instance, the time allocated for Islamic Education subjects in SJKC being less than in national schools, lack of teachers, non-conducive learning area, and lack of facilities for teaching Islamic Education. Further research may be carried out to study these factors in detail.

Correlation analysis was applied in this study to identify the relationship between teaching practices with student achievement, in the field of *Ibadah*. Each of the teaching constructs has a significantly low level of relationship with student achievement. In other words, teaching practices will impact the students' ability to acquire new skills. If teaching practices follow procedures and rules, and all factors are taken into account, then students can grasp the skills taught by teachers. The findings of this study prove that teachers do play an important role in the learning process. Teachers who practice all of the constructs in their teaching practices will be able to produce effective and meaningful learning for their students.

## **Conclusion**

Each construct in teaching practices should be taken seriously when planning teaching and learning sessions. Based on this study, it can be concluded that the teachers are following the teaching practices prescribed. But the practices are not thoroughly implemented with full determination by some teachers. The findings of this study are useful for the authorities to take appropriate action to improve the quality of teaching to increase students' proficiency in the field of *Ibadah*. Lastly, efforts towards strengthening teaching practice among Islamic Education teachers will not be achieved with an intervention at one single institution, but will be successful if it is supported by all related organizations and institutions.

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