Exploring Teachers' Experience with Student Character Development: A Comparative Analysis

Meneroka Pengalaman Guru dalam Pembangunan Tingkah Laku Pelajar: Satu Analisa Perbandingan

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative research is to explore teachers' perceptions in inculcating moral values to develop student character, to identify different challenges faced by teachers and to discover how teachers overcome their challenges in both Islamic as well as conventional schools. Purposive sampling and semi-structured interviews were used to obtain more in-depth information from six participants, and a thematic approach was used to analyse the data. Findings reveal the teachers' perception of developing student character, the challenges and how they overcome these challenges to develop students' character. A noticeable difference noted is that teachers in conventional schools face challenges due to the limitations of teachers' rights. Other challenges faced by teachers in both types of school include family background, school environment, peer pressure, and social media. The implication of this study is to raise awareness among educators and higher authorities as well as parents, about the challenges teachers face in Islamic schools and conventional schools in developing student character. This helps in correcting the misconception that teachers are solely responsible for promoting good moral character in their students.

Keywords: Character development; School orientation; Teachers' experience

ABSTRAK

Penyelidikan kualitatif ini bertujuan untuk meneroka persepsi guru dalam memupuk nilai moral untuk membentuk sahsiah pelajar, mengenal pasti cabaran berbeza yang dihadapi oleh guru dan untuk mengetahui bagaimana guru mengatasi cabaran mereka di sekolah Islam dan sekolah konvensional. Persampelan bertujuan dan temu bual separa berstruktur digunakan untuk mendapatkan maklumat yang lebih mendalam daripada enam peserta, dan pendekatan bertema digunakan untuk menganalisis data. Dapatan kajian mendedahkan persepsi guru dalam membangunkan sahsiah pelajar, cabaran mereka dan cara mereka mengatasi cabaran ini untuk membentuk sahsiah pelajar. Sementara itu, terdapat perbezaan ketara yang dicatat oleh guru di sekolah konvensional kerana cabaran yang mereka hadapi adalah disebabkan oleh batasan hak guru. Cabaran lain yang dihadapi oleh guru di kedua-dua jenis sekolah termasuk latar belakang keluarga, persekitaran sekolah, tekanan rakan sebaya dan media sosial. Implikasi kajian ini adalah untuk meningkatkan kesedaran di kalangan warga pendidik dan pihak atasan serta ibu bapa, tentang cabaran yang dihadapi oleh guru di sekolah Islam dan sekolah konvensional dalam membentuk sahsiah pelajar. Ini membantu dalam membetulkan salah tanggapan bahawa guru bertanggungjawab sepenuhnya untuk mempromosikan akhlak yang baik dalam diri pelajar mereka.

Kata kunci: Pembangunan watak; Orientasi sekolah; Pengalaman guru

INTRODUCTION

The aim of Islamic education is to produce a good man (Al-Attas 1979), and this also means to develop good behaviour or *akhlaq* in every student. Therefore, one of the important objectives in the educational process is to produce a student with a good moral development. Teachers, in particular Islamic educators, must play an important role to achieve this objective. Since, the official religion of Malaysia is Islam, it becomes an important component of the Islamic Education system to improve Muslims' understanding of Islam and to develop the character of every student since childhood, starting from schools. It is also recommended that all Muslim students be made compulsory to take Islamic

Education subject in the examination as found in the Malaysian Education Cabinet Committee on the implementation of Education Policy.

Education during Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) era was so different from what we have today. This is not because Muslims have deviated from His way, but this is reflected in the challenges that Muslims are facing nowadays. Even the government keeps on reviewing the syllabus from time to time and introducing new curriculum to suit with the nations' needs, it still does not help the Islamic Education teacher, both in Islamic schools as well as conventional schools to reduce the disciplinary problems caused by students.

Why is the bad behavior issue still occurring among students? Today, some parents raise an issue upon the role of teachers both in Islamic and in conventional schools regarding their children's behavior. This is because more and more students are having problems with their morale. They assume that teachers in an Islamic school and conventional schools are supposed to play the role in student character development in schools. It seems that they did not play the role in developing students' moral character. It also indicates that some parents only focused on the role of the educational teacher to see to the development of the students' character. However, we should consider other positions in the formation of student characters, such as the student itself, family, school authority, peers, the media and social climate. Nur-Ashikin (2003) indicated that there are five challenges faced by teachers to instill moral values while carrying out teaching activities. These include instructional aids, curriculum structure, teacher's attitude towards Islamic values, methods of teaching and, the use of textbook.

Thus, this study is aimed at filling those gaps and enriched the knowledge on what are the challenges faced by teachers in implementing character education both in an Islamic and conventional school and to identify the significant strategies that can be learned, applied, and modified at similar or other educational institutions. Therefore, this comparative analysis is aimed at exploring the problems faced by teachers in Islamic and conventional schools in instilling character education in Kajang, Selangor, Malaysia.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are:
1. To explore the teachers' perceptions in inculcating moral values both in Islamic and conventional schools.
2. To identify the different challenges faced by the teachers both in Islamic and conventional schools in the development of student's character.
3. To discover how the teachers' overcome challenges in both Islamic and conventional schools.

Hence, the study seeks to answer the following questions:
1. What are the teachers' perceptions in inculcating moral values both in Islamic and conventional schools?
2. What are the different challenges faced by the teacher both in an Islamic and conventional schools in the development of student's character?
3. How do the teachers' overcome challenges in both Islamic and conventional schools?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The guidelines among individuals in sufficing conflict are the function of morality embedded between them (Rest 1986 as cited in Mohd Yusoff & Hamzah 2015). Ethics is based on the conventional Kohlberg & Hersh (1977) definition of fairness and regard for the rights of others, stressing justice and compassion. In addition to preserving human integrity, the rules help people to save time and resources to think about their actions. A moral human being, however, that respects ideas and social standards that are widely recognized as morally good and real.

Hence, a person with morals must be aware of and understand the needs of social regulations (Abdul Rahman Aroff 1986 as cited in Mohd Yusoff & Hamzah 2015). Every person within morals must have noble attributes that are morally praiseworthy. A person with a noble personality is one with a

stable aptitude and personality in responding to a situation morally, manifested with kindness, honesty, responsibility, and respect for others (Lickona 1991 as cited in Mohd Yusoff & Hamzah 2015). More precisely, it includes ways in which a good individual can comply with society's rules and respond effectively without blindly conforming to the rules or agreeing to them.

