

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION, KNOWLEDGE AND MORALITY DEVELOPMENT IN ADOLESCENCES

Dr. Shadiya Mohamed S. Baqutayan

UTM Perdana School of STI Policy
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM)
Malaysia

E-mail: shadiya@ic.utm.my

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses about ways to develop the moral of our adolescences. The purpose of this study is twofold: to understand the moral behavior of adolescences nowadays, and to discover its relation to religion and knowledge. Simple Random Sampling assigned to 120 students of different international schools. The findings of this study indicate that there are significant mean differences between students of different schools. Eventually, the students who practices religion activities have good moral than those who did not. However, knowledge plays an important role in moderating the behavior of the adolescences and improving the morality of students. Hence, it is highly advisable to introduce the most excellent behavior and best morality that required by our religion, and to explain the importance of worshipping and knowledge in managing the behavior of adolescences.

INTRODUCTION

Let start this paper with one important question as: “can we raise moral children without religion and knowledge?” It is big challenges to answer this question, this important question needs lot of studies and research. As a researcher, without prove and studies it will be very difficult for me to answer this question. Going deeply in to this topic, look into our children’s problems nowadays, their problems is more related to moral and behavioral development. They are smoking in public, misbehaving in class, cheating in exam, pulling each others and so on. All these are common, but why it is happening, how to stop these entire immoral acts. Morality is a code of conduct put forward by any actual group, including a society. From a viewpoint of morality, mankind is in the deepest hole conceivable. Western society, which used to regard a number of social acts as immoral, now considers them as acceptable. Unfortunately, this change in the definition of morality has infiltrated the Muslim society as well. A key ingredient to stop the potential moral decay of Muslims is to first secure, practice, and disseminate the knowledge of Islam, and then transform this knowledge into academic education in permissible disciplines. Knowledge safeguards man from immoral and evil acts, and leads him to beneficially contribute to the society.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Moral education is becoming an increasingly popular topic in the fields of psychology and education. Media reports of increased violent adolescent crime, teen pregnancy, and suicide have caused many to declare a moral crisis in different nation. While not all of these social concerns are moral in nature, and most have complex origins, there is a growing trend towards linking the solutions to these and related social problems to the teaching of moral and social values in schools. Hence, morality is the biggest problem facing people who are not on the right path in their lives; they lack proper habits and attitudes. It is therefore a serious responsibility to lead people to the truth and the best morality and behavior. The big question that needs to be answered by researcher is what people can do to improve the coming generations’ morality and how to make them practice the excellent behavior in Islam.

Moral should be developed at early stage of life, so once the child reaches the adolescence age, he/she should be ready to practice the moral that he/she learned at young age. No doubt that, the period of adolescence is very important to the development of an individual. Any laxity on the part of the parents in assisting and guiding the adolescents may result in academic backwardness and development of unwholesome behaviors, the foundation of what a person becomes in the society is laid in the home and school at the early stage of life. Parents and teachers therefore have important roles to play in seeing to it that the youths acquire the appropriate social, psychological, moral and academic development. Look into the adolescences now days; their behavior is influenced by many factors that include their parents and other close relatives, teachers, peers at school, community and the media. Lack of discipline and civilized behavior at school and home is a major problem in some societies.

Muslim adolescences, although distinct in their value system, still are exposed to and affected by what they see and learn. In Islamic teachings, great emphasis has been placed on moral conduct and behavior. It is great to know the understanding, wisdom, certainty, intelligence, generosity, modesty, mildness, compassion, patience, zeal, patriotism, loyalty, trust, bravery, majesty, eloquence, courage, beauty, fear of Allah, chastity, kindness, pity, and shame of our prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم). All these good conduct comes from his knowledge, religiosity, and culture.

Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), has said, "I have been sent to perfect your conduct" (Bukhari and Muslim). "A fathers' teaching his child good manners is better than giving a bushel of grain (in charity)" (Bukhari). It is very important to teach our children about the behavior, attitude, manner and morality of our prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Sure as being Muslim scholar, the answer is yeas, because Allah (S.W.T) mentioned in the holy *Qur'an*: *sūrah Al-'Aḥzāb* 21

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ
الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾

In the messenger of Allah you have a fine example for he who hopes for Allah and the last day and remembers Allah abundantly.

So why parent do not focus on those great manners, is it difficult to practice? Is it not useful? Is hard for parents to guide their children and educate them to the good morality? As a result, what parents should do to make their children learn and practice good moral?

