The Concept of Teachers' Personality in Shaping Students' Characters

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Abstract: The personality of teachers is very essential in developing students' characters. However, the concept of teachers' personality is a subjective concept. This study aims to recommend the concept of teachers' personality in nurturing student characters through a literature review analysis. This study indicates that there are six key elements in the teachers' personality; they are application of affection values, role model of noble akhlak, mastery of knowledge, self-motivation, leadership skills and sincerity. Each element has its own roles in ensuring that teachers are able to improve the students' personality. The effects of high personality can also give students a deep understanding of what is being taught and it can attract students and teachers to interact easily with each other.
Keywords: Teachers; Personality; Affection; Akhlak; Mastery of knowledge; Self-motivation; Leadership skills; Sincerity.

1. Introduction

Personality deficiency is a major issue in producing caliber students. Malaysian Ministry of Education disclosed that about 402 primary and secondary schools in Malaysia are under observation due to students disciplinary problems. In addition, according to the Deputy Minister of Education II, Datuk Chomg Sin Woon, 111,895 students involved in disciplinary problems at schools in 2006 (Shakil Hameed, 2017). Among the most frequent disciplinary issues in schools are truancy, coming late to school, improper hair grooming, smoking, extortion, drug addiction, ecstasy pills and other serious social issues (HanXiao@Indah, 2011; Yatim, 2016). Hassan *et al.* (2016) argued that social issues especially bullying are in contradiction to the norms of society which include the good manners, courtesy and respectful practices.

Furthermore, family institutions have a significant impact to the social problem among children. HanXiao@Indah (2011) and Ali (2007), argued that parents are always busy with their work, therefore they neglect their responsibility and affection for their children. Besides that, children are also not given adequate religious knowledge that causes them to be easily influenced by their environment (Abd Halim and Ismail, 2015; Tunggak *et al.*, 2015). Children may wrongly choose friends who are often involved in unethical social activities and thus it will influence them to do the same as their friends. Meanwhile, at the school level, the practice of disciplinary teachers who use harsh punishment to students is less effective as it will lead students to rebel. There are also teachers who do not care about the well-being of troubled students, so they feel neglected (Asalal *et al.*, 2013).

To address this problem, Abdullah *et al.* (2014) encourage the application of high *akhlak* (moral) to the students. In order to nurture students' *akhlak*, one of the methods considered is the application of *akhlak* at the school level through teachers. Mohd Noor *et al.* (2016) suggests that teachers, especially Islamic Education Teachers, should play a vital role in bringing changes and filling the soul of children through Teaching and Learning (T&L), giving advice and being a model for them. To be a model to students, teachers need to have a high personality and noble *akhlak* in order to address the students disciplinary problems effectively (Ghani *et al.*, 2017; Lubis *et al.*, 2017). The noble *akhlak* shown to the students should be exemplary and practiced in everyday life (Azizan *et al.*, 2015; Mohamed and Jasmi, 2016; Tunggak *et al.*, 2015). Mohd Shafie *et al.* (2011) stressed that *akhlak* education can nurture good and perfect *akhlak* and keep students away from the vile desire.

Nonetheless, the concept of ideal teachers' personality is still debatable by many scholars in the effort to produce quality generation. Thus, this study aims to recommend the concept of teachers' personality in forming the character of students. This study applies a literature review analysis and developing concepts that consistent with the Islamic views towards the personality of teachers.

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## 2. Education Goals towards Good Character Formation

Teachers are the implementers of educational goals and educators of the children of the nation. They need to be equipped with Teaching Aids Materials (TAM) which are consistent with the development of technology and multimedia (Jasmi and Nawawi, 2012; Lubis *et al.*, 2017). Abdullah and Jasmi (2016) indicates that the teachers' source of knowledge during the use of TAM is courses, the internet and books. Attending courses can improve skills such as teamwork. While, browsing the internet in getting references can equip teachers with the latest information. Furthermore, book resources help them in mastering problem solving and communication skills (Abdullah and Jasmi, 2016). The choice of the appropriate TAM methods requires careful planning to identify the right teaching method for the topic of lessons (Ilias *et al.*, 2016; Johari *et al.*, 2016; Ku Mohd Saad and Abdul Hamid, 2016; Mohd Noor *et al.*, 2014). Deeper understanding in the use of TAM should be emphasized during teacher training so that the their teaching is in line with current needs (Ilias *et al.*, 2013). Effective teaching methods can attract the students to concentrate on their studies and may prevent them from engaging in immoral activities.