MALAYSIAN MORAL EDUCATION

The Malaysian education system focuses on creating physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual human capital that is good, comprehensive, and integrated. Parts of attitude, morality, and values are essential elements to ensure the achievement of the National Philosophy of Education. One of the important aspects evident in the National Education Philosophy is the formation of human with morally conduct. Hence, development of moral values in the students is very important because it is the internalized values that will determine the kind of human you want. Therefore, education and internalization of moral values cannot be separated (Baharuddin 2016).

Basically, moral education was established in the Malaysian education system in 1988 and revised in 2000. The Malaysian Vision 2020 has been included. Vision 2020 is an ideology developed by the previous Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, and includes nine challenges that the country foresees towards national and global building (Mahathir 1991). They are: to form a nation that stands as one; to produce a Malaysian community that has freedom, strength, and is full of self-confidence; to develop a mature, democratic community; to form a community that has high morale, ethics, and religious strength; to cultivate a community that is mature and tolerant; to form a progressive science community; to cultivate a community rich in values and loving culture; to ensure the formation of a community with a fair economy; and to cultivate a prosperous community. The essence of Vision 2020 is included in the content of the revised ME Syllabus for Secondary Schools.

Moral Education (ME) 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 taught Islamic studies. Student study ME from standard one to form five following which they sit a formal examination conducted by the Examination Board, Ministry of Education (MOE).

Even though ME is established in the Malaysian education syllabus, many complaints are aired by various parties through the media. The National Union of Teaching Profession (NUTP) has often argued through the media that ME (Moral Education) should be integrated into other subjects and moral education per se abolished. Parents have complained to schools about the heavy workload of ME and that their children do not benefit from the subject (Balakrishnan 2009). Based on Balakrishnan (2009) the studies found that material and principles that are delivered in the Malaysian ME syllabus without recognizing the possibility of addressing conflicting issues and disputes. This could be viewed as another weakness.

ROLE OF TEACHERS IN DEVELOPING STUDENTS' CHARACTER

Some researcherss said, the peace and comfortable atmosphere of school affected on children's characters education (Lickona 1993) as cited in Alanya Hamdullah and Emin Pasa (2016), said, that children and adolescents will achieve all virtuous habits in society by interacting between the school, community, and parents.

In this respect, character education is conducted through the management of all affairs in schools that involve all the citizens of the school. Ryan and Bohlin (1999) said, in terms of character preparation, there are certain qualities that a teacher requires to be a good instructor. (1) Teacher as a role model for good character and making the student's character development should be a professional responsibility and priority for the teacher. (2) The teacher should help every student to understand other friend's lives as well as speak about life's right and wrong. (3) Teachers should provide program information about self-sacrificing and ethical acts and create a democratic environment.

Therefore, the success of the implementation of character education is more due to teacher factors. The teacher holds direct contact with students. Therefore, the cultivation of character education can be seen from how the students' perspective on character education in learning and form how the students' perspective toward the teachers' planning

of learning, implementation of learning, and the evaluation of learning that have character values in it. As can be seen today, owing to the complexity and development of life, formal institutions such as schools and colleges almost exclusively assume the role of education. Though, Sahadat (1997 p.27 as cited in Tamuri 2007) the school is defined as the second level of the environment in children's education after a family. Damon and Colby (1996, as cited in Tamuri 2007) education has come to mean school and school has come to mean a place that offers knowledge and skills identified by school professionals who speak primarily with each other about such things (p.32).

Concerning the significant relationship between school and teacher, Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1987, as cited in Tamuri, 2007) explains that the teacher in Islam has an ethical duty as a *murabbi* (a trainer of souls and personalities) and not only a *mu'allim* (a transmitter of knowledge). From another point of view, associate 'teacher' with the ethical term *adab*, a teacher is a *mu'addib* in that he or she is not only concerned with the transmission of skill and knowledge but also 'the inculcation of *adab* which is the discipline of mind, body, and soul' (Hashim 1997, p.57 as cited in Tamuri 2007). While there is a distinction in terms of expression, these two Arabic terms, *murabbi,* and *mu'addib*, clearly show that the teacher in Islam has an ethical involvement.

As educators, teachers not only teach moral personality, but they also need to explain what good character is to their students. For their students, they are role models of good character; they must therefore show good examples by developing their own character. The nature of their educators is the main factor in the success of character education in schools or other educational institutions. For their students to see them as models, teachers must have acceptable attributes, moral values, and virtues. Teachers, as character educators, must be of a superior or equally virtuous character and temperament than their students. They need to show good temperament and moral character consciously and unconsciously. They also ought to be what they express and to practice sound teaching morally. So, they can provide moral instruction effectively (Tengku Sarina Aini Tengku Kasim et. al. 2021 & Mohamad Khairi Haji Othman et. al. 2019).

Rasulullah (P.B.U.H.), his companions and Muslim scholars should become an inspiration for every teacher in teaching of character education in Islam, this means all of the school, or any other institution made an attempt to educate every student in a really good akhlaq. According to Halstead, that teachers were expected not only to be learned but also to have a deep personal commitment to faith and to be a living example of virtue and piety which students could unhesitatingly emulate" (Tamuri 2007). This is why Lemu (1991, p.32 as cited in Tamuri 2007) insists that "…a teacher who has no *taqwa* (surrender to Allah) cannot, of course, exemplify it a good life''.

TEACHERS' CHALLENGES IN ENHANCING CHARACTER EDUCATION

Teachers are responsible for teaching the fundamental knowledge and skills of moral education, particularly with respect to internal needs and methods. This is because moral education is complicated, and character education has created a lot of uncertainty. It is not the sole duty of the moral education teacher in the school to teach moral education, but it also needs the cooperation of everyone, including parents and the school, especially in fostering a moral environment. According to Puka (2002) as cited in Mohd Yusoff and Hamzah (2015), even when a teacher does not understand what morality is, he is not qualified to teach (Abdul RahmanAroff 1986, as cited in Mohd Yusoff & Hamzah 2015). Therefore, it is necessary to take seriously the training of a moral education teacher because in practice, moral education is not what it is supposed to be. The objective, material, and in particular the methods of moral education instruction will be affected by the moral meaning held by educator. An educator who considers moral education as absolute compliance with the law, for instance, will behave as an authoritarian and will be indoctrinated in the moral education program; the result of which will impede the mature moral growth process.

According to Dassault (2018) as cited in Hamidullah (2019), there are many aspects faced by the teachers in teaching and learning activities today due to the globalization era. For example, teaching style. technology, family, peer pressure and environmental support. These all are becoming as the main factors in developing student's character. In the following pharagraph, the researchers attempt to describe at least three majors' challenges were faced by the teacher.

