

A PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF ISLAMIC CARDINAL PRINCIPLES (THE FIVE PILLARS)

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Abstract

This study focused on the methodology for teaching Islamic fundamental principles, it addressed a big challenge which has been confronting students and practicing teachers teaching the subject who are faced with the problem of appropriate method to adopt and particularly identifying instructional materials that suit the topics dealing with the Oneness and Unity of Allah and the likes. The work discussed the scientific approaches to teaching Islamic Studies which appealed to reasoning rather than professing dogma. It as well justified the positive support of Islam to the learning of secular and technological studies juxtaposing the inclusion of the subject in modern schooling system. The rationale for adequate preparation of lesson note and acquisition of background information on the students to serve as guide for effective teaching and learning of the subject was clearly juxtaposed in the study. It concluded with the need for Islamic Studies teachers to be knowledgeable in the subject matter; methodical; practical in teaching; morally disciplined; and relate learning to students' experiences to make the teaching of Islamic Studies effective and meaningful.

Keywords: Islam, cardinal principles, methodology, instructional materials.

Introduction

Teaching is the transmission of knowledge, experiences and behaviours from the teacher to the learner. (Akande 1985). This can be in form of skills, aptitudes, facts and figures or passing information from one person called the teacher to the other called the learner. There are three elements that are involved in teaching, where any one of these is absent, meaningful teaching cannot take place. These include the teacher who is the sender of information, the subject matter which constitutes the information or message sent and the pupil who is the receiver of the information. Teaching is not a one way traffic, it is a mutual exercise that must transpire between the teacher and the pupil on any given subject matter at a time.

Islamic Cardinal Principles constitute the pillars or five major principles of Islam on which the religion is based. Islam as a religion has been identified to have its origin from the Arabic root word *Salama* which means among other things peace, purity, submission and obedience to the will and commandments of Allah (Abdulahi 1990; Rahim 1992). The religion enjoins peaceful co-existence among different creatures, it teaches mankind to be in peace with

the creator and with other human beings in terms of living in peace with them and doing good to them as one would want people to do good to him.

To achieve this peaceful co-existence among people and promote love and human relationship irrespective of different religious inclinations, Islam has five basic fundamental pillars according to Azra (2011) which are:

(i). Believing in the Oneness and Unity of Allah and Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as His Prophet and messenger.

This entails belief in the Oneness of Allah, belief in the angels, holy books, prophets, predestination of certain occurrences and in the judgment day. (Abdul 1981). Discussion method will be suitable for teaching this first pillar at whatever level of our educational system. Equally, instructional materials that contain different objects and human beings could be displayed to learners, asking them who created these objects. Also Radio can be used to prove the existence and the Oneness and omnipresence nature of Allah. We tune on the radio to hear news, the teacher will then use it to explain that the newscaster is not seen like we cannot see Allah, and he is just one person and he is heard all over the places at a time. This is enough to prove that even though we do not see Allah, we can perceive His existence, and that even though He is one, it is possible for Him to be present in all the places at a time. A similar illustration could be drawn using a television set. We put it on, but size off the picture, in this situation we shall hear the speaker but will not see him showing, so even though we do not see Allah the only One God, we believe that He is existing through His handiwork.

(ii). Performance of *Salat* five times daily, obligatory on all matured Muslims that are sound and hearty.

This involves the five daily obligatory prayers and other optional prayers. The five daily prayers have been identified as Subhi observed early in the morning, Zuhri observed in the early part of the afternoon, Asri observed in the later part of the afternoon, Magrib observed during sunset and Ishai which is performed at night. Each of them have their number of prescribed rakats and associated naflats (optional rakats). When any of these compulsory salat is missed, it has to be repaid. In teaching salat, activity method can be employed. The teacher displays a cardboard showing different postures in *salat* and another one showing the number of *rakats*, *naflats* and time of observance. He thereafter asks the pupils to practicalize what they observe in the picture with the correct utterances at different postures of a *rakat*.

(iii). Fasting during the month of Ramadan for about 29 or 30 days compulsory on all matured Muslims, sound and hearty except for other genuine reasons.

A matured Muslim is to observe fast during the month of Ramadan for about 29 or 30 days. During this period, a Muslim is to abstain from food, drinks, smoking, sexual intercourse and other pleasures of life from dawn till sunset. This is to last for a month, however, certain

conditions may prevent a matured Muslim from observing fast during this period, such persons are to pay back their fast for the number of days missed after Ramadan.

