

To What Extent Do High School Islamic Education Teachers in Saudi Arabia Implement
Innovative Approaches in Their Teaching?

Do Teacher Gender, Academic Qualifications, and Teaching Experiences Matter?

By

Bander Muhammad Almatari

BA Islamic University, 1999

MSED University of Kansas, 2008

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Doctor of Philosophy.

Dr. Steven White Chairperson

Dr. Bruce Frey

Dr. Robert Shelton

Dr. Suzanne Rice

Dr. Phil McKnight

Date Defended: 01/24/2012

The Dissertation Committee for Bander Muhammad Almatari certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

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Dr. Steven White Chairperson

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Abstract

The purpose of this present study aimed to examine to what extent high school Islamic education teachers in Saudi Arabia implement innovative approaches in their teaching. Although the extent of implementing innovative approaches in teaching has been recognized, the current study showed little attention has been paid to teachers' beliefs about innovation and creativity and how those beliefs may influence teachers' perceptions as well as their choice of instructional methods and tasks. In this study, two questionnaires, designed to explore teacher's pedagogical beliefs and innovative approaches in teaching Islamic education, were administered to 174 high school Islamic education teachers (Male teachers=107, Female teachers=67) located in different types of school districts: Urban, Holy cities, Industrial cities, and Rural area. Means, Standard Deviations, One – Way analysis of variance ANOVA, and Correlation Coefficients were employed. The results of the study indicated that teachers' beliefs showed a great influence when implementing Innovative approaches inside the classroom of Islamic education. Moreover, the study reported that no statistically significant differences were found when implementing innovative approaches with regard to number of years teaching experience, academic qualifications, and teacher gender. However, there was a statistically significant difference of school's location in terms of Freedom of Opinion subscale.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Since September 11, 2001, Islamic education has become the target of widespread criticism by many of western countries. The educational systems of many Islamic countries, such as Saudi Arabia and their underlying ideologies have been accused of contributing to anti-western sentiments, and of providing fertile ground for Islamic extremism (Prokop, 2003). Criticism centers on teaching students to be intolerant and fanatical about any religion that is not Islam (Abdul Salam, 2008, p. 3). Many Islamic countries rejected any link between their religious curriculum and extremism. The minister of education in Saudi Arabia declared that any claim of a link is unfair. He stated, “Saudi Arabia will never allow anyone to impose changes in its national educational curricula” (Prokop, 2003, p. 77). Consequently, religious education has become a sensitive topic that has resulted in no one having permission to criticize Islamic curriculum. Talk about reforming Islamic education has created accusations that place the reformers in a position to implement what the outsiders dictate to them. The concerns over Islamic education have led to this study, which provides an important look at reforming Islamic education. It aims to provide a snapshot of innovative approaches being used in religious education.

In addition, innovation and creativity has been at the center of the educational system of Saudi Arabia particularly after 9/11. Innovation and creativity was adopted as a means to reform education in general and Islamic education in particular. However, a great deal of research has investigated the role of teachers’ pedagogical beliefs in any educational reform (Deci, Vallerand,

Pelletier, and Ryan, 1991). Whether and to what extent students engage in learning tasks also relies on their teachers' beliefs. Chong, Wong and Lang (2004) demonstrated that teachers beliefs takes its importance from playing the role in the acquisition and interpretation of knowledge and subsequent teaching behavior and how unexplored entering beliefs may be responsible for the preparation of antiquated and ineffectual teaching practices. In fact, insufficient literature about teachers' beliefs in Saudi Arabia has led to this research. This study aimed to uncover many of the teachers' beliefs about the nature of teaching and learning and understanding how those beliefs may interact with the implementation of any educational programs.

More importantly, Khoaledah (2003) found that the methods currently used in teaching Islamic education are outdated. Although many Islamic countries are paying much more attention to funding and supporting Islamic education in their educational systems, the methods used to teach the Islamic curricula revolve around traditional methods. The ultimate goal for many Islamic education teachers focuses on increasing students' achievement by utilizing memorization and avoiding any method that leads to deeper discussion or further research (p. 99). Through the use of two questionnaires, this study explored, based upon teachers' perspectives, the pedagogical beliefs of the Islamic education teachers and how those beliefs may help us to deeply understand the extent to which Islamic education teachers are using innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula. Additionally, the study examined the role that factors such as teacher gender, the number of years of teaching experience, and teachers' academic qualifications play in enhancing innovative approaches to teaching.

Purpose of the Study

The Saudi Government has been in the process of studying ways to improve programs that are used for general teacher preparation and training, and in particular for those who will become Islamic education teachers. In light of these considerations, conducting this study identified some of the current methods of teaching Islamic education and provided some innovative approaches so that policymakers may develop programs that improve the instruction and thus make Islamic education better.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in several ways. First, Islamic education teachers often are not aware of their methods of teaching Islamic curricula, including the pedagogical beliefs that may influence and thus lead them to use traditional methods. The significance of this research may be seen through understanding the role of teachers' pedagogical beliefs in the implementation of innovative approaches when teaching Islamic curricula. Therefore, this study can function to bring an awareness of teaching to the forefront, not only for in-service teachers but also for those who are responsible for educating and training Islamic education teachers in the future. In addition, studies that have explicitly addressed teachers' beliefs and how those beliefs may influence their views about innovation and creativity are few. Nonetheless, understanding teachers' beliefs and their role about innovation and creativity may provide valuable insights into their practice, and may provide the foundation for the improvement of professional preparation and training.

Research Questions

The questions that the study attempted to answer are as follows:

1. What are the pedagogical beliefs that influence the way that Islamic education teachers implement Islamic curricula?
2. To what extent do Islamic education teachers implement innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?
3. Is the number of years of teaching experience related to the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?
4. Are the academic qualifications of Islamic education teachers related to the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?
5. Does teacher gender play any role in the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?

Research Hypotheses

Based on the research questions, the hypotheses of this study were as follows:

1. Islamic education teachers use more traditional approaches in teaching Islamic curricula than innovative approaches.
2. There is a statistically significant relationship between the number of years teaching experience and implementing innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula.

3. There is a statistically significant difference between teachers' academic qualifications and implementing innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula.
4. There is a statistically significant difference between male and female teachers in implementing innovative approaches when teaching Islamic curricula.

The Variables

1. Independent Variables:

- a. Gender (male and female Islamic education teachers).
- b. The number of years of teaching experience.
- c. Teachers' academic qualifications with two levels: undergraduate degree, and graduate degree.

2. Dependent Variable. The extent to which Islamic education teachers encourage innovative approaches in five domains:

- a. Freedom of Opinion.
- b. Acceptance of Innovation.
- c. Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula.
- d. Innovation in the Method of Teaching.
- e. Innovation in the Method of Assessment.

Definition of Terms

Islamic Education:

“A purposeful process based on the principles of Islam, which aims at educating human beings socially, ethically, emotionally, and physically in order to achieve complete submission to God” (Abdullah,1994, p.8).

High School Islamic Curricula:

Islamic curricula are comprised of Islamic education courses taught to male/female students (K-12) in public schools.

High School Islamic Education Teachers:

Teachers who are educating students in Islamic courses; male teachers for all male-schools and female teachers for all female-schools.

Innovative and Creative Person:

The selected definition that I have found useful among the many definitions is developed by Gardner (1993) in his book, *Creative Minds: An Anatomy of Creativity Seen through the Lives of Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, Eliot, Graham, and Gandhi*. His definition of a creative and innovative person is “A person who regularly solves problems, fashions products, or defines new questions in a domain in a way that is initially considered novel but that ultimately becomes accepted in a particular cultural settings” (p.35).

Innovative Approaches in Islamic Curricula:

The innovative approaches are approaches that interact with the educational process to create a healthy atmosphere in which innovation can take place. These approaches discussed in this research are life-centered approach, critical thinking approach, phenomenological approach, typological approach, tolerance approach, moderate approach, and educational approach.

Summary

The motives of conducting the study have been explained in this chapter. A call for reforming Islamic curricula has created accusations that indicate the curricula is being developed under the dictate of outsiders; therefore, this study, which is conducted by a researcher who works inside the educational system in Saudi Arabia, takes its importance in opening the door for reforming curricula. More important, the study identified factors that, although believed to be improving religious education teaching, are in fact outdated and do not provide positive results, even though such factors currently have a great deal of support. In light of these issues, the researcher sought to address these factors through an investigation of the two questionnaires regarding teachers' pedagogical beliefs and how those beliefs may explain to what extent Islamic education teachers implement innovative approaches when teaching Islamic curricula. The researcher tried to understand the role of the number of years of teaching experience, academic qualifications, and teacher gender have in implementing new approaches to teaching Islamic Curricula.

CHAPTER TWO

The Review of Literature

The literature regarding religious education is insufficiently addressed in Saudi Arabia. The number of publications dealing with Islamic education is limited, even in Saudi Arabia where Islamic education occupies a prominent position (Bedaiwi, 1998, p. 45). Foreign literatures from countries such as the United States, Britain, Germany, Kenya, and Malaysia were reviewed in order to provide a theoretical framework for this study. This literature review aimed to explore the meaning of religious education and how it is different from the concept of Islamic education. In addition, it revealed the principles of innovative and traditional approaches in education in general, and in teaching Islamic education in particular. Furthermore, it explored the role that teacher gender, the number of years of teaching experience, and the academic qualifications might have on decisions regarding the choice of instructional approaches used in Islamic education.

Religion

Nye (2008) stated that there can be no denying that the term “religion” is complicated, and this term may refer to a number of different concepts and practices (p. 2). The ambiguity of the term refers to the fact that religion may be influenced by cultural context and location. Therefore, religion can be viewed in many realms: going to church or mosque, reading and reflecting on some sacred texts, believing and having faith, performing certain ritual practices, or living one’s life in a certain way. To put these elements in a comprehensive definition, Nye (2008) said, “Religion is nearly always both a set of ideas and beliefs that people can engage with (to some extent or other), and also the framework for their lived experiences and daily practices” (p.3).