Ku Mohd Saad and Abdul Hamid (2016) summarize the method of education practiced by *Ibn Abbas* which are the listening method, viewing method, writing and reading method, demonstration method, meeting teacher method, story-telling method, *tawadhuk* method, discussion method, prayer method, accompanying teacher method and advice method. All of these methods are used to provide the best educational experiences to students. Additionally, the quality of the teachers themselves is required in the process of molding students' characters (Tamuri *et al.*, 2012).

3. Teachers' Personality Elements

Teachers' personality is one of the characteristics of achieving excellence among teachers (Mohd Noor *et al.*, 2013). In other words, teachers themselves need to have a high personality first before attempting to develop students' personality (Tamuri *et al.*, 2012). Taat and Abdullah (2014) have a view that teachers especially Islamic Religious Teachers need to provide guidance or advice to the students and build their characters. The personality of teachers plays a role in influencing the students character development (Göncz, 2017). Other than forming students' personality, the teachers' personality can also impact the performance of schools (Burns and Machin, 2013), effectiveness of Teaching and Learning activities (Klassen and Tze, 2014), creativity of students (Lee and Kemple, 2014) and motivation (Klassen and Tze, 2014). Based on the previous studies, we discover that six main elements of teachers' personality are the application of affection values, the role model of noble *akhlak*, the mastery of knowledge, the self-motivation, leadership and sincerity as shown in Figure 1.

Figure-1. Teachers' personality elements
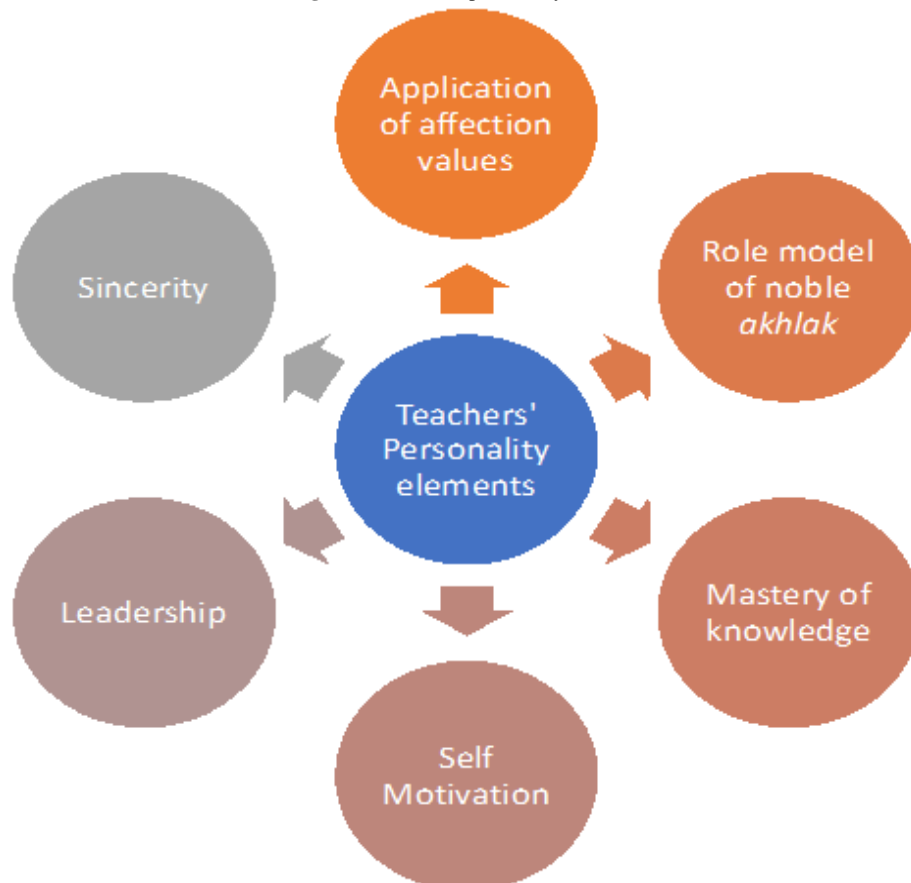
3.1. Application of Affection Values

Social problems among students are caused by the lack of affection shown by parents (Abd Halim and Ismail, 2015; HanXiao@Indah, 2011; Mohamed *et al.*, 2016; Tunggak *et al.*, 2015). Children are left alone by parents because they are busy working for income to support the family needs. As such, teachers have important task in showing the value of compassion for student to fulfill their feelings of emptiness. Mohamed and Jasmi (2016) indicates that students can be easily educated in a gentle manner without any intimidation and violence. This will encourage them to be more excited to follow each T&L activities by teachers. Gentleness and wisdom approach can nurture the characters of the students as suggested by Taat and Abdullah (2014). In contrast, the violent approach is more likely to lead students to feel depressed and rebellious which may lead them to do unexpected things such as hitting teachers or tracing their vehicles (Asalal *et al.*, 2013).