Fasting can be taught using audio-visual instructions and discussion method. The teacher displays pictures of different people, those of pregnant woman, nursing woman, aged person and a sick one. He teaches them that these persons are exempted from fasting during Ramadan and the reasons for their exemption. He also brings different fruits to the class like oranges, bananas, pineapple, pawpaw, apples e.g. to teach them what to use when breaking fasts in the evening.

(iv). Payment of zakat – Alms Giving to the poor for those who have the financial means to do so.

Zakat is another pillar of Islam which deals with giving of certain percentage of one's wealth to the needy and the poor. It is a form of worship through one's wealth and it is to be given by a matured, free and sane Muslim whose possession reaches one year, meets the nisab and has control over the wealth.

A play-way method is one of the suitable methods for teaching *zakat*. The teacher brings objects of *zakat* like money and crops to the class. He asks a student to demonstrate as the rich giving it to another student who acts as the recipient. Also, since the teacher cannot bring live camel, cow, goat or sheep to the class, he brings the pictures of these objects including pictures of other objects of *zakat* to the class to teach them objects on which *zakat* should be paid. The teacher also brings a chart containing the percentage or amount to be paid on *zakat* on different *zakat* payable items and those to receive them. The teacher teaches the students the formula for calculating what is to be paid on *zakat* of different items. He writes some questions on the portable board, brings this to the class and asks the students to do some workings in the class. Equally, project method can be used where the teacher gives these questions to the pupils and asks them to do the workings against the next lesson. Similarly, the same project method can be used for teaching the conditions governing the payment of *zakat* etc.

(v). Going on holy pilgrimage to Makkah and Madinah for the purpose of worship for those who have the financial capacity and sound health. (Sambo &Hijab 1983).

Hajj constitutes the holy pilgrimage to Makkah and Madinah for the sole purpose of worship. This is compulsory on a matured Muslim, who is free, sound and healthy who has the financial capacity to undertake the journey. This person must be a person who has been observing the other pillars of Islam like Salat, Sawm and Zakat and of course who believes in the Oneness and Unity of Allah and in the prophethood of Muhammad. (SAW).

Discussion, project, activity, lecture and other methods can be used for teaching Hajj. The teacher brings the picture of Saudi Arabia showing the spots of Makkah and Madinah to pupils. He also shows pictures of important places and things like the *Ka'bah* and a pilgrim dressed in *ihram*. He writes the *Talbiyyah* – Testimony on a chart, brings it to the class to teach the learners. The teacher can as well take the students to the Audio-visual centre where he shows

them film on Hajj. Thereafter he asks them to demonstrate what they have been taught or what they have seen.

At this juncture, it is pertinent to point out that the basic cardinal principles of Islam cannot be taught exclusively of other Islamic Studies topics, references will always be made to other areas and aspects of Islamic Studies, when teaching the fundamental pillars because they serve as the core of all Islamic Studies courses. Equally, one needs to make it clear that no single method can be used exclusively of others in any process of teaching; the various methods are always interwoven and interrelated.

It is imperative at this point to examine briefly the stand of Islam on the acquisition of secular education. This is because the Islamic cardinal principles which serve as the core of Islamic Studies in addition to other Islamic Studies topics are going to be taught in the school system where other secular subjects or courses are taught. The need to show the relationship between Islam and these secular subjects in a secular environment cannot therefore be underestimated for it will show what implications such secular setting has on the effective teaching of Islamic Studies.

Islam and Secular Education

Education means different things to different people. Historically, education deals with the knowledge, skills and experiences that one acquires from birth to death. Philosophically, it is the acquisition of knowledge, skills, experiences, norms and values of a society in which one lives. Ross (2016) sees education as the highest development of an individual as a member of the society. Adesina (1985) defines education as a tool for the integration of the individual effectively into a society so that the individual can achieve self-realization, develop national consciousness, promote unity and strive for social, economic, political, scientific, cultural and technological process.

Nduka (1982) see the education concept as the process of cultural transmission of the people and at least part of such culture from one generation to the next. To Nyerere (1982), education is the transmission of accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society from one generation to the next and also to prepare the young people for their future membership of the society in which they find themselves. A harmonized definition of education from various schools of thoughts is the acquisition of learning experiences, skills, norms and values of a society to enable one contribute significantly to the development of the society. In essence, any form of education which is destructive or which does not bring about progress and development in the society by any individual cannot be considered as education.