THEORETICAL MODEL

The purpose of this study is to investigate ways to develop moral of adolescence. Two important issues lead to morality development of Muslim adolescence, these are religion and knowledge. Based on what Allah (S.W.T.) says in the holy *Qur'an*: *sūrah Al-Qalam* (1-4).

ن وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ (١) مَا أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ بِمَجْنُونٍ (٢) وَإِنَّ لَكَ لَأَجْرًا غَيْرَ مَمْنُونٍ (٣) وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ (٤)

Nun. By the Pen and the (Record) which (men) write, you (O Muhammad) are not, by the Grace of your Lord, a madman. And verily, for you (O Muhammad) will be an endless reward. And verily, you (O Muhammad) are on an exalted standard of character.

The above verse focuses on the important of knowledge and religion in shaping the behavior of our prophet Mohamed (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Islam concern about the important of knowledge and it's not only the holy *Qur'an*, which is concerned about knowledge and education but also the traditions of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). We find many *āadāth*s, which ask Muslims to seek knowledge and demonstrate the importance of education. The prophet said in a *āadāth* that has been narrated by Anas bin Mālik (R):

Search for knowledge is compulsory upon every Muslim male and female. (Ibn Majah).

Since there is strong beliefs that knowledge leads to good morality, our prophet encourages Muslim to seek the true knowledge. Moreover, seeking the true knowledge is better than worship, because with knowledge people can learn about their religious obligations and duties. Therefore, our Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

To the devil, a learned theologian is stronger than thousand pious worshippers. (Ibn Majah)

RESEARCH DESIGN

This inquiry examines the existing relationship between religion, knowledge, and morality development among adolescence. It expresses in descriptive and quantitative terms the degree of relationships between dependent and independent variables, as well as their magnitude.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Hypothesis

H1: Morality development is highly correlated with religion and knowledge.

H2: There is a statistically significant mean difference between male and female students' religion, knowledge, and moral development.

H3: There is a statistically significant mean difference between students of different schools in their religion, knowledge, and moral development.

Population

The research population includes all adolescences studying in Malaysian Schools. However, the International Schools adolescences are deemed most appropriate sample.

Sample

The sample of 120 male and female adolescences was randomly selected from three different international schools (International Islamic School, Adni Islamic School, and Al-Noor International School). With the help of the principles, every sample in the population had an equal and independent chance of being selected.

Instruments

The questionnaire used in this study is from Ummatic Personality Inventory developed by (Nooraini Othman, 2008) was used to test the adolescents’ moral development. The scale consists of 69 items that deal with religion, knowledge, and manner, and only thirty-five 35 items were used for the purpose of this study.

Procedures

All the 120 adolescences were requested to complete the research questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to the students in classes, after obtaining the approval from the lecturers of the selected classes. The teachers personally requested from them to complete the questionnaire containing the above measures. They were given detailed instructions about how to fill in the questionnaire and were assured of complete anonymity of their individual responses. They were given about 20-25 minutes to complete the questionnaires.

Statistical Analyses

The data were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The researchers employed compare means statistic as well as multiple regression analysis to find out the correlations between the study variables and its effect on adolescences moral development.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The prime focus of this part is to examine the hypothesis mentioned above; firstly, I tried to find out the relationship between moral development, religion and knowledge by using multiple regression analysis. Morality is the dependent variable and the other two religions and knowledge are independent variables. The result can tell us how much of the variance in dependent variable can be explained by independent variables.

At this point, let us see the correlations between these three variables as provided in the following table:

Correlations				
		moral	religion	knowledge
Pearson Correlation	moral	1.000	.555	.208
	religion	.555	1.000	.460
	knowledge	.208	.460	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	moral	.	.000	.011
	religion	.000	.	.000
	knowledge	.011	.000	.
N	moral	120	120	120
	religion	120	120	120
	knowledge	120	120	120

The above shows that the dependent variable (morality development) is highly correlated with religion (.555), and less correlated with knowledge (.208). However, there is a correlation between each of independent variables, but the correlation is not too high. Evaluating each of the independent variables, we are interested in using the beta values in the Coefficients table as follow:

Coefficients ^a														
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF	
		1	(Constant)	27.923			4.194		6.657	.000	19.616	36.230		
	religion	.533	.079	.582	6.738	.000	.377	.690	.555	.529	.517	.788	1.269	
	knowledge	-.058	.083	-.060	-6.694	.489	-.222	.107	.208	-.064	-.053	.788	1.269	