There are various ways affection can be demonstrated by teachers such as calling students' names to show teachers recognize them (Mohamed *et al.*, 2016). Through this method, students will be more approachable (Mohd Noor *et al.*, 2013). Affection can also be shown through showing respect to students Mohamed and Jasmi (2016) and also having a cheerful face (Mohamed *et al.*, 2016). These methods are reiterated by Abd Halim and Ismail (2015) who indicate that affection elements are very effective in addressing students' discipline and personality problems.

3.2. Role Model of Noble *akhlak*

Educators especially in the Islamic education system should become role models or *qudwah hasanah* to students (Ahmad and Tengku Kasim, 2017; Mohd Noor *et al.*, 2016; Tamuri and Ajuhary, 2010). This is based on the finding of Mohd Noor *et al.* (2013) that students consider Islamic Education Teachers in schools as their role models. Besides that, they are more receptive to advice from teachers who demonstrate good *akhlak* (Ahmad and Tengku Kasim, 2017). Furthermore, teachers also need to maintain their appearance, tidiness and flawlessness to keep the students emulating them as indicated by Jasmi and Nawawi (2012) who found that Excellent Islamic Education Teachers should have high personality and maintain their appearance as they are key indicators of excellence.

To train teachers in making them role models for students, (Haris@Harith and Ahmad Kassim, 2011) recommend that the Islamic Education syllabus at the Teacher Education Institutes should be restructured by incorporating elements that can produce knowledge, noble *akhlak*, skill and positive attitudes to achieve their well-being in the world and the hereafter (*akhirah*). Additionally, teachers need to demonstrate good examples to their colleagues and administers (Hamdan and Jasmi, 2016). This is recommended by the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W who showed high personality to friends and even to his enemies. Allah S.W.T said in Holy Al-Quran, Surah Al-Ahzaab, verse 21 which means:

> "You have indeed, in the life of Rasulullah, the 'Best Model' for him whose hope is in Allah and the Day of the Hereafter, and who engage himself a lot in the remembrance of Allah."

3.3. Mastery of Knowledge

Mohd Zhaffar *et al.* (2016) argue that to produce teachers who have good mastery of knowledge, they need to combine the existing knowledge, experience and common sense. Teachers should be able to formulate and state their position in certain issues. Teacher also need to master certain knowledge through various mediums such as engaging in discussion with friends, presenting papers to experts, delivering lectures, writing scientific articles and books. In other aspect, the mastery of knowledge can be enhanced through the reading of various references such as the internet and *muktabar* (famous) books (Abdullah and Jasmi, 2016).

Other than that, the teachers' personality such as having communication skills can also shape the students' character formation. Abdullah and Jasmi (2016) stressed that great communication skills both verbal and nonverbal reflect high knowledge and personality of the teachers. Communication with students can enhance their learning, support, encouragement and positive learning response.

There are two situations that indicate teachers strives to give their students success. The first situation, the teachers do their utmost to provide students with the skills to answer exams. The second situation is the teachers strive to provide knowledge including a deep understanding of the Islamic Education. Good understandings allow students to answer the exam questions well. Furthermore, based on these two situations, the second situation shows that teachers gain two benefits, the first is the success of the students in examinations and the second one is the attainment of understanding by the students (Jasmi and Tamuri, 2015).

3.4. Self-Motivation

Teachers' motivation is vital in developing a quality education system. Motivation of teachers can improve school achievement (Iliya and Ifeoma, 2015; Sheikh Ali *et al.*, 2016). School performance can be measured by its academic achievement, students co-curricular activities and characters of their students. Strong motivation can also encourage teachers' commitment, improve the quality of education, psychology and work satisfaction levels, meet the standards of work and profesionalism, and enhance student motivation (Appova and Arbaugh, 2017; Fakhar *et al.*, 2013; Firestone, 2014; Fokkens-Bruinsma and Canrinus, 2014; Han and Yin, 2016; Salifu and Agbenyega, 2013; Viseu *et al.*, 2016).