TEACHER'S TEACHING STYLE

Being a teacher is not easy task today because need to follow and update the teaching methods and style, most of teacher faced difficulties due to the student's seemed to have their own perception and hardly accept opinions from teacher except their parents. According to Ibrahim et al. (2017) as cited in Norazlin Mohamad Nurdin and Siti Rahaimah Ali (2019) stated the efforts in educating student skills are very difficult due to this era the students have differences terms of interests, knowledge, motivation and learning style, and it becomes the responsibility of teachers in taking initiatives and attracting student's interests by applying new style in teaching techniques. Therefore, teacher as role model and who responsible for student's activities in schools must be creative in shaping the characters building among the students as well as finding new teaching style in learning activities to attracted student's interests.

TECHNOLOGY

In the globalization era today, computers and the internet are important parts of educational institutions, either teacher or students have used. Computers and the internet are facilitating students to access anything regard to their lesson. They can search for many articles and find some references in relation to their study. However, the problem today, students tend to abuse the internet, they can access anything files without controlled by the parents or instructors. Brady & Matthews (2006) said, media technology has made children's personality may be individualistic, aggressive, permissive, early sex, drug abuse, and gangsters. These all aspect can come from media technology, and it will be troublesk the teacher to teach every student's *ahklaq*.

FAMILY BACKGROUND AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT

Family background and environment are important part to support children's character, it is also determining children's qualities to be good or bad. Many researcherss found, that environmental support very determined the children's behaviors. Based on research found by Zainuddin Sharief et al. (2011) said that bad habits shown by parents in the family will cause negative effects on children's minds, parents who spend the most time in working, and rarely at home, their children tend to be depressed and run away from home. It's undeniable today, that teacher almost faced many challenges aspect comes from student's background, and environmental. Therefore, teaching student to have good characters are not easy especially when the community, social, parents, and authorities can not cooperate in educating and shaving student's activities.

IMPLICATIONS OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN SCHOOLING

Schools have always been in the business of character education. The word "educate" itself means to "supervise the mental or moral growth of". Schools traditionally have encouraged and promoted character education as part of their mission. Rather than being the schools' "latest fad, character education is the school's oldest mission. Research into the hidden curriculum has revealed that the agenda of the schools are larger than the explicit list of courses, syllabi, and programs. Schools teach more than academics—they teach values. From early curricular materials, such as the Horn Book and New England Primer followed by the codes of conduct of the early twentieth century, to the contemporary character education programs of today, schools have always had a connection to a higher moral purpose in the development of students. Explicitly or implicitly schools remain at the forefront of debates and debacles in the effort to continue this ongoing mission of character education (Lewis, M. & Ponzio, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative study which uses phenomenology as a methodology to answer the research question. The qualitative research study aims to study the phenomena that affect the realities of individual and group life in a particular cultural or social context. Furthermore, according to Corbin and Strauss (2015) to connect directly with the participants and gaining word from their points of view, the researchers should use qualitative with phenomenological for this research.

PARTICIPANTS

In this study, the researchers used the purposive sampling technique to select a sample of informants. This study focuses on Islamic and conventional schoolteachers in Selangor, with each school

involving three teachers who teach in selected Islamic and conventional schools, namely Sekolah Rendah Agama Sungai Kantan in Kajang and Real schools in Cheras, Selangor.

Six informants were interviewed in total, three of whom were female teachers from Islamic schools and the others were male teachers from conventional schools. Besides that, all of the teachers from Islamic schools were teaching Islamic subjects, whereas teachers from conventional schools were teaching morals subjects on their schools. The researchers chose teachers from Islamic schools and conventional schools to see if there any difference in how the teachers from each school applied Islamic values in their teaching and how they built their students' characters.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

The main sources of data collection were collected on teachers from Islamic school and conventional schools thorough interviewing three teacher at each school.

Before conducting an interview, the researchers requested the participants if they were willing to be involved in this study. Due to Corona virus disease (Covid-19) the researchers had to use two modes of interviewing of teachers. Four of the teachers were interviewed online by using WhatsApp recording, while the others had face to face interview. The interviews were recorded using the auto recording option offered on the Cube Call Recorder ACR application developed by Catalina Group on Android. The recorded interviews were saved and then transcribed verbatim using Microsoft World.

DATA ANALYSIS

In this study, several steps were taken by the researchers to analyze the data. The results of the interviews obtained were immediately transcribed into Microsoft Word 2010. Sale (2007) and proposed that the transcripts against the voice recording should be checked. This method of transcription continues until the authors are pleased with the transcription accuracy. All of informants used Bahasa Melayu to answer all the questions. So, the researchers need to translate it. The next steps were defined together with coding as a method of labeling, gathering and organizing the data and reporting pattern (themes). Finally, all the data collected from the instrument were analyzed in line with the objective of the study.

FINDING

TEACHER PERCEPTIONS

Based on the findings of this research, all informants from Islamic school almost giving the same answered regarding character meaning and their perspectives. Informants 1, 2 and 3 said that character is guidance for students and forming the student's betterment. These were their responses.

"Mmm…in my opinion character education is closer to the term akhlaq education, which means education that is in accordance with the akhlaq and good character building for students."(1/ IS 8) (IS: Indicated Islamic school)

"It's essential brother, because it shapes a child to be good or not, it is very important as it says in our Islamic religious teaching."(1/ IS 12)

"On my mind, character is a mental state existing in someone's inner which influences behaviour, mind-set, and his/her gestures in his/her daily life that has been already inherent in controlling him/her reflexively." (2/ IS 4)

"Akhlaq or character education is to sculpt the students becoming perfect men and Muslim who are aware of their God." (3/ IS 4)

"Hmm, I guess, aarh, it's something that must be instilled into and taught to the children since childhood, namely good things, in order for them not to get lost." (3/ IS 6)

In addition, from conventional school the informants giving a bit different when I hear their answers; Respondent (1), Character is something got from parent or educator, (2) character is something that can affect student's action from what he shows, and (3) character is something that parents must implement at home for every child, while character education is something that we can show or convey to our students through teaching and learning activities in the classroom. The following are teachers' responses from both schools;

"My name is xxx, I think character is education about, hmm…, character education was taught since childhood from parents or educator" (4/CS 2). (CS: Indicated conventional school)

"Character education is something crucial that may affect student's action from what he experiences either at home or schools." (5/CS 6)

"Aaa…, This is an important one among the other things, and it has to be taught starting from home, that at schools, college, etc., it is because if children go astray it is going to be worst." (5/CS 8)