Religious Education

As illustrated above, it is difficult to define religion. An alternative approach is to define religious education through its activities. In fact, to look at the activity and the practice of religions in the world may be a more fruitful method. This alternative approach was adopted by Smart (1992) as cited in Bastide (2007). This approach portrays religious education through seven dimensions. These dimensions are as follows:

1. Doctrinal dimension is about a religious vision of ultimate reality. This dimension may be elaborately expressed in philosophical terms with vague and less coherent ways. For example, in Christianity, the central doctrines may be seen through the official creeds of the church, in particular the Nicene Creed. Christianity also focuses upon the two basic doctrines: the Trinity which sees God in three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.) and the Incarnation, which means the entry of God the Son into humanity in the person of Jesus Christ. Another example is within Judaism, which places a great stress upon the oneness of God and his loving kindness. Within Islam, there is a strict emphasis upon unity and upon the uniqueness of God. For all these examples, the philosophical dimension is clear and beyond the vision of the believer.

2. Mythological dimension, or as is often called the story dimension, is the means of conveying the religious teachings. These means are stories, poems, legends, hymns, and so on. A story, which is essentially the meaning of mythology, includes the lives of the founders: the story of Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad.

3. Ethical dimension. All religions lay upon their followers a way of life that should be followed. For instance, Judaism has placed a great emphasis upon the Torah, the revealed law of God. The Torah concentrates on the Ten Commandments and how these Commandments are

binding for all Jews. Islam, through the Quran, lays down requirements of Muslims that even includes the style of dress.

4. Ritual dimension encompasses all these practices and activities that the worshippers do in their daily life. Ritual dimension includes festivals, ceremonies, customs, traditions, clothing, and symbols. It is closely associated with the stories of any religion. The ritual dimension provides the framework for both sustaining and deepening of the worshiper's faith. This dimension is more closely related to religious feelings than to religious doctrine. Rituals may reflect the doctrines; however, they work upon the emotions of the believers.

5. Experiential dimension is considered the center of any religion. However, people experience any religious matter differently. For instance, where do believers find their God? Some find God in solitude, others in a community of believers, while yet others in prayer. The importance of this dimension may appear in providing motivation for others and making the performing of any ritual a living and significant activity instead of participating in a historical curiosity. Bastide (2007) mentioned one problem with this dimension. He stated that it is very difficult to describe religious experience in words. Any attempt in describing any religious experience depends heavily upon such devices such as symbolism, simile, metaphor, and analogy (p.27). Therefore, the complexity of this dimension makes it challenging for students to achieve it.

6. Social dimension is concerned with the expression of the religion in a society. This dimension is close to ethical dimension because both dimensions give guidance on how the believers should live in the world. Although for many people religion is a strictly private matter and a question of personal belief, worship, and prayer with others, discussion about the meaning of the text and the celebration of festivals are considered the most important part of the religious life.

7. Material dimension may be seen through carrying the beads in the pocket, the way people dress, and the buildings of worship. For example, Islam and Judaism prohibit the use of images of living people in prayer, whereas the use of imagery in worship is important to Roman Catholic Christians, Orthodox Christians and Hindus. Bastide (2007) stated that these dimensions are facets of the one gem, interrelated and interconnected indissolubly (p. 24).

Islamic Education in Saudi Arabia

Islamic education is the name used in Saudi Arabia for religious education. Alkhuli (1987) explains the meaning of Islam:

The root of the word Islam in Arabic is “*silm*,” which means “peace,” and denotes peace with God (Allah) and mankind. Islam is the religion that asks for a complete submission to God and obedience to his orders. Thus “Islam,” by definition, means obedience to God, and implies the unity of all human beings and the brotherhood of all races (p.18).

A person who submits to the order of God and accepts the principles of Islam is called “Muslim.” Alkhaldeh (1996) explained the two sources that Muslims should follow and that are considered as a supreme guide to the Islamic faith. All Islamic curricula revolve around these two sources. The first source is the Holy Quran, a text which Muslims believe was revealed by God to the prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) beginning in the year 610 A.D. This book was revealed in portions on certain occasions during the 23 years of Muhammad’s prophetic mission. The second source is the “*Sunnah*,” the tradition established by the prophet Muhammad. It encompasses the sayings of the prophet, his actions, and his silent approval of the actions of others (p.55).

Abdullah (1994) defined Islamic education as “a purposeful process based on the principles of Islam, which aims at educating human beings socially, ethically, emotionally, and physically in order to achieve complete submission to God” (p. 8). According to this definition, Islamic education should do more than giving students a sound intellectual background in their religion. Rather, it must respond to and satisfy students’ social, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual needs. Islamic education curricula consist of six courses taught to students (male and female) K-12 in public schools in Saudi Arabia. These courses are as follows:

1. **The Noble Quran:** Recitation of the Holy book of Muslims.
2. **Tafsir:** Translation and interpretation of the meaning of the Noble Quran.
3. **Aqidah:** The fundamentals of the Islamic creed.
4. **Fiqh:** Islamic Jurisprudence made up of the rulings of Islamic jurists to direct the lives of Muslims. A component of Islamic studies, the Fiqh expounds the methodology by which Islamic law is derived from primary and secondary sources.
5. **Hadith:** Prophet Muhammad’s sayings. Traditions relating to the words and deeds of the prophet Muhammad that lead to the Muslim way of life.
6. **Islamic Culture:** A term primarily used in describing all historical cultural practices common to the people of Islam (Abdulsalam, 2008, p. 10).

Jamjoom (2009) illustrated that the emphasis on Islam is not limited to these six courses. Rather, Islam is taught in all subjects at all academic levels. For instance, the sciences and humanities are filled with Islamic thought and philosophy. More specifically, a history class

encompasses a great deal of the history of Islamic civilization, the life of the prophet Muhammad, and his companions. Arabic language and literature class are heavily influenced by Islamic teachings. For example, Quranic verses and the sayings of the prophet Muhammad are used in a way that enables students to understand the grammar of Arabic language.

The Traditional Approaches in Education

John Dewey (1938), in his book *Experience and Education*, revealed the characteristics of traditional approaches in education. For instance, a traditional approach may be imposed on students from outside and from above. Traditional schools rely for their aims and methods of teaching on things "handed down from the past" (p.18). The teachers' role in this kind of education is the connection between educational policy makers and students. In traditional schooling, children are taken seriously; as Dewey remarked, "The center of gravity is outside the child. It is in the teacher, the textbook, anywhere and everywhere you please except in the immediate instincts and activities of the child himself" (*The School and Society*, p.23). The child is expected to adjust to the school's rules and curriculum. The philosophy behind this approach lies in the fact that the future should be much like the past. From the standpoint of a traditional approach, education is a cultural product of a society that sees the past as a valuable product that must be passed down to generations.

In addition, the traditional school views experience as a static process that does not enhance further experience. Dewey (1938) described static process as "one permanent frame of reference" (p.25). Consequently, traditional schools separate educational experience from personal experience. Schools that follow this approach do not contribute to students' background nor do they participate in helping students to build their own future. Therefore, Dewey (1938) believed

that "not all experience is educative," which implies that "some experiences are mis-educative" (p. 25). For instance, when teachers use a static and fixed experience that is not linked to students' background or students' future, they essentially either halt or distort the experience that students are dealing with.

Ferire (1970) described the role of teacher in traditional schooling. He said that a teacher as narrator leads students to memorize mechanically the narrated content. Worse than that, teachers turn students into "containers" or "receptacles" to be filled by their teacher's knowledge (p.72). In light of this traditional approach, education becomes an act of depositing, which sees students as "depositories" and their teachers as "depositors." Ferire (1970) named this kind of education as "pedagogy of the oppressed." He illustrated that oppressive pedagogy may be reflected through several attitudes and practices. Ferire (1970) lists many examples of those attitudes and practices:

1. The teacher teaches and the students are taught.
2. The teacher knows everything and the students know nothing.
3. The teacher thinks and the students are thought about.
4. The teacher talks and the students listen meekly.
5. The teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined.
6. The teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply.
7. The teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher.

8. The teacher chooses the program content, and the students adapt it.
9. The teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his or her own professional authority, which she and he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students.
10. The teacher is the subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects (p.73).

Kohn (2008) mentioned several signs of a traditional approach in education. For example, grades and tests are the only ways that determine the performance of students. Also, heavy textbook usage is a visible sign that students are required to memorize all data. Furthermore, teachers exercise control over their classrooms. Students are supposed to be quiet listeners and passive learners, whereas teachers are lecturers or sometimes commanders.

However, traditional schools are not only about memorizing data and definitions. Traditional teachers may commit to helping students deeply understand ideas. Mark (2006) said that "for thoughtful traditionalists, thinking is couched in terms of comprehending, integrating, and applying knowledge," which means that students are seen as "comprehending how the teacher has integrated or applied the ideas.... and reconstructing the teacher's thinking" (p. 352).

The Traditional Approaches in Religious Education

The above-mentioned principles of traditional approach in education have shaped and influenced the way teachers approach religious education. Wuthnow (2005) stated that one of the visible characteristics of the traditional approach in teaching religious education lies in lack of religious diversity. Students in religious education classroom know very little about religions of others. Wuthnow (2005) demonstrates throughout his study, *America and the Challenges of*

Religious Diversity, that "the lack of knowledge about the religious other translates directly into beliefs and actions that show a lack of sensitivity and understanding toward the religious other; when people lack this knowledge, sensitivity, and understanding of the religious other, they lack religious literacy" (p. 93).

Rosenblith and Bailey (2006) criticized teaching religious education when focusing on communities of worship. A community of worship guides students to the exploration of their inner selves. It provides them with stories that help them to exclusively understand their own histories. Charron (2004) said that traditionalists when teaching religious education forget that religion should respond to humanity's needs. They may also concentrate on building a strong relationship among students toward their convictions, whereas they forget that "belief enables human beings to structure the way the world appears to them and gives them inner strength" (p.5). Education has become increasingly global; all kinds of schooling activities are needed in order to be able to function in global environment. Furthermore, the content of religious curriculum that concentrates on community of worship tends to be more focused on connecting each child's personal sense to their own religious affiliation. This denominational perspective, as named by Charron (2004), may encompass students who are from different traditions. They may be forced to follow the instruction given to them.

In addition to these approaches, Bedaiwi (1998) sees unchangeable content as a visible sign of the traditional approach. As an example, in Saudi Arabia the content has remained static over a considerable period of time. Therefore, it is not a surprise that students shut down any discussions on religious matters in schools and keep silent all the time. This observation is supported by a statement in the Saudi Ministry of Education No. 29 (1988), which reads:

The Islamic curriculum in the three grades of secondary school has remained unchanged for over 20 years except for modifications to Islamic law (p. 5).