Education from the Islamic point of view is divided into two namely, the spiritual or religious aspect of education and the material or secular aspect of education. (Bidmos 1991). The spiritual aspect of education will regulate the relationship of man to his Creator, other creatures of Allah and to himself. This will teach man the consciousness of Allah, the purpose of his creations

which is not accidental but to serve God, to obey His commands, do good to others and to prepare for the life after death.

The secular aspect of education is the education a man acquires to fend for himself and cater for his sustenance in this world but in the process through lawful means and doing good to others. In support of this, Quran says, “Do not forget your portion in the world, but do good to others as Allah has done good unto you” (Quran 28:77).

References are available in the Quran and Hadith to show that Islam gives positive support to the acquisition of any form of education be it spiritual or secular. Quran 58, verse 11, says “Allah will exalt those who believe among you and those who have knowledge to high ranks”. Also, a tradition says, “Seeking for knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim male or female”. Another tradition says, “He who leaves home in search of knowledge walks in the path of Allah till he returns”. Further to this, the Prophet was reported to have said, “He who has knowledge has everything in life and he who loses knowledge loses everything in life”.

In another dimension, he was reported to have instructed his followers to seek for knowledge as far as China when China was not a Muslim state and he equally made the prisoners who were non-Muslims teach the Muslims how to read and write before they could gain their freedom. All these are enough evidences that a Muslim could acquire any form of education be it religious or material; what is important is to observe the professional ethics because no profession teaches immorality, corruption, or any bad thing. Therefore, any education that teaches destruction or brings about bad developments is no education at all.

The stand of Islam to the pursuit of secular education has been shown to be positive. This makes it easy for the Islamic cardinal principles and other Islamic Studies courses to be welcomed and accommodated in the modern school system and this suggests that no threat is posed to Islamic teaching within the secular environment.

Objectives of Teaching Islamic Studies in the School

The purpose of teaching Islamic Studies is very essential in the pre-and post primary education because it teaches the Islamic Fundamentals which are a source of guidance, security and motivation for the child. A Muslim child who believes in Allah as his creator, Guide and Judge and believes in the guidance of Islam as to right and wrong has a sense of inner security which helps him to overcome many difficulties throughout his schooldays and adult life.

It motivates the child to work hard and places greater importance on seeking knowledge. It teaches the belief in the unity and oneness of Allah, the Most Supreme Being (Al-Attas 1979). A person's beliefs influence his moral conduct. In other school subjects, pupils gain the knowledge of how to read, write, how to add and subtract, and how to speak other languages etc. This knowledge may put to either good or bad use, he may use his knowledge to help or cheat

others. It is his beliefs and moral standards that will determine which way he uses his knowledge and the subject that can guide and direct this usage is Islamic Studies.

Therefore, if any improvement is to be made in the moral standard of the nation, it should start with the beliefs and moral standards of every individual. Hence, Islamic Studies which deals with the belief and moral standards should be of prime importance in our educational system.

It is aimed at teaching children the foundation of discipline whereby it will afford them the opportunity of learning discipline on the basis of obedience to God, His messenger and the constituted authorities which will be part and parcel of them as they grow up.

One other objective is to place Islamic Studies in the school syllabus to remove the fear of Christian evangelization of children from Muslim homes. It is equally to awaken in the child the consciousness of Allah as the foundation of his intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth and to provide sound Islamic bases for rational and reflective understanding of the world around him.

It is also to make the child to be conscious of his responsibility to Allah, serving Him with all the talents and resources He has given him. To train the child's personality towards the best moral and social conduct, healthy attitude and self discipline in accordance with the guidance of the *Quran* and *Sunnah*.

It is also to create opportunities for teaching the emulatable characters of the Prophets of Allah so that they can be influenced by them. Besides, it is to teach them about their future encounter as regards family life, business transactions and other social and legal matters.

Further to the objectives of teaching Islamic Studies in schools is to encourage the pursuit of useful knowledge in accordance with the sayings of Muhammad that "The search for knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim male or female" and the application of such knowledge for the benefit of humanity in the fields of Arts, Sciences, Medicine and Technology.