"Aaa, I guess, character or akhlaq is something that needs to be instilled into students since early age at home. Meanwhile, this character development is thing that can be done through teaching and learning in the classroom either by using story telling or our own behaviour in front of the students. ''(6/CS 2)

"Take the advantageous stories, for example a recent trend on social media Ustaz Ebit Liew who makes charity for people regardless their group, race, and religion. Then, share the inspiration to the students because in the classroom, there are students with various ethnic and mostly they are non-Muslim, to me this is appropriate." (6/CS 6)
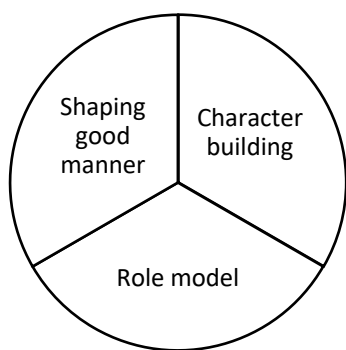

FIGURE 1. Character in Education

All the informants from Islamic school teachers mentioned many ways in developing students' character which each of them almost provided different ways. According to the respondent 1, teacher Islamic school, developing student's character can be done by praising the student when she wants to advise her student's. Informants 2 said that by instilling Islamic values the student will have a strong religion foundation in their daily life later. She also added when the student has a religious foundation it will make them be a good character and who has balancing in term of physical, spiritual, and emotional. Following by informants 3, by using Prophet's story as a role model, it will give better reaction to the student activities as she said. The following are their responses.

"Usually, I do it by giving a touch of affection to my students, then I whisper Bismillah and Shalawat to his ear. After that, I compliment him "you are looking good today, but it will look more handsome and neat if you tucked your shirt." (1/IS 14)

''What I do and instilling to students are moral and Islamic values every time they do something, in order to have a continuous effort to develop and produce human being who is physically, spiritually, and emotionally balanced, so the students become someone who are responsible, pious, skilled, and knowledgeable.'' (2/IS 6)

"So, I will ask him (student) to lend (something to his others) and at the same time I explain the importance of helping each other as we are ordered in Islam. That's all about my short experience." (2/IS 8)

"To me, as a teacher, using prophetic stories and exemplary deeds in teaching and learning will give good impact to every student. Then, implementing moral values in teaching and learning is the next step, so students know and understand the true Islamic values." (3/IS 8)

Interestingly, the informants from conventional school answered a bit different. Two of them said that developing student's character through a role-modelling for student, this means by showing a good action around the student and giving rewards. Other respondent said that developing students' character by motivating them and taking care for the students who have problems, or in other words being a problem solver for students any time. The followings are their responses.

"My strategy to develop student's character is showing good example to them as a teacher, admonishing them, and fairly complimenting them as well." (4/CS 6)

"Aaa…based on my teaching experience, if we want to teach morality to students, we—as a teacher, need to be the good role model for them." (5/CS 14)

"Hmm, as for instance, if there is one of my students is smoking, I should advise him to not smoke and at the same time I need to stop smoking. Nevertheless, if we advise the students to not do something, but we do it, it will be meaningless—even though we advise them hundred times, because the students know that we do it. That's all for more or less." (5/CS 16)

"What I do is getting aware of student's main problems and motivating students a lot, that's all." (5/CS 16)
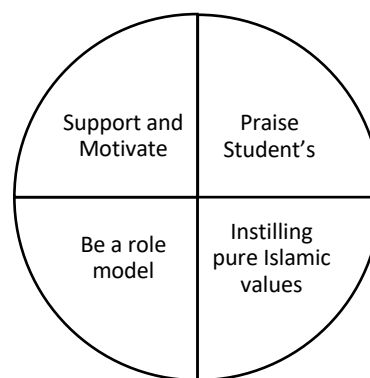

FIGURE 2. Student's Character Development

TEACHER CHALLENGES

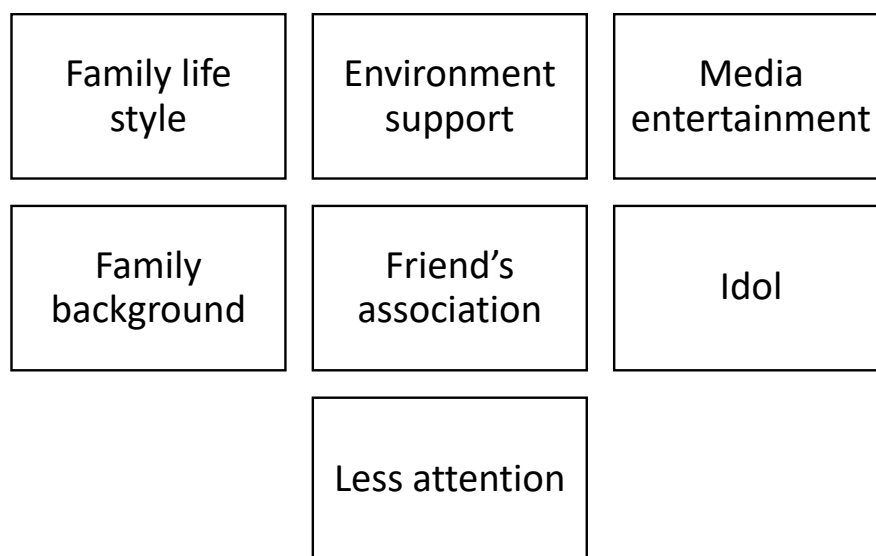| Family life style	Environment support	Media entertainment
Family background	Friend's association	Idol

	Less attention	

FIGURE 3. Influential Factor Affected Student's Character

Two of three informants from Islamic school mentioned that the main factor that affects student's character is family lifestyle, such as parents who live western lifestyle and do not show good deeds in front of their children. The other informants provided some reasons regarding to this question by saying that the main factor are social media and habituation. Besides that, environmental support where students can access internet anytime and anywhere, so they will follow what they see on the internet and downloaded what they want for example, TikTok Apps, and following western style, K-Pop etc. The followings are what the informants say.