In fact, unchangeable religious curricula imply sacredness on the subject matter that closes the door for any attempt to analyze, discuss, synthesize, or apply. An unchangeable religious curriculum not only creates passive learners, but it also leads to the use of traditional ways in teaching, such as lecturing and memorizing.

Jackson (2004) demonstrated that the control of the content of the religious curriculum tends to be in the hands of the religious insiders who construct the knowledge according to the rules of their own language and culture. As a result of this control, the knowledge is delivered to students who are prevented from using their own imaginations to construct their own knowledge. Students are left out of the educational equation. They are deprived from expressing themselves and being heard.

Onsongo (2002) in her study, *The Life Approach Method in Teaching Christian Religious Education in Secondary Schools*, discussed one of the traditional approaches to teaching religious education in Kenya, called “A Missionary Approach.” The curriculum was designed to convert students to Christianity. In this approach, students are encouraged to put their own beliefs aside and build a new ground so that the content of the religious curriculum may find its place in students' experiences. The missionary approach does not consider students' needs and interests. It aims to vacuum students' past experiences and build a new experience.

Onsongo (2002) pointed out that the findings of the study may be summarized in the following points. The first is that religious education teachers made very few attempts to enhance topics so that there was further discussion. Additionally, the teacher-centered, subject-centered,

and Bible-centered approaches were found to be the dominate method used. Moreover, religious education teachers were seen to be implementing models that allowed minimal student' participation. The study concluded that drama, role-play, field-trips, and social action projects, which may be used to encourage students to think critically, were the least used.

A study conducted by Wainanina (1984) revealed the factors that contributed in the failure to implement the "Life Approach" in the new Christian Religious Education Syllabus in primary schools in Thika municipality. The findings of the study showed that the traditional approach in teaching religious education was responsible for creating obstacles toward implementing the new approach. These obstacles lie in four main points: lack of time, heavy teaching loads, poor professional guidance, and lack of supervision in the subject.

Hashim (2005) mentioned that Islamic education teachers are not innovative in their teaching. They teach the subject matter in the same way that their teachers taught them. Islamic education teachers repeat the content regardless of whether the content or the methodology applied is relevant or effective. For instance, Islamic education teachers never think about why they are teaching the prescribed five prayers. The ultimate goal for them is to prepare students for public examinations where they excel in knowledge of the subject, as they "are least concerned whether students internalize the values imparted and become better behaviorally, mentally, spiritually, or morally" (p.137). Hashim (2005) gave an example of the traditional method of teaching the Holy Quran. He said that most of the time, teaching the Quran solely lies in reading the text written in accord with the syllabus. Students are taught in a way that pushes them to recite the Holy Quran from cover to cover without considering whether they know its content and love it or not.

Hashim (2005) stated that Islamic education teachers tend to teach Islamic curricula as a moral prescription, or a blind indoctrination. For instance,

You must not steal because that violates the commandment of the Quran. You will be punished and thrown into the fire. You must be honest because Allah loves those who are honest. You must pray because if you do not, you will not be able to enter the garden of Paradise. You must recite the Quran because you will be rewarded for every letter recited, not only for each word but for each letter. You can have more than one wife because that is the *Sunnah* of the prophet....etc” (p.140).

All these examples are taught in a way that does not help students to morally reason with these issues. The traditional methods currently used in teaching Islamic curricula does not consider context. Students are not taught how they judge unfamiliar situations correctly, think according to Islamic principles, weigh circumstances, or think critically. The absence of moral reasoning when teaching Islamic curricula caused one sad incident in 2002. Schoolgirls in Saudi Arabia burned to death when the school had a fire because the religious police would not allow girls to leave the school’s gates without wearing their veils. In fact, the religious police chased girls back into the school. By the time the girls were properly clothed, it was too late. Those religious men were blind when it came to weighing the situation and distinguishing between normal situations and a life- threatening situation. This is a clear case of imposing Islamic principles without the use of moral reasoning.

In addition, Hashim (2005) illustrated that the teaching methods seems to emphasize God as the harshest punisher and not as the most merciful. “In the name of God, the most compassionate, most merciful” is found and recited at the beginning of each of the 114 chapters in the Holy Quran. This formula is even recommended to be recited at the beginning of every daily activity. In fact, punishment is rarely mentioned in the Holy Quran. This type of teaching

leaves students with the impression of God as a punisher who does not understand or forgive and will generate a deep fear rather than a deep love of God.

Innovation and Creativity in Education

Diekelmann and Scheckel (2004) articulated that an innovative approach in schools may be accomplished as a mutual process between a teacher and students. The researchers illustrated the process of innovation inside classroom as a result of cooperation between teachers and students. Innovation leads both teachers and students "to engage in a circular dialogue which provides students-centered learning experiences in which both teachers and students co-create the learning activity" (p. 291). Story and Butts (2010) described innovation inside classroom as a method that leads students to think outside the box (p.292). Another description shows innovation as "the ability to solve problems and fashion products and to raise new questions" (Gardner, 1993, p.35). Lucas (2001) sees innovation as a "state of mind in which all our intelligences are working together." Robinson (2001) also defined it as "imaginative processes with outcomes that are original and of value." Copley (2001) added one essential factor for innovation and creativity called novelty. He pointed out that a novel idea may occur when looking for new solutions to problems or creating unique methods or plans for doing things.

According to these definitions, three common characteristics may be derived regarding innovation:

1. **Generation** stems from making, forming, or bringing something into being. Generation is the most important and the first step in the process of innovation. When Linus Pauling won the Nobel Prize, he was asked how he had thought of so many innovative discoveries. He replied: "It is easy. You think of a lot of ideas, and throw away the bad ones" (Fisher, 2002). The essence of

generation comes from something that already exists in the mind. It is an outcome of combining a huge amount of ideas.

2. **Variation** is another characteristic of innovation. It means that for ideas to become innovative must be varied, because without variation, what results is repetition, not innovation. Innovative ideas are driven from exploratory processes that seek to vary from what has been given.

3. **Uniqueness** is a clear sign of a successful innovation. Bruner (1962) defined innovation as "an act that produces effective surprise." The obvious sign that indicates the uniqueness of what we have produced can be expressed as being different from the original thought. Fisher (2002) divided the levels of uniqueness from the original thought into three levels. First, it is an idea which is unique in relation to one's previous thoughts, words, or deeds. Second, it is work which might be seen unique in relation to one's social group or community. Third, it is universal in that it is seen unique in terms of all previous known human experience.

Fisher (2002) illustrated how creative minds work. Initially, creative and innovative minds begin with connecting ideas, seeing similarities and differences, and then generating new ideas. Creative minds tend to have lots of ideas. They do not limit their thinking to a few ideas. As Thomas Edison, the inventor of the telephone, said, he needed 100 ideas for he knew that 99 of them might be wrong. Creative minds do not simply discard ideas because they seem at first look to be odd or unworkable. Rather, having lots of ideas leads to further ideas, each of which might have an unexpected potential. Moreover, creative and innovative minds are flexible in their thinking, experimental and seek variation. Creative minds do not stick with one idea, one approach, or one way of doing things. More important, creative and innovative minds strive for originality by thinking of novel ideas. Creative minds always look for new solutions to problems.

They often seek to create their own unique methods or plans for anything they pursue to do. Creative minds tend to extend their thinking through a process of elaboration so that they can improve an original idea. The process of elaboration in the minds of creative and innovative people may be seen through an action of expanding on existing knowledge in order to make it more complex or build a unique feature into a given situation.

Where is creativity and innovation? Gardner (1993) discussed three elements which are central in any consideration of creativity and innovation: 1) the individual person or talent; 2) the domain or discipline in which that individual is working; and 3) the surrounding field that renders judgments about the quality of individuals and products. Creativity and innovation cannot be found in one single element nor in any pair of elements. Rather, creativity and innovation may be viewed as a dialectical or interactive process in which all these elements participate together. In fact, the interaction between these three elements generates continuity. In other words, interactions “cause a refashioning of the domain,” so that “the next generation of students, or talents, now work in a domain that is different” (p.38).

To be innovative, an act, idea, or product must be new. However, not every new act, idea, or product is considered innovative. Gruber and Wallace (1999) added an important criterion in order to say that this act, idea, or product is innovative: it must be given value by some external criteria. Being different from the original thought is not sufficient, but it must also be appropriate and useful. It must have a valuable meaning. However, the main question is how to judge that this innovative idea is useful or not. Who is able to separate useful innovations from useless innovations? Fisher (2002) stated that adding usefulness to the concept of innovation is meant to

exclude any new innovation that may harm human beings. Usefulness, then, means to guide any new innovation toward what adds something to human knowledge and experience.

The Innovative Approaches in Religious Education

In this section, approaches that create a healthy atmosphere for innovation and creativity to grow inside of religious education classroom are presented. McCreery, Palmer and Voiels (2007) described innovation as a process that leads religious education teachers to "move outside your comfort zone, and take risks and try out new ideas wherever you have gathered them from; that way you will keep your teaching of religious education alive and invigorating" (p.10). As a result of this process, students should be given the space to put something of themselves in the curricula and use their imagination so that they can reflect, analyze, and apply what they have gathered.

Critical thinking is one of the new approaches in teaching religious education. Critical thinking is not simply recalling information. Rather, it lies in manipulation of concepts and information. Some people believe that critical thinking and religion are in opposition to each other. However, joining religion with critical thinking means that "We are using reasoning as a process by which we come to make judgments, the reason is the justification we give for a viewpoint" (McCreery, Palmer & Voiels, 2007, p. 56). There are four principles that form the concept of critical thinking. "When identifying questions, children are learning to analyze. When discussing the reliability of sources, children are learning to evaluate. When considering how answers fit together, children are learning to synthesize. And when using their information for a project, they are learning to apply knowledge" (McCreery, Palmer & Voiels, 2007, p. 61).

Onsongo (2002) discussed another innovative approach in teaching religious education called "The Life Approach." Loukes (1965) defined it as a way of teaching about the present situation of the learners and then letting students arrive at a religious understanding of those experiences engendered from present situations. Muthoni (1992) emphasized that the life approach essentially concentrates on the use of the learners' day-to-day experiences. In this approach, students are receivers of God who speaks to people through their situations and experiences. The role of teaching this approach is to shift from the traditional faith-fostering to a more life-centered education. The innovation in this approach may be seen through "encouraging learners to look more deeply into their feelings, acts, and experiences and to express what they discover in everyday language" (Onsongo, 2002). Engebretson (2002) stated that the life-centered approach emphasizes "the sharing of life experiences between students and teachers, reflection on this life experience, and the linking of this reflection with growth in knowledge and affective understanding of faith content" (p.38). According to this definition, the process of life approach may be applied through four steps: experience shared, reflection deepened, faith expressed, and insights reinforced.