The above showed that religion carry largest beta valve (.582) than knowledge. This means that religion variable makes the strongest unique contribution to the explanation of morality variable. However, the beta value for knowledge is only (-.060), this indicating that knowledge made less of a contribution. For each of the above variables, look into the value in the column that marked Sig. this tells whether this variable is making statistically significant unique contribution to the equation or not. According to Pallant J. (2007), if the Sig. value in a coefficient test is less than 0.5, the variable is making a significant unique contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable. If greater than .05, we can conclude that the variable is not making a significant unique contribution to the prediction of dependent variable. In this study, religion made a unique, and statistically significant, contribution to moral development than knowledge dose.

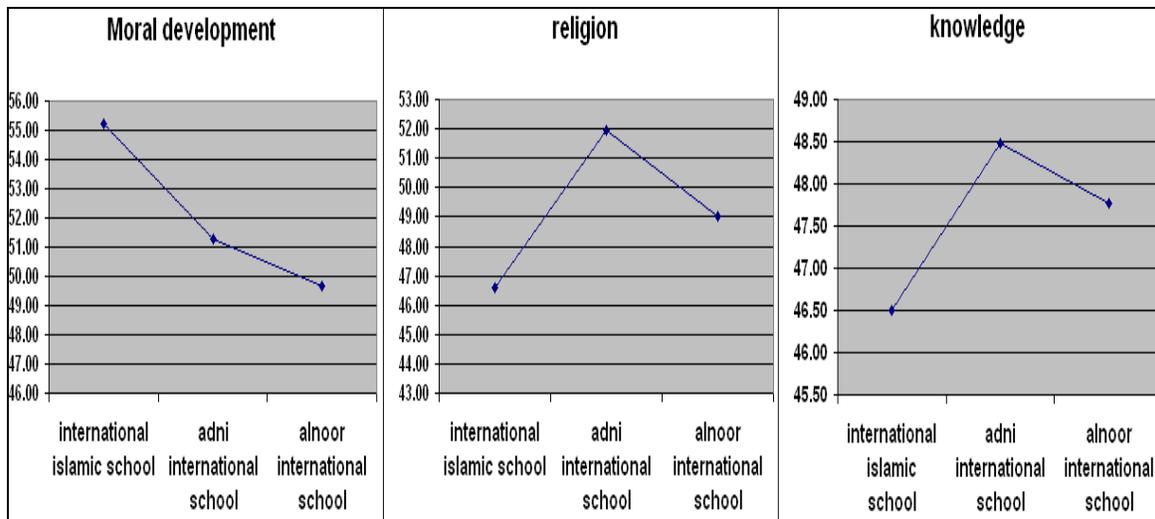
Testing the second hypothesis, an independent-samples t-test is used to compare the mean score, on some continuous variable, for two different groups of subjects (male and female).

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
moral	Equal variances assumed	5.703	.019	.523	118	.602	.903	1.725	-2.513	4.319
	Equal variances not assumed			.547	117.381	.586	.903	1.651	-2.367	4.173
religion	Equal variances assumed	16.425	.000	-.610	118	.543	-1.149	1.883	-4.877	2.580
	Equal variances not assumed			-.671	109.700	.504	-1.149	1.712	-4.541	2.244
knowledge	Equal variances assumed	2.653	.106	-.347	118	.730	-.623	1.797	-4.181	2.936
	Equal variances not assumed			-.373	116.153	.710	-.623	1.669	-3.929	2.683

Looking into the above result of Levene’s test for equality of variances, the Sig. value for knowledge is larger than 0.5, whereas, the Sig. value for moral development and religion is less than .05. This indicated that the variance for male and female are not same in moral and religion, but they are same variance in knowledge.

Testing the significant differences between male and female in the three mentioned variables, we have to look into Sig. (2-tailed). As shown above, two values are given, one for equal variance, the other for unequal variance.

Based on Leven’s test result, the Sig. (2-tailed) for morality, religion and knowledge are (.586, .504, and .730 respectively). These results are above .05, so it is indicating that there are no significant mean differences between male and female in the study variables.



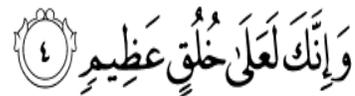
Testing the third hypothesis, one-way ANOVA is used to compare the total mean score, on some continuous variable, for three different schools in Malaysia (International Islamic School, Adni Islamic School, and Al-Noor International School).