From the Islamic perspective, Fakhar *et al.* (2013) indicate that motivation is closely linked to higher Islamic Work Ethics (IWE). The employees who emphasize IWE can increase their commitment in the workplace (Athar *et al.*, 2016) and the spirit of sharing knowledge (Murtaza *et al.*, 2014). Motivation in Islam encourages teachers to obtain *halal* (legal) income and achieve success in this world and the hereafter (Ather *et al.*, 2011; Sulaiman *et al.*, 2014).

Similarly, having passion in education is also an important factor in improving teacher motivation. In becoming a successful teacher, the teachers themselves must have deep interest in becoming educators (Schiefele, 2017). Teachers will find it fun to teach and assist students learning something new, growing and developing (Mertler, 2016). Students who are from problematic family backgrounds can motivate teachers to help them continuously especially in the aspects of education (Heystek and Terhoven, 2015).

3.5. Leadership Skills

Teachers should also have the leadership skills. Usually, leaders in schools refer to principals or headmasters. They have the responsibility to ensure that teachers and schools achieve excellent performance. There are various efforts that principals can do in assisting teachers. They are responsible for developing the skills, professionalism and leadership of them (Garza *et al.*, 2014). Principals can also influence teacher's emotion by listening to ideas and problems faced by them in person and serve teachers fairly so as not to cause misunderstanding among other teachers (Hoppey and McLeskey, 2013).

In strengthening a school, teachers need to have a high level of leadership to maintain the high performance of the school (Wan Mahmud *et al.*, 2014), provide high quality education (McLeskey *et al.*, 2016) and promote positive school culture (Dou *et al.*, 2016) by doing all the necessary changes (Garza *et al.*, 2014). A teacher should also share and obtain ideas from other teachers to map the school's vision and mission (Liu, 2015; Othman and Wanlabeh, 2012; Yang, 2014).

3.6. Sincerity

Sincerity is associated with intentions. The sincerity of teachers can lead to a good *akhlak* (Hidayatulloh and Fahrudin, 2015). They should be sincere to convey knowledge hoping for *mardhatilllah* (Allah's merit) alone (Hadi, 2014; Novitasari and Nur, 2017), without discriminating students (Puluhulawa, 2013). The sincerity of teachers in helping and listening the student's problems will manifest their concerns. The method of helping and listening to the student's make the teachers become closer to them, especially problematic students (Mohd Noor *et al.*, 2013). If a teacher has lost his or her sincerity then there will be unpleasant feelings among teachers and students (Kosim, 2016).

Islam asserts that Muslims must be sincere in worshipping or performing work. This sincerity is required to obtain the mercy of Allah S.W.T as mentioned in Surah An-Nisa', verse 146 which means:

> "Except for those who repent, correct themselves, hold fast to Allah, and are sincere in their religion for Allah, for those will be with the believers. And Allah is going to give the believers a great reward."

4. The impact of Teachers' Personality

Teachers' personality could help students understand the knowledge presented by teachers who love them like their own children as well as provide the guidance and advice to them wisely and patiently, ask them to adhere to the Islamic worship and good manners. This is in contrast to teachers who often punish students (Asalal *et al.*, 2013; Taat and Abdullah, 2014). Teachers are also able to lead students to be good Muslims who practice good characters so the students will always be careful in maintaining their relationship with Allah, the Prophet, themselves, their families, friends and society. Teachers who are adept in leading and communicating will be able to manage all interesting and systematic teaching and learning activities (Abdullah and Jasmi, 2016). Likewise, teachers who are masters in a particular knowledge is essential to link knowledge, skills and values in their teaching to attract students to have more enjoyable learning experience. Additionally, students will be more motivated to learn and it indirectly improves their academic results as they have focus during the two-way interactive learning sessions.

5. Conclusion

In order to address the problems of the present young generation, teachers are one of those who have the advantage because they spend considerably significant amount of time delivering useful knowledge to them. One of the methods that can be applied in shaping the attitudes and behaviours of students in school is by exemplifying high standard of personality. This study indicates six key elements of teachers' personality, which are the application of affection values, role model of noble *akhlak*, mastery of knowledge, leadership skills and sincerity. These elements can help students not only develop their personality, but also enhance their understanding of learning and motivate them to focus in their studies.

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