This new approach in teaching religious education has encouraged researchers to examine it. Goldman (1964) conducted an examination in Britain using a sample of 200 students between the ages of 6 and 17 years. This study aimed to explore if the life approach has any influence on developing levels of understanding in religious thinking. The findings of the study showed that teaching religious education based upon real life experience plays a large role in building critical thinking among students.

Buchanan (2005) discussed “Shared Christian Praxis” as a new innovative approach in teaching religious education. Groome (1991) defined this new approach as

A participative and dialogical pedagogy in which people reflect critically on their own historical agency in time and place and on their socio-cultural reality, have access together to Christian Story/Vision, and personally appropriate in community with the creative intent of reviewed praxis in Christian faith towards God’s reign for all creation (p. 135).

This approach was meant as a response to the growing quest for human freedom. The innovation in this approach may be seen through employing strategies that allow the development of critical self-reflection skills. According to this approach, the goal of religious education is neither to deliver a static truth nor to determine certain attitudes. Rather, it is to create critical participants who will be able to face ongoing issues in life. In addition, the aim of the shared praxis approach is to engage the whole person; it is more than an exercise in learning the cognitive dimensions of religious education. Groome (1980) recommended five steps when applying the shared praxis model.

1. Naming the present action so that students can reflect on it and make distinctions between what was really happening and what should be happening.
2. The participant’s stories and visions: In this phase, students may critically reflect based upon the factors that led to the present situation. Students in this phase should be concerned with the “why” questions, for example, “why do we do as we do”?
3. The Christian community story and vision: In this phase, students should be provided with an opportunity to see their own experiences in light of the religious story and vision.

4. Dialogue between the inspirational story and participants: In this phase, both: students' experiences and Christian stories and visions should be examined in light of what "should be," as well as what actually "is."
5. A decision for future action: In this phase, students should be prepared to make appropriate decision for future action in order to close the gap between the lived experience and the Christian vision (p.146).

Additionally, Buchanan (2005) discussed one of the new approaches compatible with international trends called phenomenological approach. Ryan (1997) defined it as

A study of the ways in which humans come to know, acknowledges that all meaning, knowledge and truth is grounded in a person's experience of encountering objects in their lived reality. This is equally so of peoples' encounters with religious objects. Religious symbols, people, ideas, buildings and so on present themselves to individuals in ways common to other social settings (p. 100).

This approach focuses on the critical understanding of religion. According to this approach, the curriculum is based on the context of secular ideologies. In light of this approach, students should contrast and compare various religious traditions and non-religious alternatives, such as communism and humanism. Teachers are required to teach all religions presented in their classrooms with the same spirit of thoughtful courteous appreciation and inquiry (Buchanan, 2005). Under this approach, students become knowledgeable and literate in the language of religion. However, they are not required to accept or approve of those beliefs. Buchanan (2005) illustrated that the shared praxis provides students with opportunities that enable them to explore knowledge about any religious matter within the context of a Christian faith tradition, whereas a phenomenological approach places an emphasis on knowledge as a part of a social product.

Two Australian academics, Habel and Moore (1982), have presented a new approach in teaching religious education called the “typological approach.” This approach was based on the fact that the “modern world forces people increasingly to confront others with varying religious and cultural beliefs to their own” (Ryan, 1997, p. 105). Habel and Moore (1982) demonstrated that students would benefit from learning types of elements related to religion. Their theory has outlined eight “types” shared by religious traditions, which are beliefs, texts, stories, ethics, ritual, symbols, social structure, and experience. As a result of this approach, a religious curriculum in Britain has taken different direction. For instance, one of the courses was called “Religion and Society” and another course was called “Texts and Traditions.” These two courses depended heavily on the approaches of both phenomenology and typology.

Buchanan (2005) concluded his series of new approaches in teaching religious education with the approach called the “Educational Approach.” This new approach places its emphasis on knowledge-centered curricula. Religious curricula are presented within the context of educational paradigm that emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge as “a vehicle for spiritual and personal faith development through attention to knowledge, understanding, and critical inquiry” (p. 33). From the educational perspective, religious education excludes neither the faith and beliefs that are underpinned in the life-centered approach nor shared Christian Praxis Approach as discussed above. However, the educational approach does emphasize that religious education ought to be taught in a way that meets the needs of both a society and the state.

In addition to these approaches, Charron (2004) discussed the importance of including citizenship education in religious curricula. This approach builds a solid ground for the concept of patriotism among students. This does not contradict teaching of religious education because it

provides a positive atmosphere for human beings under the values of justice and coexistence. Joining citizenship to religion is meant to "advocate moral commitments that are translated into norms for citizens to foster responsible citizenship, and that become obligations that the state must meet for this goal to be achieved" (Charron, 2004, p.13). In fact, the benefit of joining citizenship education to religious education is to deepen students' understanding toward others. It may help students to eliminate prejudice and make it easier to recognize that others have the right to be different and thus affirm this difference. Therefore, this innovative approach creates and promotes a positive view of otherness and diversity. More importantly, citizenship education helps develop citizens who are qualified to take part in public debate and action regardless of the differences among respective convictions. Charron (2004) described the characteristics of responsible citizens:

A responsible citizen is aware, free, compassionate, involved and supportive, and has developed analytical and synthetically skills that enable him or her to make connections among various personal and social phenomena. A responsible citizen is also autonomous, and has developed an ability to judge and evaluate that he or she applies to his or her own actions as well as those of fellow citizens (p.10).

McCreery, Palmer and Voiels (2007) enlarged the circle of citizenship education to global citizenship. This new understanding of citizenship may be delivered through enhancing several topics in the content of the religious curriculum. Students should be able to build skills that enable them to evaluate information and different points of view on global issues throughout the media and other sources. Additionally, the content of the curriculum helps students to understand how and where key decisions are made. Students should be taught in a way that allows them to appreciate the global context of local and national matters at both personal and societal levels.

Tolerance education is another innovative approach developed by Charron (2004). He defined it as actions that "allow other individuals who do not share our ideas or belong to the same ethnic group to live freely" (p. 18). Teaching students to be tolerant requires teachers to encourage students to understand others. This does not come from memorizing ideas or listening to teachers' lecturing; instead, it comes from comparing ideas and analyzing them. Tolerance is interpreted in either a "weak" or "strong" sense. To illustrate this point, weakness comes when we are tolerant because the law bans us from interfering in others' beliefs who do not share ours. However, tolerance may be a strong sense that comes from understanding the reason behind other's beliefs.

Charron (2004) stated that strong tolerance is a psychological and cognitive ability. When we teach students to be tolerant we are not asking them to put their beliefs aside; rather, we are asking them to respect the rights, values, and ways of life that others may adopt. Tolerance education does not only take its importance from treating others well and justly, even though it is important. It does take its importance from realizing that others have an equal dignity, whether or not their beliefs may seem strange or incompatible with the majority view.

The process of tolerance education produces what is referred to as "moderate education." When religious education teachers seek to teach the religious matters from different points of view, this will lead students to set certain limits to the expression of their own convictions in their relationships with other people. Moderation does not lead to self-denial; rather, it leads to deep understanding in the religious matters. The concept of moderation goes hand in hand with another important requirement, reciprocity. Charron (2004) states that "the ability to think in reciprocal terms makes such learning easier: we must do unto others as we would have them do

unto us" (p.20). More important, the new concept may provide personal persuasion that helps individuals acknowledge the identities of others and lifestyles as acceptable or valid. Education provides a way to reach this end because even the obligation of the law cannot force individuals to be considerate of their relationships to other.

Between Traditionalists and Innovationists

How do traditionalists and innovationists view themselves when they teach religious education? Nepstad (2004) discussed three approaches that distinguish traditionalists and innovationists in understanding religious education: the nature of good and evil, the nature of truth, and the nature of religion. In the first approach, the nature of good and evil, traditionalists view themselves as protectors of righteousness. Anyone who disagrees is considered an enemy who must be fought. In addition, traditionalists possess and represent rightness, law, and morality; therefore, they see themselves as heroes and granters of meaning and purpose to their existence. On the other hand, religious education teachers who adopt the concept of innovation in their teaching believe that the line between good and evil lies within each individual and not between groups. All people are capable of evil and everyone is redeemable.

The second essential distinction focuses on their views of truth. Traditionalists believe that there is only one truth and they possess it. For instance, Gandhi talked about the relationship between God and truth. From the standpoint of traditionalists, the truth is God and they have the truth, so God is in their own side, whereas from the viewpoint of innovationists, Gandhi stated that God is the truth and since all humans do not fully and completely know God, then all humans do not possess the absolute truth. The idea of not owning the truth and the truth is spread

among religions requires truth seekers to constantly stay open to others' views, including their enemies' views (Nepstad, 2004).

The third fundamental difference appears in their understanding of religion itself. For traditionalists, religion is an end in itself, while innovationists see religion as a means to an end. When religion is seen as an end, it leads followers to sacrifice themselves in order to preserve a religious foothold in the society; however, when it is seen as a means to an end, then the understanding of religion “may integrate religiously inspired principles of justice and respect for all people into the fabric of society” (Nepstad, 2004). In the other words, innovationists see religion as an umbrella that unifies all the differences in society under the concepts of justice and coexistence (Nepstad, 2004).

Teaching Experience

One of the hypotheses that the researcher studied in this research was to determine if there is a statistically significant relationship between teaching experience and implementing innovative approaches in teaching Islamic education. Yujing and Qiong (2009) conducted a comparative study on the forms and content of dialogues in the classrooms between expert and novice teachers. Of the 55 lessons surveyed, the study's finding shows that expert teachers tend to use analytical and comparative questions more often in order to detect students' mathematical reasoning. Novice teachers, on the other hand, tend to give their students hints and use simple questions only to jog the memory.

Similarly, O'Connor, Fish, and Yasik (2004) conducted a study to determine whether differences exist between expert teachers (n=35) and novice teachers (n=35) on three factors: cohesion, communication, and flexibility. After 50-minute observations using Classroom

Systems Observation Scale (CSOS) in elementary schools in New York, researchers found that expert teachers had statistically higher levels of classroom communication and flexibility than classrooms of novice teachers, whereas there was no difference for classroom cohesion.