"Mm, it has many factors, Brother, it may be their peers, or parent's western life-style, or because their parents are too busy working." (1/IS 20)

"The major factors are cultural norm manners around the students; take for example nowadays, students are more opened to internet or social media." (2/IS 10)

"That's it, that's it. My students are familiar with social media. So, they become more vulnerable to get influenced by what they see on social media and what is more worrying is if they are influenced by the foreign style from social media, for example K-Pop etc. Because of these factors students are more suspicious at their youth and they get more interested in entertainment and get easier to download thousands of apps like TikTok, etc." (2/IS 12)

"If parents do not teach good things at home, I will get it so hard to educate them at school." (3/IS 16)

In addition, respondent 1 from conventional school mentioned that the main factor which affects student's character is peer group and family background. The informants 2 and 3 mentioned that the influence comes from the student's idol. The students tend to follow what their idols do and their idol's actions as well. Also less attention because their parent always busy in working every day, so that most of student's depressed. There were their responses.

"Aaa…, it may be various leading factors, but, to me, the main factor is coming from peer association and family background." (4/CS 8)

"There are various leading factors, (such as) things they witness with their eyes, so that as the teacher we need to be careful of saying bad things, consequently the students will follow our words. If we do litter, they may litter too, if we say something bad in front of them, they may do it as well." (5/CS 18)

"According to my observation during this time, it comes from their peers and the lack of parents' supervising because some parents are busy, spending their morning-to-afternoon time working till they abandon their parenting responsibility. As a result, children get less attention from their parents. Mmm, this is the most challenging me, sometimes my student come to class in bad shape, so it makes what we deliver doesn't really reach them." (6/CS 10)

TEACHERS CHALLENGES

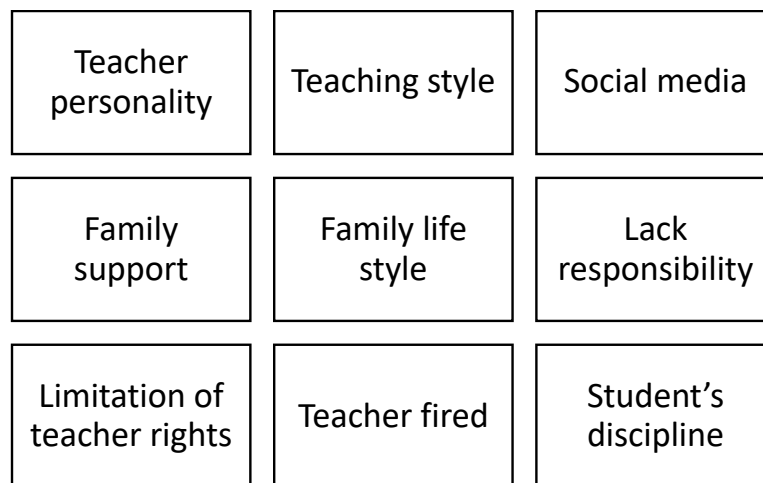| Teacher personality	Teaching style	Social media
Family support	Family life style	Lack responsibility
Limitation of teacher rights	Teacher fired	Student's discipline

FIGURE 4. Teachers Challenges

Informants from Islamic schools answered different challenges regarding their teaching experiences. According to the respondent 1 from Islamic school, the major challenges was teacher personality, she said that educating students' character we are as teacher must be perfect character early. Informants 2 mentioned that social media as main challenges today, the student's also follow everything in social media, so teacher must be professional in searching any alternative method teaching due to globalization era. This means teacher needs to update new teaching styles. Informants 3 mentioned that family background as the challenges because if the parent did not show good character around their children will affect their children behaviour. These were their responses.

"In my opinion, the most important challenges in developing students' character is, firstly, our role—as the teacher. It's because to educate others, we need to be a good being, in other words, if a teacher wants his students become a good person, the teacher himself needs to be a good person. The teacher has to have good character." (1/IS 22)

"Personally, the major challenge in my teaching experience, nowadays, is we cannot educate and guide the students using old ways like formal teaching methods due to time changes." (2/IS 14)

"To me, we may use recent strategy in which we can also use digital apps which is favourite of the students like TikTok and we modify the fun into a good Islamic milieu. For example, we can use TikTok apps to preach, religious songs to make students having spiritual entail. This will grab students' interests and follow our desired instruction." (2/IS 16)

"That may be included, hmm, the family background is very challenging, because if parents and relatives do not show good deeds in daily life, these will influence students and they will perform as what they witness." (3/IS 18)

"Ahh, that is a must, they are so lazy, do not listen to teachers, do something different, … that is too much for children today." (3/IS 20)

On the other hand, respondent 1 of teacher conventional school mentioned that parents leave all their responsibilities regarding children's character only to the teacher at school, parents cannot advise the students as teachers do in other school, because the student's will tell to their parents then their parents will complain the principle of the school, if the student failed in exam the teacher will be blamed, and probably the teacher will be dismissed from the school, also because of the student's disrespect behaviours. Interestingly, he also mentioned regarding his experience during teaching that he faced trouble about student's discipline because they consider themselves privileged so the teacher cannot give advice as well. In addition, the respondent 2 and 3 answered the questions regarding their experience that the students dislike the teacher, and they like to another teacher. Besides that, the students are busy with their gadget even in the classroom. Sometimes they use it especially for accessing Facebook, Instagram. These are their responses.

"The major challenge is if parents irresponsible for their children's character education and are despair and leave education merely to our role as the teacher." (4/CS 10)

"At such this conventional school, we—as the teachers cannot admonish the students like teachers at Malay school do, because the students will tell their parents and the parents will complain the school and say this teacher hits students. Consequently, the teacher will be advised by the board. Another worst thing is when a student fails in exam; the teacher will be questioned about the lesson on the exam questions. Therefore, the teacher will be blamed for such mistakes. (4/CS 12)

"Yes, that is correct. I have also my own experience at this school. There are two of my friends—they were teachers at this school, fired because of those matters. Even, sometimes when we admonish our students, parents will get angry at us while using harsh words in Chinese or other languages. (4/CS 14)

"There is not, indeed. But we get it so hard to admonish them just like we can do it to students at Malay school. This is just my own experience." (4/CS 16)

"About students' discipline, not all of them have it, but I think saying that conventional school students are more disciplined than any other school is not correct. I have teaching experience both in conventional and Malay school, to me, Malay school has more disciplined students. It is because students at conventional school assume that they have special privileges, so we cannot truly admonish them to much." (4/CS 18)

"Personally, if students do not like me, and they like the other teacher in anyway, we try our best so hard." (5/CS 20)

"This, we cannot say that it's okay, because there are sometimes students disturbing his friends, sleeping during lesson time, and many others." (5/CS 24)

"The real major challenge that is most prominent today is the changes of times. Students are always busy with the internet, game, facebook, instagram, even there had been my student getting caught saving porn clip. So, it's is so hard today to have students who have good character." (6/CS 14)

OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES

Teacher's patience and sincerity	Explore student's real life	Taking Counselling session

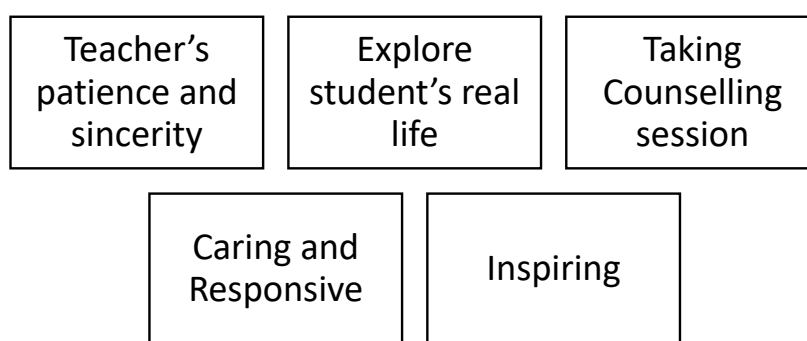| Caring and Responsive	Inspiring

FIGURE 5. Way Overcome Challenges

The informants from Islamic school stressed their strategies in developing students' character such as informants 1 and 2 said that teacher should be patience and sincere in teaching students with moral values because teachers are demanded to do *Da'wah* (Islamic preaching) in any situation as our prophet did. Other informant said that increasing theoretical knowledge by exploring of the student's real life is a must. The following are their responses.

"To me, a teacher primarily needs to have sincerity and patience, show good behaviours and high morality in his daily life, so students can observe and follow our ways of life as da'wah as our prophet demanded us namely preaching with good deeds. If people look at an individual reluctantly, then he will get easier to educate people with noble akhlaq. (1/IS 24)

"We need to have strong patience, always persuade students to show noble characters and we have to show our care to them, get close to them." (2/IS 18)

"As an educator, never give up training students with noble character as for religion and nation as our objective and enhance our knowledge to know students better and get closer to them." (2/IS 22)

In addition, the informants from conventional school give a bit different answer regarding their experiences. It also will take big difference if we compare to Islamic school teacher. Respondent 1 said that giving motivation by sending the student to teacher counselling or contacting their parent to explain the students' problem. Informants 2 and 3 said that discussing with the student as if you are their parent and giving inspiration until they are asking for your views, also motivated students with stories such as Robin Hood, Spiderman. These were their responses.

"My strategy to face this challenge depends on the students. Maybe, I can send the students to see counsellor teacher to dig either the problem is inside or outside the school, and I can also call his parents." (4/CS 20)

"To me, discuss with them as if we are their parents. Get to know what their problem, make them need our opinions, play with them in many things." (5/CS 26)

"Ahh..it could be possible, we may give them good stories that inspire them to do good things." (5/CS 28)

"Islamic values are not merely taken from prophetic stories, because majority students in the classroom possibly come from any other religion. So, we need to be professional to use stories which avoids inter-group conflict issues, for example, just take stories about doing good to parents, tolerance, respect each other, etc." (5/CS 30)

"For example, I give them motivational stories such as Robin Hood, Spiderman. If we use Islamic prophetic stories, we will be complained for being racist as the majority of students in this class come from non-Muslim families, so we must be smart in teaching." (6/CS 16)

EFFECTIVE METHODS USED BY TEACHERS IN DEVELOPING STUDENTS' CHARACTER
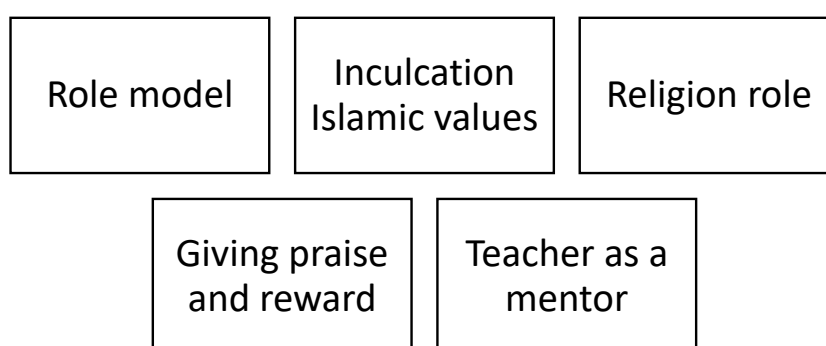

FIGURE 5. Effective Methods Used by Teachers in Developing Students' Character

Based on the answers from the respondent in Islamic school, respondent 1 answered that strategies to develop students' character can be done by asking them to follow what he have done and showing my true nature. The informants 2 and 3 said that instilling Islamic values and showing the role of Islamic religion holistically are their strategies. These are their responses.

"To me, I will suggest them to do what I've done. For example, I recite Quran every day before going to bed, after obligatory prayers although only one verse, and pray a lot every day. So, I can give them values in character education with truly good deeds that is more appreciated." (1/IS 30)

"This, we cannot explain about religion in a half way to them, so I think we have to instilling Islamic values deeply into their soul, so they become pious not only in the classroom but also outside the class." (2/IS 28)

"…by showing the role of religion as the foundation in building students' character because it can affect students' though and their behaviour as well." (3/IS 26)

"For example, teach them how to forgive and to pray before lesson starts." (3/IS 28)

Additionally, the informants from conventional school answer regarding their experiences by giving rewards in order to cultivate the students' moral values and be habit. Informants 2 and 3 said that becoming a mentor for the students such as teach the student from the real life, teach them how to thankfully, how to respect others, also friendly to the student and using formal communication as a strategy in developing their character. The followings are their responses.

"The method I use is giving compliment and rewards to students, it doesn't mean that students get addicted to rewards, but it can grow students' habit to have noble character." (4/CS 24)

"In my experience, we lead students to learn from daily life, like for example learn how to dress neatly, to say thank to whom helping him, we teach them how to do teamwork in group of people in order to lower their ego." (5/CS 38)

"This method, I frequently assume that the students are my friends so I communicate with them in their style, but still stick to the ethics as teacher-students relationship which has certain limitation. At the same time, I can control them and make correction to their character." (6/CS 20)

SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING CHARACTER
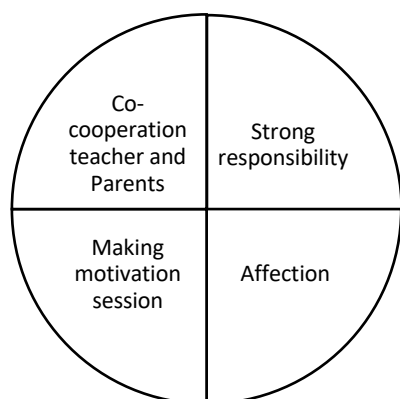DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

FIGURE 6. Suggestions for Overcoming Character
Development Challenges

Based on the answers from the informants from Islamic school teacher, respondent 1 said that strong responsibility should be taught to the students because if the students have that, it will be easier to teach them. By taking care and motivating the students, the informants two and three said that we should follow what the student's interests and motivate them any time due to the globalization era. The responses are as follow.