Similarly, is to show the positive relationship between Islam, Science and Technology. As an attestation to this, is the computerization of the Holy Quran today meeting up the challenge of Computer Age. (Hammed Deedat nd).

The inclusion of Islamic Studies as a school subject is to create avenues for pupils to be able to study the subject up to the highest level of education. It is also to open up employment opportunities for professionals in the field. Today, thousands of graduates of Islamic Studies are working in companies, factories, ministries and parastatals and they earn their living on the subject which they studied.

Islamic Studies teaches that there is an overseer to our public and private lives. This is simply to regulate our behavior in the society. It teaches that there is somebody who is always with us. So, we should do good wherever we are because God sees us. It also instills sympathy and commands

the care for the weak and the needy in the society which is in line with the poverty alleviation scheme of different countries of the world.

Obstacles Confronting the Teaching of Islamic Studies

There are some obstacles militating against the successful teaching of fundamental principles of Islam and other Islamic courses in schools, these include:

(a) Shortage of qualified teachers in Schools:

Researches have shown that many schools do not have Islamic Studies teachers in this part of the country i.e. South West of Nigeria where a large population of the Muslims exist. Many schools do not offer the subject not because there are no children to offer the subject but because there are no teachers at all to teach the subject (Salako 1988 & 2014).

Even where few Islamic studies teachers exist, they are not well qualified to teach the subject for the fact that many of them are NCE holders and by the National policy of education, NCE holders cannot teach beyond J.S.S. III level and this explains the reason why most schools do not offer the subject at the senior secondary level.

Solution to this is that more candidates are to enroll for the subject at the higher levels to bridge the gap. Philanthropic individuals or Muslim groups should endeavour to sponsor candidates who have interest in the subject to serve as incentives.

Prizes can be instituted or put on board for the subject at our various institutions where the subject is offered. This will serve as incentive and motivation for intending students.

The National Association of Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies should take up the responsibility of getting the candidates fixed for job at their various national and state levels after graduation. This will serve as high morale for students when they know that they have a body caring for their welfare.

Equally, the association can take up the task of sponsoring one or more candidates at the higher levels of education yearly. Before we know it, within a short period, this will go a long way in motivating students, helping in producing experts to fill the available vacancies and also gives the association high fame and honour which it deserves among other professional associations.

(b). Lack of Relevant textbooks.

Textbook is an educative material through which the teacher and the learner have to update their knowledge to collect facts and correct information on any field of study, it is disappointing however that relevant textbooks are not in circulation as regards the new topics added on Islamic Studies syllabus.

The old books written a long time ago have become obsolete in the sense that they do not include the new topics enlisted on the syllabus, they are not even in circulation and where they exist at all,

they have become too costly and are not within the reach of many children to buy. If this is so, there is no doubt that teachers who have graduated a long time will have difficulties in updating their knowledge to be able to meet up with the new challenges of Islamic education. A research conducted by Salako (2015) still confirmed that undergraduate students of Islamic Studies continued to face the challenge of inadequate reading materials for some of the courses they study in the university.

To overcome this problem, experts of Islamic Studies should take up the task of writing Islamic books on the relevant topics. Islamic Studies experts can also come together to write on different topics and put it in book form. This will go a long way in serving the teachers and the learners because they will be exposed to various ideas of different scholars in one book. An example of this is book of readings or contributing chapters in a book or reputable journals.

Journals, Magazines, periodicals and Dailies on Islamic Studies could be made used of by the teachers and learners to update and enrich their knowledge on all the various aspects of Islam. This will go a long way in bridging the gap which the lack of relevant textbooks has created.

©. Content of Islamic Studies Syllabus.

A critical appraisal of the Islamic Studies Syllabus indicates that many topics have been compressed into the syllabus. Topics that cannot be offered in a 4 year degree programme have been compounded into Junior Secondary 1 to 3 levels (Bidmos 1991, Salako 2015). The latest development was the introduction of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in September 2013 which modulated up Religious Studies (IRK & CRK) in a single subject with Social Studies identified as Religion and National Values. In this arrangement, Islamic Studies cannot be taught separately at the junior secondary school level.