In addition to these studies, Chi, Glaser, and Farr (1988) found that expert teachers have superior self-monitoring skills, examine problems qualitatively, and solve problems quickly and fairly accurately. In addition to these characteristics, expert teachers display a more elaborate knowledge base and perceive problems on a deeper, more complex level than novice teachers (Gallagher, 1994; Weinert, Schrader, & Helmke, 1990). Furthermore, researchers have shown that expert teachers may be better able to comprehend and describe classroom phenomena in depth than novice teachers. When expert teachers encounter problems in their classroom, they find it easy to offer many possible solutions. In contrast, novice teachers may not see the problem, which indicates that they may not be able to properly observe their classroom (Carter, Cushing, Sabers, Stein, & Berliner, 1988; Peterson & Comeaux, 1987; O'Connor, Fish, Yasik, 2004).

Studies are quite limited that look at the impact of teaching experiences on implementing the new innovative approaches in teaching Islamic religious curricula. Alzu'bi, Alhawamlah, and Alshowdayfat (2009) conducted a study in Jordan that aimed to investigate the relationship between teaching experience and the extent of the Islamic education teachers in motivating innovation among secondary school pupils. A questionnaire was developed and distributed to 126 Islamic education teachers. The finding of the study revealed that there is no statistically significant difference relevant to teaching experience. In other words, expert and novice teachers

did not show any difference in using innovative approaches in teaching Islamic education curricula.

Academic Qualifications

The second hypothesis in the study was to explore the relationship between the academic qualifications of Islamic education teachers and the implementation of new innovative approaches in Islamic education curricula. Buddin and Zamarro (2009) examined whether teacher licensure test scores and other teacher attributes affect elementary students' achievement. The result showed that there are large differences in teachers' quality across the school district. However, measured teacher characteristics demonstrated little difference. The study shows that teacher licensure test scores and teacher success in the classroom are not related. Furthermore, the study concluded that teachers with advanced degree do not affect students' achievement. Hanushek (1986) indicated that most explicit measures of teacher qualifications such as experience and education had little influence on student achievement.

In contrast to these studies, implicit measures such as average performance of individual teachers differed significantly across teachers. However, these implicit measures lacked to control the prior achievement of students. Therefore, new studies have been conducted year-to-year measuring the role of teacher qualifications in student achievement. For instance, Ehrenberg and Brewer (1995) found that the teacher test scores on a verbal aptitude test were linked with higher gains in students' scores. However, the results were varied based upon school level and students' ethnic status.

Teacher Gender

The third hypothesis in this research focused on the gender differences among Islamic education teachers in applying new innovative approaches when teaching Islamic curricula. Many studies have been conducted that reveal the role of gender differences in several different domains. However, information about the role that gender difference may play in teaching religious education is quite limited. Basow (1995) conducted a study considering the gender differences related to teachers' knowledge. He found that male teachers were perceived by students to be more knowledgeable; female teachers, on the other hand, were thought to be more sensitive and respectful of students' ideas.

Lacey, Saleh, and Gorman (1988) studied the relationship between gender differences and teaching style. They found that male teachers were more dominant and exacting, while female teachers were more informal and open toward students' ideas. Moreover, Starbuck (2003) found that female teachers tend to use methods of teaching that are more interactive, such as class discussions, small group discussions, and group projects. Basow and Montgomery (2006) conducted a study of 20 female and 23 male professors at a Liberal Arts College. The findings of the study showed that female professors may have different teaching styles than their male colleagues, and their students may prefer the teaching style more consistent with their own gender. Female professors tend to be more student-oriented and less authoritative than male professors. More specifically, female professors have more class discussion, less lecturing, and greater availability outside of class. In addition, it is more important for female professors to be friendly than male professors. It is also important for female professors to be self-confident, stable, and steady.

Basow and Montgomery (2006) demonstrated that there are two factors that may affect the result of the studies mentioned above. First, gender differences may be affected by discipline differences. For instance, class discussions may be more likely in the humanities than in science and engineering, which is not casual regarding gender differences. Second, divisional affiliation may interact with gender differences. For example, because female teachers are less likely to be in the physical sciences and engineering, their presence in physical sciences may be interpreted as gender-inappropriate and thus female teachers may be evaluated negatively. While researchers have studied the relationship between gender differences and their impact on teaching from different domains, the researcher could not find any literature that investigated gender differences in teaching Islamic curricula; therefore, it is important that this study will examine this issue.

Summary

In this chapter, I have presented literature on worldwide approaches that influence the delivery of curriculum in the field of religious education. The approaches in the field of religious education have been divided into two categories: traditional approaches and innovative approaches. Traditional approaches follow certain approaches: lack of religious diversity, missionary approach, unchangeable religious curriculum, teacher-centered approach, Bible-centered approach, and moral prescriptions or blind indoctrination approach. Innovative approaches, on the other hand, may follow other approaches: life-centered approach, critical thinking approach, phenomenological approach, typological approach, tolerance approach, moderation approach, and educational approach. In addition, the literature of the role of number of years of teaching experience, academic qualifications, and gender differences in teaching have been reviewed in this chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methods and Procedures

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methods and procedures used to conduct the current research. The study is designed to investigate the extent that Islamic education teachers in Saudi Arabia implement innovative approaches when teaching Islamic curricula. In addition, the study aimed to examine the role of number of years teaching experience, academic qualifications, and teacher gender in implementing innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula.

This chapter provided in details the methods and procedures of the study including the research design, research questions, data collection, description of the variables, description of population and sample, instrumentation, validity, reliability, and data analysis.

Research Design

A descriptive research was used in order to accomplish the objectives of this study. This kind of research design is commonly selected to test research questions and examine hypotheses. Lauer (2006) divided descriptive research into three categories. The first category is simple descriptive studies designed to collect data that describe persons, organizations, settings, or phenomena. This type of descriptive study was used in the current research to measure the extent that Islamic education teachers in Saudi Arabia implement innovative approaches in their teaching. Means and standard deviations of the two questionnaires, “The Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula” and “The Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education” were computed. The second category of descriptive research is comparative descriptive studies

that describe and compare two or more groups of participants. In the current study, this type of research was used to compare gender and expert versus novice teachers regarding their implementation of innovative approaches when teaching Islamic curricula. The third category of descriptive research is correlational studies that describe the statistical association between two or more variables. The current research used this type of design to examine the relationship between the number of years teaching experience and the five subscales in the second questionnaire, “The Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education.”

Administering these two questionnaires helped the researcher to explore based upon the teachers’ perspectives, the extent to which Islamic education teachers are implementing innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula. The study also investigated the role that factors such as teacher gender, numbers of years teaching experience, and teachers’ academic qualifications play in the implementation of innovative approaches to their teaching. A questionnaire was used because it is commonly considered an effective tool for measuring attitudes, beliefs, values, feelings, thoughts, and perceptions (Johnson & Christensen, 2000).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The questions that the study attempted to answer are as follows:

1. What are the pedagogical beliefs that influence the way Islamic education teachers implement Islamic curricula?
2. To what extent do Islamic education teachers implement innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?

3. Is number of years teaching experience related to the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?
4. Are the academic qualifications of Islamic education teachers related to the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?
5. Does teacher gender play any role in the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?

Addressing the above questions, the researcher generated the following hypotheses:

1. Islamic education teachers use more traditional approaches than innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula.
2. There is a statistically significant relationship between the number of years teaching experience and the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula.
3. There is a statistically significant difference between teachers' academic qualifications and the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula.
4. There is a statistically significant difference between male and female teachers in the implementation of innovative approaches when teaching Islamic curricula.

Data Collection and Procedures

In order to accomplish the objectives of the study, two questionnaires were administered. Since the educational system in Saudi Arabia has adopted single-sex schooling, each questionnaire was grammatically revised for either male or female teachers. Demographic information such as academic qualifications, number of years teaching experience, and gender

were collected. The first questionnaire, Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula, has five domains (subscales):

1. Static –Dynamic (4 items)
2. Easy –Hard (6 items)
3. Sanctity of the Discipline (4 items)
4. Student Learning and Achievement (5 items)
5. Teacher Role as Mentor (7 items)

The second questionnaire, The Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Curricula, consists of five domains or subscales:

1. Freedom of Opinion (9 items)
2. Acceptance of Innovation (12 items)
3. The Innovation in the Content of Islamic Curricula (9 items)
4. The Innovation in the Method of Teaching (9 items)
5. Innovation in the Method of Assessment (7 items)

Both questionnaires employ a Likert-type scale consisting of: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree and 5= Strongly Agree for collecting responses.

In order to ensure confidentiality, participants were provided a cover letter describing the purpose of the study and how the data were used. Participants were informed that they were voluntary subjects and their responses would not be personally identifiable.

Translation from English to Arabic

Since the participants in the study were Arabic-speaking Islamic education teachers (female and male) who were teaching Islamic curricula and their English language may not enable them to accurately understand the questionnaire, the researcher developed an Arabic version for the first questionnaire “The Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula.” The second questionnaire, “The Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education,” was originally designed in an Arabic language, so the researcher has developed an English version for the dissertation committee.

To ensure validity of the first questionnaire, the researcher sought assistance from doctoral students at the University of Kansas who are experts in both languages (English/Arabic) and have a linguistics background. The translation process began by translating the English version into the Arabic language, and then the revised Arabic questionnaire was given to a different translator in order to translate it back into English. After that, the researcher compared the original English questionnaire with the version that has been translated from Arabic into English. Both versions matched without significant difference.

Consent to conduct the study

Two questionnaires were approved by the Human Subject Committee in Lawrence (HSCL) at the University of Kansas.

Description of the Variables

1. Independent Variables:

- a. Gender (male and female Islamic education teachers).
- b. The number of years teaching experience.
- c. Teachers' academic qualifications with two levels: (undergraduate degree, and graduate degree).

2. Dependent Variables include the extent those Islamic education teachers encourage innovative approaches in the five domains:

- a. Freedom of Opinion.
- b. Acceptance of Innovation,
- c. Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula.
- d. Innovation in the Method of Teaching.
- e. Innovation in the Method of Assessment.