"Today, we need to teach students in better way, especially teaching honest and trustworthy, because if they are honest, we will get easier to educate them later on." (1/IS 26)

"Aa, akhlaq can be translated into deeds in real life. For example, to identify that someone is good or bad, we may look at his obligatory prayer routine, if it is good, in sha Allah, he is a good person, if he helps the poor a lot he is possibly merciful. So, this should be practiced by the teachers, and it needs exercise so it will get easier to be followed by the students, not only talking based on rhetoric." (1//IS 28)

"As a guardian, we need to guide them, follow what their favourites, as if we are their parents. So, we treat them as our own children, don't assume them as others." (2/IS 22)

"To me, hold a motivational session for students especially for those having troubles. As an educator, it is necessary to continuously teach and learn for developing self-character and the students can grow together with recent technology. That's all, I think." (3/IS 24)

In other words, the informants from conventional school raised their answers according to the question. Informants 1 and 2 said that by advising every student to have a logbook diary as well as cooperate with student parents as solution today. Cooperating with foreigners is also very important due to the new era as the students can access anything on their phone anytime so that teacher and parent must be cooperative to keep on the student activities either in school or at home. The complete responses are as follow.

"My suggestion is, in this modern era, we can easily get connected each other, and it can be said that all students have their own phone. But I suggest every student to have log book, diary, for teacher to note about ethic problems at school, subjects and assignments and it should be signed by parents." (4/CS 22)

"Aa, a…the solution is, in my opinion, in today era there should be collaboration between parents and teachers, teachers and community, and the society." (5/CS 32)

"Hmm...for example at cybercafé, the places where students hang out, regarding this, it should have collaboration to sweep away the students, then parents also need to take care of their children, and don't just send them to school as if it is day-care centre." (5/CS 34)

"So, parents and teacher must ensure what children access on their phone, try to check it. Don't tell that they are negligent, it's dangerous." (5/CS 36)

"Mmm… in my opinion this is simple, try to stand on their feet and feel what they are facing today, we must understand how to deal with them." (6/CS 18)

The thematic analysis both schoolteachers above has revealed their opinions that character is something crucial that can be affected student's action from what he shows either at home and schools'. (1) Both teachers from Islamic and conventional school were almost same opinions about character meaning. They assumed the strategies to improve their students' character by instilling pure Islamic values, giving praise to the students, be a role model and supporting or motivated. So, the researchers did not find any critical differences or critical issues either in Islamic teacher and conventional schools about their views and ways in build and developing student's characters.

(2) They have also mentioned some challenges in developing student's characters. The only differences challenges both Islamic and conventional teachers' schools were concerned the ''limitation of the teacher right'' the others challenges and main factors that affected student's characters such as peer pressure, family background, lack responsibility, teaching style, social media, student's discipline were almost there either in Islamic and conventional schools.

(3) Finally, both teacher Islamic and conventional schools faced various challenges. To overcome

these challenges both teacher schools mentioned that teacher should be patience and sincerity in their teaching activities as well as exploring the student's real life, taking counselling session, caring and responsive. Overall, both schoolteachers also pointed that make cooperate between teacher and parents is an important parts to improving students' characters.

DISCUSSION

TEACHER'S PERCEPTION IN DEVELOPING STUDENTS' CHARACTER

From the analysis and findings mentioned the researchers found that all informants from Islamic and conventional teachers have given the same opinions regarding character meaning on their views. The informant defined that Character education is something crucial that can be affected student's action from what he shows either at home and schools'' (5/CS 6) and character is a mental condition of an individual that influences his way of thinking, attitude, and daily behaviour, which have been infused and lead him to perform the behaviour spontaneously (2/IS 4). Their views are appropriated according to Stone and Ann (1997, p.22) children learn the repertoire of moral behaviour with repetition and finally become habits and this helps them in formulating the good character.

In fact, there are some teacher strategies to developing moral values in their teaching and learning activities as researcherss found in chapter four from the participant responses. It's undeniable that how the teacher develops students' character is by instilling Islamic values, be a role model, prophet stories as a role model, supporting and motivating the student. Cubuku (2012) as cited in Zurqoni et al. (2018), Character building is an effort to help the students to develop the physical aspects so that he able to relate and work with all stakeholders in mutually agreeable conditions. However, the improving character building for every student is running overtime because of character or moral growth and evolves with the development of student's good behaviors and habituation continuously. This means what we do and what we say every day, how we behave in their dealing with others will eventually grow into the character and can be applied permanently. (Djailani 2013).

From the data above the researchers received that both teachers in an Islamic and conventional school tend to be role models as their effort in developing characters. They assumed with a role model the students will follow and do what they have seen even practice in their activities either in school or outsider. It's also known that students spend most of their day or time in school, and it cannot be denied that their teachers are responsible for character values in their students and forming a good personality. Furthermore, despite of being responsible for nurturing morals and forming a good personality, students will make their teachers as their role models in school. And in other words, what has been done by the teachers will be followed by the students since they put teachers as their role model.

Regarding the question "How do you develop student's character in education?" all participants in both schools argued that praise Student's, instilling pure Islamic values, Prophet's story as a role model, be a role model and support, and motivate as their way in developing students' characters. Hence, the researchers did not found any differences challenges or critical issues either in Islamic teacher and conventional schools about their views and ways in build and developing student's characters.

CHALLENGES FACED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDENT'S CHARACTER

1. Islamic Teacher Challenges

There are several challenges while teaching and building character among the students including family lifestyle, environment support, and lack of religious knowledge. Family lifestyle becomes a big impact on student character due to the students are going back home, and the same role is taken over by the parents of the students as well as the other family members. Despite how hard-working a teacher inculcates moral character among the students while at school, it will not be successful without any support from their families, especially from their parents. It is because at home their parents will be the ones who monitor their children, and if the parent's practicing activities as western style, it will be affecting the children's physical activities whole, as a result it gives a big difficulty for teachers in guidance them. It also supported by the Islamic teacher participant in their statement. '' There are many factors that affect student's character including family follows western style (1/IS 20). It cannot be denied that parents are a reflection of their children and parents are plays a big role at home. When the parents of a student have high western style the children might have the same value as well.