Based on the above graph, total mean score were compared. And, the result indicated that the international Islamic school carries the largest mean score in the moral development (55.21). However, Adni Islamic School carries the highest mean score in religion and knowledge (51.95, 48.49 respectively). This result illustrate that the school has no relation with individual perception of the study variables.

DISCUSSION

Based on the above finding, religion is very important, it has a great effect on our children moral development, without religion our children morality will not be good as what we are looking for. We need great morality, we need adolescences that can carry the word of Islam, and we need an Ummah whom we can depend on them to be the vicegerent of Allah on this world. Parents need to fulfill these understanding, they need to care about their children's religion as they care about their food and drinks. They need to make the five pillars of Islam not only as habit, but also as inner and outer actions of their children. Islam is the religion that heavily focuses on character building and doesn't grant the place in paradise by merely admitting into Islam. In fact, it teaches that sins can be washed not just by accepting commands of Allah but by physically doing these commands in Actions, and that bad deed can be washed away by doing good deeds. The people who acts on Allah's commands and perform good deed invariably attain good character. There is strong relationship between religion and good character. A person cannot attain full or perfect faith without attaining good character. In fact, a person with bad character is likely to find a place in hell than in paradise.

Religion is not focusing only on prayer and fasting, it includes moral behavior that person address in their life. Allah (s.w.t) said to our prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) in the *Qur'an: sūrah Al-Qalam* 4.



And verily, you [O Muhammad] are on an exalted [standard of] character.

This character of prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) comes from his keen to Islamic religion and practicing to the holy Quran. Similarly, Ibn Omar related that he heard the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) saying: “A Muslim who worships in moderation reaches by means of his good manners and noble nature the rank of a person who fasts and recites the holy Quran in the night prayers.” [Imam Ahmed]

Furthermore, Islam concerns about the importance of knowledge in building an excellent moral and manner. We should keep in our mind that knowledge is another important factor that leads to good moral. It is not less important than religion. Both are very important, and Allah (S.W.T) concerns about both. Morality and good conduct are not possible without knowledge. The contents, sources and conditions of knowledge must, therefore, understand.

Which kind of knowledge is required in Islam? Is it the religious science or the worldly knowledge? The answer to this question is that Islam requires all types of knowledge as long as they do not contradict the principles of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. As long as they transform human beings from being illiterate to literate and as long as it is useful for them. It has been narrated that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) did not only teach his companions about their religion, but also taught them all aspects of life, e.g. social, economic, military, and political. But the degree of obligation to acquire these sciences is different according to their importance in the progression and development of people and their societies. Therefore, the Muslim scholars have classified sciences into different sub-divisions. Al-Ghazālā, for example, classified knowledge into different parts according to their importance and their types. Whatever the division of knowledge, it is useful here to note that knowledge is very important and is obligatory on all Muslims. Any knowledge, which is beneficial and does not contradict the basic Islamic principles, is required by Islam and Muslims are entitled to get it. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

The word of wisdom is an astrayed animal of wise man, so wherever he finds it, he is entitled to get it. (Fazlul Karim).

Knowledge is aimed at the physical, mental and moral preparation of the child so that he/she can become a good individual to the society.

Douglas and Shaikh (2004) reported that through ethical and moral teaching, an educated person would act in a socially responsible manner, acquire the social graces of civilized life, and would partake of and contribute to the sum of skill and knowledge according to their time. Therefore, parent need to educate their children at young age. If he/she is educated to become accustomed to what is good, he/she surly will follow truth even when they grown up and then will acquire the happiness of both worlds (now and hereafter).

CONCLUSION

The results of this study confirm that religion and knowledge are very important in our life; both can not be separated from our moral development. Good conducts comes from our religion and knowledge. Based on the results of this study, researcher is strongly recommending from parents, teachers and every individual to be responsible and always keep eyes on children and adolescents morality. They must encourage them perform their religious activities and give serious actions to any misbehaving and bad conduct. Based on what Allah (SWT) says the *Qur'ān: sūrah 'Āli 'Imrān* 104.

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ
الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

And there should be a group amongst you who invite towards good, order for acknowledged virtues, forbid from sin and these it is that are the successful ones.

They also need to concentrate on their education, school environment, performance in and outside the school, as well as their friends. Lastly parents need to link between religion, knowledge and moral development.

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