Population and Sample

The population of participants for the study were male and female Islamic education teachers at high schools in seven different school districts in Saudi Arabia. Those school districts were Eastern School District of Jeddah, Industrial City of Yunbu, Industrial City of Jubial, School District of Umlej, School District of Madina, School District of Mecca, and School District of Al Wajh. These seven school districts represent four types of schools in Saudi Arabia:

1) districts located in industrial cities (Yunbu and Jubial), 2) districts located in rural areas (Umlej and Al Wajh), 3) districts located in urban areas (Eastern School District of Jeddah), and 4) districts located in the two holy cities (Mecca and Al Madina). The total sample for the study consisted of 107 male and 69 female Islamic curricula teachers. Teachers were randomly selected. Two hundred and thirty questionnaires were given to the supervisors of Islamic education teachers for the school districts and were administered throughout their visitations to teachers of Islamic education in the spring of 2011. The instruments of the study were given to the supervisors of Islamic education teachers in order to enable “each member of the population has an equal and independent chance of being selected to be part of the sample” (Salkind, 2009, p.90).

Validity

Validity is “the degree to which an instrument measures what it is designed to measure and the degree to which it is used appropriately” (Lauer, 2006, p.136). The validity of both questionnaires used in this study demonstrated a high level of content validity. DeVellis (2003) defined this form of validity as “the extent to which a specific set of items reflect a content domain” (p. 50). For example, a researcher may ask colleagues who are familiar with the context of the research to review the list of items. Colleagues may suggest items that have been omitted whereas they should be included, or those experts may delete items that are not related to the content area.

For the first questionnaire, “The Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula”, was created by Iluz and Rich (2008) for their study “Internal and external factors shaping educational beliefs of high school teachers of “sacred” subjects to girls.” The questionnaire was constructed

with a series of 12 open interviews conducted with religious public school principals, supervisors, and teachers of sacred subjects. These interviews aimed to reveal themes in the pedagogical thinking of teachers of sacred subjects. It also aimed to conceptualize unique issues that teachers are encountering as well as issues shared with teachers of other subjects. Moreover, teachers of sacred subjects for high school girls were asked to express their feedback regarding the items used in the questionnaire. The items were revised for clarity, relevance and redundancy.

The second questionnaire, “The Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education”, was designed by Alzu’bi, Alhawamlah, and Alshowdayfat (2009) and was shown to 13 experts in the field of educational measurement, educational curriculum, and Islamic education. Those experts were professors from different universities in Jordan including A’al Albait University, Alyarmouk University, Jordanian University, and Alhashemiah University. They were asked to give feedback about the items regarding their clarity and relevance to each other. Additionally, they were asked to give any suggestions that might improve the questionnaire. As a result of their suggestions, the questionnaire was cut to 46 items after 4 items were deleted.

Reliability

Reliability is considered a fundamental issue in psychological measurement. DeVellis (2003) stated, "Scale reliability is the proportion of variance attributable to the true score of the latent variable" (p. 27). A strong relationship between items and the latent variable implies a strong relationship among items. When a questionnaire or an instrument is consistent and accurate, they have a high degree of reliability. Internal consistency concentrates on examining how unified the items are for a particular test. It correlates performance on each item to the total performance on the test. Internal consistency is concerned with the homogeneity of the items within a scale. The common statistical method used is Cronbach's (1951) alpha coefficient (Salkind, 2009, 117). Santos (1990) indicated that 0.70 is an acceptable reliability coefficient. For both questionnaires, Cronbach's alpha has been computed for previous studies and these results are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1

Past Reliability Coefficients for “The Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula” by Subscale

Subscales	Items	Reliability Coefficients
1. Static- Dynamic	6 items	$\alpha = .74$
2. Easy-Hard	6 items	$\alpha = .76$
3. Sanctity of Discipline	4 items	$\alpha = .67$
4. Student Learning and Achievement	5 items	$\alpha = .71$
5. Teacher Role as Mentor	7 items	$\alpha = .81$

Table 2

Past Reliability Coefficients for “The Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education” by Subscale

Subscales	Items	Reliability Coefficients
1. Freedom of Opinion	9 items	$\alpha = .78$
2. Acceptance of innovation	12 items	$\alpha = .83$
3. Innovation in the Content	9 items	$\alpha = .78$
4. Innovation in the Method of Teaching	9 items	$\alpha = .81$
5. Innovation in Assessment	7 items	$\alpha = .67$

However, The Cronbach's alpha coefficients computed for the two questionnaires for this study are reported in Tables 3 and 4. For the first questionnaire, item numbers 4 and 6 were deleted from the first subscale (Static – Dynamic) in order to improve the reliability alpha level.

Table 3

Current Reliability Coefficients for “The Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula” by Subscale

Subscales	Items	Reliability Coefficients
1. Static- Dynamic	4 items	$\alpha = .72$
2. Easy-Hard	6 items	$\alpha = .67$
3. Sanctity of Discipline	4 items	$\alpha = .64$
4. Student Learning and Achievement	5 items	$\alpha = .70$
5. Teacher Role as Mentor	7 items	$\alpha = .83$

Table 4

Current Reliability Coefficients for “The Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education” by Subscale

Subscales	Items	Reliability Coefficients
1. Freedom of Opinion	9 items	$\alpha = .83$
2. Acceptance of innovation	12 items	$\alpha = .89$
3. Innovation in the Content	9 items	$\alpha = .89$
4. Innovation in the Method of Teaching	9 items	$\alpha = .88$
5. Innovation in Assessment	7 items	$\alpha = .74$

Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative analysis methods were used for this study in order to accomplish its objectives. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program, version (19.0) was used to code and analyze the data according to the research questions and hypotheses proposed by the study. The researcher used different statistical tests based upon the research question.

A- The researcher used descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) to investigate the first two questions:

(1) What are the pedagogical beliefs that influence the way that Islamic education teachers implement Islamic curricula?

(2) To what extent do Islamic education teachers implement innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?

Means and standard deviations were computed for the questionnaire, “The Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula,” in order to examine the first question. For the second research question, means and the standard deviations for the “The Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education” questionnaire were computed.

B. For the third research question, the relationships between the number of years teaching experience and the five subscales for the “The Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education” questionnaire were determined by examining the various correlation coefficients.

C. A one-way analysis of variance was used to investigate the fourth and fifth research questions.

4. Are the academic qualifications of Islamic education teachers related to the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?
5. Does teacher gender play any role in the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?

For research question 4, teachers' academic qualification was used as independent variable and the five dependent variables were the subscale scores for the "The Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education" questionnaire: freedom of Opinion, Acceptance of Innovation, Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula, Innovation in Method of Teaching, and Innovation in the Method of Assessment. For research question 5, the same procedure used gender as the independent variable, and the five subscales for the "The Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education" questionnaire were the dependent variables. For all statistical tests, the researcher used the alpha level of 0.05.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

In this chapter, the results for the analysis of the data collected are presented. The study was designed to explore the pedagogical beliefs of Islamic education teachers in Saudi Arabia and to measure the extent to which Islamic education teachers implement innovative approaches in their teaching. In addition, the study also explored the role of teacher gender, academic qualifications, and years of teaching experience in the implementation of innovative approaches when teaching Islamic education. The chapter includes a summary of the statistical methods used for analysis, a description of the population and sample, the findings pertaining to each research question, and a chapter summary.

Statistical Methods

Descriptive statistics (Means and standard deviations) were used in order to explore the pedagogical beliefs of Islamic education teachers and the extent of implementing innovative approaches when teaching Islamic education. A one-way analysis of variance test was used to investigate the differences in teachers' perspectives based upon gender and academic qualifications. Correlation coefficients were used to examine the relationship between years of teaching experience and the implementation of innovative approaches when teaching Islamic education. The data were analyzed and coded using SPSS version 19.0.

Data Cleaning

The data was examined for univariate outliers by computing and analyzing z-scores for the five subscale scores in the study: Freedom of Opinion, Acceptance of Innovation, Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula, Innovation in the Methods of Teaching, and Innovation

in the Methods of Assessment. The criterion score used to determine the outlier was ($\leq \pm 3.20$). Six univariate outliers were found and deleted. Therefore, the actual number of cases for analysis is 174. In addition, the data was checked for multivariate outliers as well. The Mahalanobis Distances were computed to determine the multivariate outliers among the variables. To identify an outlier that exceeds the critical value, we have to look for a chi-square which depends upon two factors: the degree of freedom and the probability level. The degree of freedom is based on the number of variables under investigation (8 variables for the current study), and the probability level we set for this test is .001, so our critical value is 26.13. As a result, any Mahalanobis Distances score above 26.13 was determined a multivariate outlier. No multivariate outliers were detected in the data.

Population and Sample

Participants in this study were high school Islamic education teachers in 7 school districts in Saudi Arabia. These school districts were: Jeddah School District, Mecca School District, Madina School District, Yunbu School District, Jubial School District, Al Wajh School District, and Umledg School District. Two hundred and thirty questionnaires were given to the supervisors of Islamic education teachers for the school districts and were administered to teachers in the spring of 2011. One hundred and eighty-two questionnaires were returned. After cleaning the data, 174 were deemed valid cases and were used in the final analysis.

The participants in the study differed in terms of gender as shown in (Table 5), academic qualifications as shown in (Table 6), and school district as shown in (Table 7). The participants also differed in terms of years of teaching experiences. Teachers ranged from one year of experience to 26 years of experiences.

Table 5

Frequencies for respondents' gender

Gender	Participants	Percentage
Male Teacher	107	61.5
Female Teacher	67	38.5

Table 6

Frequencies for respondents' academic qualifications

Academic qualifications	Participants	Percentage
Undergraduate	117	67.2
Graduate	57	32.8

Table 7

Frequencies for respondents' School District

School District	Participant	Percentage
Urban	53	30.5
Holy Cities	38	21.8
Industrial Cities	42	24.1
Rural Area	41	23.6

Research Questions

In order to answer the first research question, “What are the pedagogical beliefs that influence the way that Islamic education teachers implement Islamic curricula?” data was gathered about the most frequent pedagogical beliefs held by the high school Islamic education teachers using a survey instrument designed to explore the pedagogical beliefs of Islamic education teachers. This survey, the Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula, consisted of five subscales: Static-Dynamic, Easy-Hard, Sanctity of the Discipline, Student Learning and Achievement, and Teacher Role as Mentor.

Static- Dynamic

The first subscale, Static-Dynamic, is related to teacher’s beliefs about the extent of change in their knowledge over time. The most frequently mentioned pedagogical belief related to static-dynamic was item number 1, “There are constant changes in the subject I teach” (M=2.97, SD=1.23). The least frequently mentioned pedagogical belief was item number 2, “The body of knowledge comprising my subject is constant changing” (M=2.71, SD= 1.20). Table 8 displays the means and standard deviations for the pedagogical beliefs related to Static-Dynamic survey subscale based on the perspective of high school Islamic education teachers.