The resultant effect is that some of the topics are left untaught or taught with much brevity leaving the children with half-baked knowledge on the subject thereby putting them in a confused state which is worse than the ignorant state. The overloading of the syllabus affects the topics under Islamic fundamentals and other aspects of Islamic Studies which go along with the teaching of the fundamentals. The content of the curriculum in use has been in operation for over two decades. (Salako 2014). The objective set for this curriculum then cannot be the same today and this calls for the need to review the curriculum to meet the needs and aspirations of the contemporary world.

Nigerian Association of Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies should call and prevail on the government to review the syllabus to a more reasonable and manageable size. They should also add topics that will enhance students' horizon to enable them contribute significantly to the physical, social and economic progress and developments of the society. They should equally advocate for the separation of Islamic Studies as a separate subject at this level because it may hinder students studying it at the senior secondary class which may further affect its registration

in WAEC and NECO examinations. If this happens, students will not be able to study it in the university for lack of necessary requirement.

(d). Government Policy on Islamic Studies.

The National Policy on education which represents the Government Policy reflects Islamic Studies as a core subject at the Primary and Junior Secondary levels of Education; it however reflects it as an elective at the senior and higher levels of education. (NPE 2004). This has negative effects on the teaching of the subject, on the teachers and on the children. Teachers see themselves as not relevant in the stream of education, this affects their morale and imputs and their attitude to work. Pupils on the other hand see the subject as not relevant to their educational careers, many of them drop it when they get to the senior secondary level and they lost the virtues which they would have imbibed in the process of learning. The result of this is a lot of atrocities, immoralities, corruption and all sorts of evils perpetrated in our society today.

Godlessness is the final products of what are students turn to after leaving school because the Islamic fundamentals which could have been taught and made them godly if the subject were to be given a core position has been avoided by students when they were in school. And what do we expect from somebody who is ungodly? There is no atrocity such a person cannot perform to achieve his selfish aim at the expense of others.

It is high time our government reviews this position to make Islamic Studies a core subject at our senior secondary level and a prerequisite course to be offered at all the higher institution levels of education for our Muslim students.

(e). Arabic Language Palaver.

Lack of knowledge of Arabic constitutes a constraint to the teaching of Islamic Studies in the sense that there are some topics which need to be taught with this language e.g. Teaching of Quranic chapters and Hadiths which are compulsory aspects of the subject. It becomes a problem when we discover that some teachers that teach the subject are deficient in the language and there is no way by which such teachers can function well in the teaching of the subject.

Individual teachers who are deficient in this area and who still want to remain on the job should make effort to brush up their knowledge of Arabic language through formal or informal process.

(f). Un-employment of Islamic Studies Graduates.

Job marketability is another important aspect considered for choosing a subject to be studied by students, they would not want to enroll for any subject or course which could not promise them future jobs and incomes. Rosnani (2007) posited that the Islamic Studies curriculum today had become unbalanced and lacked integration between theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge. She lamented that the curriculum did not show any correlational relationship between the sacred and the mundane worlds and that students were unable to see how

Islamic sciences they learned could be applied to other spheres of life. Kamal (2011) supports this view as he asserted that Islamic Studies is not just to produce a profound critique of the conventional ideology of development but also to acquire relevant courses of *al-mu`amalat* (transactions) and *fiqh al-siyasah* (the science of governance in Islam) needed for world development. Therefore, there is the need to review the curriculum of Islamic Studies to include courses and topics that will make the subject attractive and lucrative.

(g). Influence of Parents on the teaching of Islamic Studies.

Most parents want their children to enroll for subjects that would make it easier for them to get job and earn source of income. They believed that studying Islamic Studies at whatever level might not be able to do this. Researches conducted by Lawal (2003) and Azeez & Adeshina (2013) earlier established the fact that parents encourage their children to choose subjects that would lead them to sciences and commercial studies. Students due to the orientation they get from their parents preferred to choose subjects that would lead them to sciences and commercial fields because they believed that these subjects would secure their future in terms of job security and uninterrupted income. This position was further established by Salako in a research conducted in 2014.

(i). Attitude of Some Overzealous leaders.

Some political leaders who were overzealous in their administration used their positions to the detriment of education which could have serious negative implications on the study of some subjects. Islamic Studies has been a victim of such overzealous policy and administration. For instance, Governor Akande (June 1999 – May 2003) laid off Islamic Studies teachers and some arts based subjects' teachers off their jobs with the position that these teachers and their subjects were not relevant as far as the development of the state was concerned. This development which happened in Osun State during the governorship period of Bisi Akande sent wrong signals to Ogun State and other surrounding states in the country and this has adversely affected the enrollment of students in Islamic Studies in the senior certificate examinations since then.