In fact, environmental support also becomes the main factor for every student's character today. Azizi et al. as cited in Abd Rahman (2013) said that environment support was the main factor in changed student's actions, it happened because the result of the student's interaction with socialize. I also have done analysis in chapter four regarding environment support as whole participant responses, so that, it's also a really important matter because more of student's action comes from the environment. However, I think there is the responsibility that what was been taught or applied in school will be useless if the environment does not support what has been taught or applied in school.

Moreover, social media also impacting student's life negatively, the student tend to follow anything on internet, they can access and search anything they need and anywhere they are. It's more horrible today as support by the participant ''my students are familiar with social media. So, they become more vulnerable to get influenced by what they see on social media and what is more worrying is if they are influenced by the foreign style from social media, for example K-Pop etc. Because of these factors students are more suspicious at their youth and they get more interested in entertainment and get easier to download thousands of apps like TikTok, etc." (2/IS 12).

In addition, after I analysed the participants responses, the researchers received the major challenges that have been facing by the teacher in Islamic school is that family lifestyle, environments support, social media, and family background. Then, regarding the question '' what are the major challenges in developing student's character during your teaching experience?'' the researchers discovered that the participants responses more quite familiar with the idea; family background and social media as the major challenges today.

2.   Conventional Teacher Challenges

There are several challenges faced by these teachers when it comes to developing and shaping student's characters. The significance factors of influence student's characters based on finding from conventional school teachers were; friend's association, student's idol, and less attention. Amongst them the most significant factor influencing student's character was peer pressure, because the student will follow-up what he/she shows from their friend's action. According to Ahmad Ali Karim (2019) stated, in shaping the personalities of children and adolescents, emotional and spiritual development is influenced by the environment, particularly the people who are close to it, such as friends. This is because the ideals and culture of life around them, whether good grades or poor, seem to quickly impact adolescents. This pattern will also lead to behavioural issues among the teens involved, which will impact their other peers in the future as well.

However, the main challenges in developing student's character based on the findings from the conventional teachers were; lack responsibility, limitation teacher's right, and student's discipline. Although all participants stated regarding in their experience, but there are some interesting that the researchers found during the interview session. The difference challenges faced among the teacher on conventional and Islamic schools are included, teacher's right and student's disciplines. For example, the teacher cannot do as such this conventional school, it's also supported by the participant as stated, "we—as the teachers cannot admonish the students like teachers at Malay school do, because the students will tell their parents and the parents will complain the school and say this teacher hits students. Consequently, the teacher will be advised by the board. Another worst thing is when a student fails in exam; the teacher will be questioned about the lesson on the exam questions. Therefore, the teacher will be blamed for such mistakes. (4/CS 12). The limitation teachers right become as major challenges among teacher at this school, the teachers would feel threatened, for fear of losing their jobs later if the students who are supposed to be reprimanded. Another difference also the student's discipline, the students are always using harsh words in Chinese or other languages when the teacher admonish the students, and the students not studying seriously, disrespect of the teachers.

In fact, either teacher Islamic or conventional schools almost equally state the significant factors, and the major challenge such as family lifestyle, family background, peer pressure, social media and lack responsibility. Hence, after the research analyse, the researchers concluded that the differences challenges between teacher Islamic and conventional schools is that only the limitation of the teacher's right and student's discipline actions.

WAY TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES

The teacher strategies to confront the challenges are in many ways. For example, teachers need to have strong sincerity and patience in order to ensure that every student can be taught morals education. Besides the sincerity and patience, the teacher also might be caring, responsive, taking counselling, and inspiring them. In addition, the effective method in teach and educating student's characters as mentioned of both participants are a role model, inculcation Islamic values, and giving praise and rewards. While solution according to their responses were should teacher has strong responsibilities, making motivation session, and do co-cooperate teacher and parents.

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers made some recommendations. Facilitating material that may aid teachers' teaching styles in developing students' character. Aside from that, the school principal or authority should fully support the teacher's efforts to improve the character of students. Furthermore, as a result of today's new era, there is a growing awareness among Islamic school teachers and the conventional about the teaching style. The researchers hope that future research will use university level to examine how lectures at Islamic and conventional universities shape students' personalities.

Moreover, this study is done during the Covid-19 pandemic, and it is difficult for researcher to have face to face interviews since the movement during this pandemic is limited, so the researcher only can interview two of six participants by face to face and other is done using WhatsApp recording application. It cannot be denied that when online applications are used as a medium to interview participants, of course there are some difficulties that occur and sometimes the data gained is unsatisfactory. The researcher hope that future researchers will use face to face interviews to get satisfactory answers.

CONCLUSION

This research has given insight about the difference challenges faced by the teachers of both schools. Ideally, the main point of this research reveals the important findings that:

Firstly, the meaning of characters is referring to a condition of internal process of an individual that influence the way of thinking, feeling, and behaviour, whereas most of informants assume that characters is a mental state existing in someone's inner which influences behaviour, mind-set, and his/her gestures in his/her daily life that has been already inherent in controlling him/her reflexively. The informants believe that character ''*akhlaq*'' is something crucial that may affect students' action from what he/she experiences either at home or schools.

Secondly, the internal factors that influenced students' character either in Islamic and conventional schools are closed into three factors: family background, peer pressure, and media entertainment. And the main challenges in developing student's character more closed into some main points which are: teacher's personality, teaching style, family support, and social media. Except one point almost different challenges among the teacher Islamic and conventional schools is that limitation of the teacher right which on Islamic teacher are not occur.

Thirdly, the teacher strategies to confront the challenges is with be a role model, this the overall responses that participants given. To specify the teacher strategies of both schools are ''Islamic teacher'' as a role model, caring and responsive, inculcation Islamic values, and be patient and sincerity. And ''conventional teacher'' teacher as a mentor, taking counselling session, do co-cooperate teacher and parents, and giving reward and praise.

Finally, even though teacher as role model and have big responsibility to inculcate moral values as well as to build student's characters in the schools and to support that parent have to make sure the application it at home. It's not an easy task, it is needing a collaborative effort which has to be done by the teacher, parents, peer pressure, surrounding communities, and schools' principle. To overcome these all, teachers must be smart and creative in applying any method to educate or applying moral values and characters in each of their students and the most crucial thing is to do co-cooperate among teachers and parents.

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