Table 8

Static-Dynamic subscale means and standard deviations

Item No	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	There are constant changes in the subject I teach.	2.97	1.23
5	The knowledge in my subject is constantly developing.	2.86	1.17
3	The body of knowledge in my subject is not in a process of change.	2.84	1.25
2	The body of knowledge comprising my subject is constant changing.	2.71	1.20

Easy-Hard

The second subscale of the pedagogical beliefs survey, Easy-Hard, is related to the knowledge of religious curricula. The most frequently mentioned belief was item number 11, “Students must work hard in my class to understand the material” (M=3.76, SD=1.02). The item that received the lowest ratings in terms of the Easy-Hard subscale was item number 7, “Compared to other subjects the subject I teach is hard for students” (M=1.95, SD=1.01). Table 9 displays the means and standard deviations of the pedagogical beliefs considered by Islamic education teachers in terms of the Easy-Hard subscale.

Table 9

Easy – Hard subscale means and standard deviations

Item No	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
11	Students must work hard in my class to understand the material.	3.76	1.02
10	Even students who succeed in other subjects might not do very well in my subject.	3.50	1.35
8	I want my students to think that the subject I teach requires a major effort from them.	3.20	1.22
9	The subject I teach demands a high level of analytical skill.	3.14	1.14
12	I make significant academic demands from the students who study my subject.	2.52	1.09
7	Compared to other subjects the subject I teach is hard for students.	1.95	1.01

Sanctity of the Discipline

The third subscale of the survey is Sanctity of the Discipline. The most frequently mentioned pedagogical belief related to Sanctity of the Discipline was item number 13, “It's important to me that students relate to the subject I teach with a great deal of respect” (M=4.56, SD=.89). The item that received the lowest ratings in terms of Sanctity of the Discipline was item number 16, “It is very important to me that my students don't belittle interpretations they disagree with” (M=3.86, SD=1.04). Table 10 displays the means and standard deviations of the pedagogical beliefs considered by Islamic education teachers in terms of Sanctity of the Discipline subscale.

Table 10

Sanctity of the Discipline subscale means and standard deviations

Item No	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
13	It's important to me that students relate to the subject I teach with a great deal of respect.	4.56	.89
14	When in class I want students to feel that the value of the subject I teach is different from other subjects.	4.48	.94
15	I will not tolerate arguments in class against our Islamic teachings in the subject.	3.95	1.29
16	It is very important to me that my students don't belittle interpretations they disagree with.	3.86	1.04

Student Learning and Achievement

The fourth subscale, Student Learning and Achievement, focuses on teacher perceptions of students as learners and achievers. High ratings in this subscale demonstrate that achievement and attainment are critically important for students' happiness and success. The most frequently mentioned pedagogical belief in terms of Student Learning and Achievement was statement item number 21, "My students' matriculation examination scores are very important to me" (M=3.64, SD=1.19). The statement that received the lowest ratings was item number 18, "Success in teaching is manifested in the high grades of students" (M=2.69, SD=1.31). Table 11 displays the means and standard deviations of the pedagogical beliefs considered by Islamic education teachers in terms of Student Learning and Achievement subscale.

Table 11

Student Learning and Achievement subscale means and standard deviations

Item No	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
21	My students' matriculation examination scores are very important to me.	3.64	1.19
20	High grades are essential for my students to get ahead in life.	3.49	1.26
17	Grades are an impetus to high quality learning.	3.15	1.29
19	Grades are an essential tool for assessing learning.	2.79	1.23
18	Success in teaching is manifested in the high grades of students.	2.69	1.31

Teacher Role as Mentor

The last subscale in the instrument of pedagogical belief is Teacher Role as Mentor. The most frequently mentioned belief was item number 23, "It is very important that I be a role model for my students" (M=4.67, SD=.76). The lowest rating statement was item number 26, "My chief role is to serve as guide and leader for my students" (M=3.98, SD=1.04). Table 12 displays the means and standard deviations of the Teacher Role as Mentor subscale pedagogical beliefs by Islamic education teachers.

Table 12

Teacher Role as Mentor subscale means and standard deviations

Item No	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
23	It is very important that I be a role model for my students.	4.67	.76
24	I feel great responsibility to help my students develop personality strengths that will help them cope with important issues in life.	4.52	.78
22	My main job as a teacher is to contribute to shaping the personality of the student.	4.35	.83
25	The most important thing to me is for my students to feel that they can come to me with any personal problem.	4.25	.84
27	It is important that my students remember me as a guide in life.	4.17	.95
28	My role as a teacher is to guide students towards a particular value system.	4.08	.97
26	My chief role is to serve as guide and leader for my students.	3.98	1.04

Additional Findings for Research Question One

Additional findings may be found when comparing those five subscales of pedagogical beliefs in terms of teacher gender or the location of school district. A series of One-Way Analyses of Variance was conducted to evaluate the role of teacher gender in terms of the five subscales of pedagogical beliefs. The independent variable was teacher gender with two levels: (male and female). The dependent variables were the five subscales: Static-Dynamic Subscale, Easy-Hard Subscale, Sanctity of the Discipline Subscale, Student Learning and Achievement Subscale and Teacher Role as Mentor Subscale. An examination of the histograms for the five subscales was conducted and indicated that scores were approximately normally distributed with no extreme outliers. In addition, prior to the analysis, the Levene test for homogeneity of variance was used to examine whether there were serious violations of the assumption of homogeneity of variance across the five subscales, and no significant violations were found.

Statistically significant differences between teacher gender was found for Static-Dynamic subscale with $F(1, 173) = 5.26, p = .02$. This corresponded to an effect size of $\eta^2 = 0.03$; that is, about 3% of the variance in the first subscale (Static-Dynamic) may be predicted by the gender of the teacher. This effect size of .03 is considered a small effect. Female teachers ($M = 3.01$) had significantly higher ratings than male teachers ($M = 2.73, p < .05$). In addition, teacher gender was statistically significant in terms of the Sanctity of the Discipline Subscale, $F(1, 173) = 12.21, p = .001$. This corresponded to an effect size of $\eta^2 = 0.07$; that is, about 7% of the variance in the third subscale (Sanctity of the Discipline) may be predicted by the gender of the teacher. This effect size of 0.07 is considered a medium effect. Female teacher ($M = 4.46$) had significantly higher ratings than male teachers ($M = 4.05, p < .05$). Moreover, student Learning and Achievement Subscale significantly differed based on teacher gender, $F(1, 173) = 4.87, p =$

.03 with a small effect size as well $\eta^2 = 0.03$. Female teachers ($M=3.32$) had significantly higher ratings than male teachers ($M= 3.04$, $p<.05$). For the last subscale, Teacher Role as Mentor, a statistical significant difference was found between male and female teacher, $F (1,173) = 5.02$, $p=.03$ with a small effect size $\eta^2 = 0.03$. Female teacher ($M= 4.42$) had higher ratings than male teachers ($M=4.20$, $p<.05$). Table 13 shows the analysis of variance results for all the five subscales.

Table 13

One- Way analysis of variance results for the Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula by Teacher Gender

Subscale	F	Sig.
Static-Dynamic	5.26	0.02
Easy-Hard	2.56	.11
Sanctity of the Discipline	12.21	.00
Student Learning and Achievement	4.87	.02
Teacher Role as Mentor	5.02	.02

df for all subscales was (1, 173).

A series of One-Way Analyses of Variance were conducted to evaluate the role of the location of school districts in the Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula. The independent variable was the location of the school district category with four groups: urban school districts, school districts in the two Holy cities, school districts in the two Industrial cities, and school districts in a rural area. The dependent variables were the five subscales of the Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula: Static – Dynamic Subscale, Easy-Hard Subscale, Sanctity of the Discipline Subscale, Student Learning and Achievement Subscale, and Teacher Role as Mentor Subscale.

Statistically significant differences were found for the Static - Dynamic subscale based on the location of school district with $F(3,173) = 3.50, p=.02$. This corresponded to an effect size of $\eta^2 = 0.06$; that is, about 6% of the variance in the first subscale (Static-Dynamic) may be predicted by the type of school district. The effect size of 0.06 is considered a medium effect.

Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences among the four locations of school districts using Bonferroni tests. Post-hoc comparisons of the four types of school districts indicated that school districts in Urban area ($M=3.08$) had significantly higher ratings than the school districts in the Industrial Cities ($M= 2.57, p<.05$). Comparisons between other types of school districts were not statistically significant, as seen in Table 14.

Table 14

Static-Dynamic Subscale means and standard deviations, and confidence intervals for each type of school district

	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Urban	53	3.08	.94	.12	2.82	3.34	1.00	5.00
Holy Cities	38	2.87	.61	.09	2.67	3.07	1.00	3.75
Industrial Cities	42	2.57	.61	.09	2.38	2.76	1.67	3.75
Rural Area	41	2.76	.79	.12	2.51	3.01	1.50	4.00
Total	174	2.84	.78	.05	2.72	2.95	1.00	5.00

There were no statistically significant differences on the four subscales based on school district; the second subscale (Easy – Hard), $F(3,173) = 1.00, p > 0.05$, the third subscale (Sanctity of the Discipline), $F(3,173) = 0.79, p > 0.05$, the fourth subscale (Student Learning and Achievement), $F(3,173) = 2.38, p > 0.05$, and the last subscale (Teacher Role as Mentor), $F(3, 173) = .52, p > 0.05$. Table 15 shows analysis of variance results for all subscales by types of school district.

Table 15

One- Way analysis of variance results for Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula by type of school district

Subscale	F	Sig.
Static-Dynamic	3.50	0.01
Easy-Hard	1.00	.39
Sanctity of the Discipline	.79	.49
Student Learning and Achievement	2.38	.07
Teacher Role as Mentor	.52	.66

df for all subscales was (3, 173).

In order to address the second research question, “To what extent do Islamic education teachers implement innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?” data was gathered about the most frequent innovative approaches implemented by the participating high school Islamic education teachers. The second survey instrument, “The Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education,” was designed to explore the innovative approaches of Islamic education teachers. It consisted of five subscales: Freedom of Opinion, Acceptance of Innovation, Innovation in the Content of Islamic Curricula, Innovation in the Method of Teaching, and Innovation in the Methods of Assessment.