The development also affected the morale of Islamic Studies teachers in the south western state. Parents were also disturbed and they have since discouraged their children from enrolling for Islamic Studies in the senior certificate examinations.

Political leaders and government officials should be mindful of actions and policies they take particularly with regards to education. Education should not be politicized in any manner.

General Guidelines for the Teachers of Islamic Studies

Mastery of the Islamic cardinal principles and other areas of Islamic studies is a task for Islamic Studies teachers. They should seek for more knowledge through private studies, and discussions with others on topics that also exercise the intellect.

They should not only keep their teaching techniques constantly under review but also keep abreast of the new developments in Islamic learning by reading books, journals, magazines, attending seminars, symposia and conferences.

The Islamic Studies teachers need to arouse the interest of the students at the beginning of the lesson by:

- (i) Asking questions on the previous lesson.
- (ii) Associating the lesson with what the students are already familiar with.
- (iii) Making his teachings within the understanding of the students through the use of simple language and simple illustrations and examples.

They should use instructional materials in teaching fundamentals and others topics of Islam because these aid learning and make pupils learn faster and better. They should organize Islamic learning activities in a systematic manner whereby there would be unity and continuity in what pupils learn.

For teaching Islamic cardinal principles and other topics, adequate planning is required to prepare the scheme of work, daily lesson note, instructional materials and mastery of short notes to be given at intervals. The teachers of Islamic studies should recognize that they hold a delicate position and so, they should refrain from all sorts of immoral acts which could tarnish the image of the religion they project in the school system. What other subject teachers would do and be patted on the back would raise an alarm in the case of an Islamic studies teacher.

For teaching Islamic Fundamentals which require the use of Arabic, it is clear that an Islamic Studies teacher cannot function effectively unless he understands little Arabic. Hence, teachers of Islamic Studies are to enhance their knowledge of Arabic language to be effective. Teaching of Islamic Fundamentals requires learning by examples, so, teachers should teach by practical examples and should leave emulatable characters for students to follow. A situation where the teacher teaches one thing and practices another will not be in the best interest of the subject.

Islamic teachers should not restrict their studies to Islamic fundamentals alone, they should also seek for knowledge in other areas of Islamic and Secular studies and should be able to contribute intelligently in those areas when discussions ensue on them. This will accord them great respect and honour among their colleagues and they will not be looked down upon as people look down on Islamic teachers as if they know nothing except religion.

As a means of gearing students up to meet the challenges of the 6-3-3-4 system of education and that of 9-3-4 basic education in terms of self employment and less dependence on government for job, the Islamic studies teachers should willingly take up the teaching of other subjects in the school or in the extra mural classes to show that their knowledge is not restricted to the fundamental circle alone. They should also be ready to practice a vocation in addition to their Islamic teaching to enable the students see the need for use of hand and appreciate the dignity of labour.

Islamic studies teachers are to be gentle, honest, kind, loyal, friendly, truthful and tolerant in the discharge of their duties but at the same time; they should be steadfast and firm in their words and deeds. They should not come to a compromise when it comes to issues which have no bases or proofs in Islam and they should not allow people to corrupt them in any manner. They should leave no room for corruptive tendencies. Lastly, Islamic Studies teachers should keep on impressing it on the students that Islamic principles and other aspects of Islamic studies cater for spiritual and material aspects of man and they should motivate students on what they feel they can do to contribute to the nation's development because learning without benefit to humanity is useless.

Various Techniques Suitable for the Teaching of Islamic Principles

Techniques could be defined as means, methods, devices, or approaches used in imparting knowledge to the learners. These are variety of approaches which a teacher or an instructor adopts in order to induce, promote and direct learning. Too numerous are these methods which can be adopted in the teaching of the Islamic Principles.

(i) Class Method:

This involves grouping together students of the same age range of about 35 to 50 in a class and teaching them who are all engaged at a time for a period of 40 minutes or an hour on the same topic or topics. It could be used for teaching any topic like kinds of salat, importance of fasting.

(ii) Activity Method:

This is the method whereby the teacher directs the students learning through activities. It involves students' participation. Activity method is about the pragmatic method which John Dewey an American Philosopher in Psychology propounded. "It is learning by doing". It is very useful in teaching topics like "A Complete Rakat", "Ablution", "Marriage", "Zakat", Quranic Recitation and Hadiths etc.

(iii) Project Method:

This means plan or idea to be executed. It is a device that is employed when the class has a central idea or interest on characters which their work is center. It must have a definite time and period within which the project must be completed. This is designed to put the responsibility on the individual or group of students to carry out their learning activities with the teacher as an adviser. This is good for topics like "Blessings of Ramadan", "Contributions of Abu Bakr to the Development of Islam", "The Conversation of Umar to Islam", "The Recipients of Zakat", "Concept of Tawhid" and a host of others.

(iv) Lecture Method:

This is a process by which the teacher conveys knowledge, ideas, and information through oral speaking to a class of students. It could be a large class and this is commonly found

in our higher institutions. It is a teacher centred approach and allows the teacher to cover a wide gap within a short time. It is suitable for teaching any topic particularly the historical and legal aspects of Islamic fundamentals e.g. “Life of Muhammed” “Concept and Sources of Shariah”. The unity of Allah, Hajj in Islam.

(v) Discussion Method:

This involves approaches by which the teacher directs members of a class or group to share their knowledge, ideas and experiences freely with other members of the class. Pupils do this in a play way and less tensed atmosphere and thereby gain a lot in the process. Secondly, recollection will likely be easy because they participated fully in the discussion. This method is suitable for topics like “Polygamy in Islam”, “Causes of Divorce and forms of Divorce”, Conditions governing *zakat*, *Sawm* etc.

(vi) Audio – Visual Instructions:

It involves using audio-visual materials to aid instruction e.g. Radio, Television set, films, projectors. To teach Hajj, A Complete Rakat.

At this point, it is worthy of note to state that teaching method is dynamic as a result of new discoveries, subject matter, environment, the age and background of the learner. It is equally difficult for any teacher to employ the use of a single method at the pure and complete exclusion of others. No single method can be used in teaching any topic, other methods always sway in. Therefore, the teacher needs to know certain criteria when considering teaching methods for use.

- (a) While lecture method may be adequate in SS classes, and above, it might not be so in J.S.S. 1 and 2.
- (b) The method should suit the subject-matter.
- (c) The objectives of the lesson also determine the method to be used.
- (d) Time and situation also help in determining the method.
- (e) Interest and experience of the learner including his background, age, ability and capability of the teacher all help in determining suitable method of teaching.

Preparation of Lesson Notes and Its Importance

A lesson note consists of periodic sketch by the teacher which maps out his line of activities during the lesson. A good lesson notes contains the following:

Name of the Teacher:

Class:

Topics:

Objectives – This is to be stated using behavioural terms

Teaching Aids: To be selected by the teacher

Time: i.e.: Duration of the lesson

Ref. Book

Content: This contains a brief summary of the topic of the lesson.

Presentation:

Step I: Deals with introduction/revision

Step II: Deals with the discussion of the topic.

Step III: Deals with pupils' involvement and use of teaching aids.

Step IV: Deals with the evaluation of the lesson

Step V: Deals with the summary and conclusion of the lesson.

Importance of a Lesson Note

- (a) It directs learning and guides the teacher in his teacher.
- (b) It saves time wastage in the sense that the teacher knows what to do and how to go about it instead of beating about the bush.
- (c) It could be used by another teacher in the same field if the teacher who prepared it is unavoidably absent.
- (d) It enables the teacher to evaluate himself and his pupils.
- (e) It helps in mapping out teachers' and pupils' involvement in the lesson.
- (f) It guides the teacher to achieve set objectives for the lesson.

Conclusion

This paper discussed the pragmatic approach to the teaching of the five pillars and other aspects of Islam. It points out the importance of adequate preparation on the part of the teacher, the usefulness in the use of teaching aids and the involvement of the learners in the process of teaching for the desired result is to be achieved. It however points out that no single method of teaching is indispensable to the others. The general guidelines suggested will be of immense help and great assistance to Islamic Studies teachers if adopted. The Islamic Studies curriculum needs to be reviewed to accommodate Islamic financial courses and computer appreciation courses to equip Islamic Studies students for practical use and widen their horizon in opening career opportunities for them.

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