Freedom of Opinion

The first subscale, Freedom of Opinion, resulted in means ranging from 3.55 to 4.44. The most frequently mentioned statement was item number 5, “I help students to feel comfortable throughout my class,” (M=4.44, SD=.71). The lowest rating statement was item number 1, “Students can express their opinion toward anything that might impede their learning,” (M=3.55, SD=1.13). Table 16 displays the means and standard deviations of the Freedom of Opinion subscale of the innovative approaches implemented by Islamic education teachers Survey.

Table 16

Freedom of Opinion subscale means and standard deviations

Item No	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
5	I help students to feel comfortable throughout my class.	4.44	.71
6	I accept ideas that are offered by students.	4.43	.63
9	I encourage students to ask about the purpose of studying any topic.	4.38	.65
7	I encourage students to freely express their opinion.	4.37	.76
8	I encourage students to talk about their thoughts and feelings.	4.32	.80
2	Students are open to discuss new ideas.	3.93	.88
3	I provide sufficient time for students to think of any issue.	3.92	.73
4	I encourage students to express their complaints toward any activity that may seem contradictory to prior experience.	3.78	.99
1	Students can express their opinion toward anything that might impede their learning.	3.55	1.13

Acceptance of Innovation

The Acceptance of Innovation subscale consisted of 12 items. Teachers' responses ranged from 3.83 to 4.29. The most frequently mentioned statement was item number 18, "I give talented students a chance to help lower achieving students" (M=4.29, SD=.84). The second most frequently mentioned statement was item number 15, "I allow students to change their opinion about any topic" (M=4.17, SD=.72). The lowest rated item in this subscale was statement 17, "I encourage students to adopt different opinions" (M=3.83, SD=1.09). Table 17

displays the means and standard deviations of teachers' perspectives related to Acceptance of Innovation when teaching Islamic education.

Table 17

Acceptance of Innovation subscale means and standard deviations

Item No	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
18	I give talented students a chance to help lower achieving students.	4.29	.84
15	I allow students to change their opinion about any topic.	4.17	.72
14	I allow students to provide alternative solutions for any particular situation.	4.15	.68
10	I open the discussion for students to introduce their ideas even if these ideas sound unusual.	4.06	.99
20	I allow students to research deeply about any particular topic.	4.05	.81
21	I enable students to focus on a particular topic in order to understand it well before moving to a new topic.	4.02	.82
19	I encourage extracurricular activities which enhance innovation.	4.02	.87
13	I work hard to reveal what impedes student's innovation.	4.00	.81
16	I implement untraditional activities in my classroom.	3.97	.96
12	I give rewards to talented students.	3.96	.99
11	I allow students to disagree with me.	3.89	1.06
17	I encourage students to adopt different opinions.	3.83	1.09

Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula

The innovation in the Content of the Islamic curricula subscale consisted of 9 items. Teachers' responses in this subscale ranged from 3.88 to 4.48. The most frequently mentioned statement was item 22, "I guide students to know how to apply their learning outside school" (M=4.48, SD=.63). The second most frequently mentioned statement was item number 26, "I organize the elements of lesson in a logical way" (M=4.43, SD=.54). The statement that received the lowest ratings from participants was item number 29, "I present problems that challenge students' thinking" (M=3.88, SD=.99). Table 18 displays the means and standard deviations for teachers' perspectives related to Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula when teaching Islamic education.

Table 18

Innovation in the Content of the Islamic curricula subscale means and standard deviations

Item No	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
22	I guide students to know how to apply their learning outside school.	4.48	.63
26	I organize the elements of lesson in a logical way.	4.43	.54
28	I enable my students to discover multiple solutions for one problem.	4.37	.65
23	I present information which interests high school students, by using open ended questions which leads to further research.	4.34	.66
27	I give my students a chance to discuss a particular topic from multiple viewpoints.	4.31	.62
30	I allow students to recognize the religious background of a particular view.	4.19	.82
24	I concentrate on explaining the role of human effort in developing knowledge over time.	4.02	.80
25	I focus on the performance of the students in understanding the knowledge.	3.91	.83
29	I present problems that challenge students' thinking.	3.88	.99

Innovation in the Method of Teaching

The Innovation in the Method of Teaching subscale consisted of 9 items. The means for these items ranged from 4.07 to 4.56. The most frequently mentioned statement was item number 31, “I encourage students to reach the right answer” (M=4.56, SD=.58). The statement that received the lowest ratings was item number 33, “I guide students to discover multiple aspects of what is taught” (M=4.07, SD=.71). Table 19 shows the means and the standard deviations for teachers’ perspectives related to Innovation in the Methods of Teaching survey subscale.

Table 19

Innovation in the Method of Teaching subscale means and standard deviations

Item No	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
31	I encourage students to reach the right answer.	4.56	.58
38	I utilize students to gather information independently	4.43	.62
36	I concentrate on the current methods of teaching such as, discussing, brainstorming, and solving problems.	4.42	.79
34	I focus on diversifying methods of presenting the knowledge.	4.39	.75
35	I give my opinion after discussing students’ opinion.	4.35	.78
37	I reinforce students who raise new ideas.	4.32	.80
39	I focus on methods of teaching that focus on a student-centered-classroom.	4.25	.82
32	I help students to distinguish between what s/he produces from what others produce.	4.22	.71
33	I guide students to discover multiple aspects of what is taught.	4.07	.71

Innovation in the Method of Assessment

The innovation in the Methods of Assessment subscale consisted of 7 items. Teachers' responses on these items ranged from 3.27 to 4.43. The most frequently mentioned statement was item number 44, "I use an assessment that considers the individual differences among students" (M=4.43, SD=.64). The statement that received the lowest ratings was item number 46, "I try to make sure that the students have solely mastered the lesson" (M=3.27, SD=1.26). Table 20 shows the means and standard deviations of Islamic education teachers related to Innovation in the Method of Assessment.

Table 20

Innovation in the Method of Assessment subscale means and standard deviations

Item No	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
44	I use an assessment that considers the individual differences among students.	4.43	.64
45	I encourage unique answers.	4.33	.94
43	I try to use an assessment which enhances scientific thinking.	4.24	.75
42	I focus on methods of assessment that develop the skills of analysis and synthesis.	4.14	.78
40	I present to my students a problem with a full freedom and independence to reach to the solution.	3.92	.82
41	I present questions that have many answers.	3.87	.97
46	I try to make sure that the students have solely mastered the lesson.	3.27	1.26

The third research question “Is the number of years teaching experience related to the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?” was addressed using correlational analysis. Pearson correlations were computed to assess the relationship between the number of years of teaching experience and the implementation of innovative approaches when teaching Islamic education. The number of years teaching experience ranged from one year to 26 years of experience. The researcher coded teaching experience as a continuous variable instead of range of years versus a different range of years. The correlations between teaching experience and the five dependent variables: Freedom of Opinion, Acceptance of Innovation, Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula, Innovation in the Method of Teaching, and Innovation in the Method of Assessment were not statistically significant. The Pearson correlations are reported in Table 21.

Table 21

Pearson Correlations for the relationship between the five subscales and teaching experience

	Freedom of Opinion	Acceptance of Innovation	Innovation in the Content	Innovation in the Method of Teaching	Innovation in the Method of Assessment
Teaching Experience	.03	0.02	0.01	0.07	0.10
Sig. (2 Tailed)	.65	0.78	0.86	0.35	0.17

To answer the fourth research question, “Are the academic qualifications of Islamic education teachers related to the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?” a series of One-Way Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the role of academic qualifications in the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic Curricula. The independent variable was the academic qualification with two levels: (undergraduate degree and graduate degree). The dependent variables were the five subscales: Freedom of Opinion, Acceptance of Innovation, Innovation in the Content of Islamic Curricula, Innovation in the Method of Teaching, and Innovation in the Method of Assessment. An examination of the histograms for the five subscales was conducted and indicated that scores were approximately normally distributed with no extreme outliers.

In addition, prior to the analysis, the Levene test for homogeneity of variance was used to examine whether there were serious violations of the assumption of homogeneity of variance across the five subscales, and no significant violations were found. Statistically significant differences between teachers’ academic qualifications were found for the Freedom of Opinion subscale with $F(1,173) = 5.47, p=.02$. This corresponded to an effect size of $\eta^2 = .03$; that is, about 3% of the variance in the first subscale (Freedom of Opinion) may be predicted by the academic qualifications. This effect size of .03 is considered a small effect. Teachers with Bachelor level ($M=4.18$) had significantly higher ratings than those with graduate level ($M=4.00, p<.05$).

No statistically significant differences were found for the other four subscales based on teachers’ academic qualifications: the second subscale (Acceptance of Innovation), $F(1,173) = 1.41, p>.05$, the third subscale (Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula), $F(1,173) = .25, p>.05$, the fourth subscale (Innovation the Method of Teaching), $F(1,173) = .33, p>.05$, and

the last subscale (Innovation in the Method of Assessment), $F(1, 173) = .33, p > .05$. Analysis of variance results for all subscales are reported in Table 22.

Table 22

One- Way analysis of variance results for the Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education subscale by academic qualifications

Subscale	F	Sig.
Freedom of Opinion	5.47	0.02
Acceptance of Innovation	1.414	0.23
Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula	0.255	0.61
Innovation the Method of Teaching	0.331	0.56
Innovation in the Method of Assessment	0.333	0.56

df for all subscales was (1, 173).

The fifth research question, “Does teacher gender play any role in the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?” was addressed by a series of One-Way Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) to evaluate the role of teacher gender in the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic Curricula. The independent variable was teacher gender. The dependent variables were the five subscales: Freedom of Opinion, Acceptance of Innovation, Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula, Innovation in the Method of Teaching, and Innovation in the Method of Assessment.

An examination of the histograms for the five subscales revealed that scores were approximately normally distributed with no extreme outliers. In addition, prior to the analysis, the Levene test for homogeneity of variance was used to examine whether there were serious violations of the assumption of homogeneity of variance across the five subscales, but no significant violations were found. There were no statistically significant differences between teachers’ responses to the five subscales based on gender. Table 23 shows the analysis of variance results.

Table 23

One- Way analysis of variance results for the Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education subscale by teacher gender

Subscale	F	Sig.
Freedom of Opinion	2.82	0.09
Acceptance of Innovation	0.026	0.87
Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula	1.19	0.27
Innovation the Method of Teaching	1.28	0.25
Innovation in the Method of Assessment	.638	0.42

df for all subscales was (1, 173).

Additional Findings

In addition to the analysis surrounding the research questions, analysis was also conducted regarding the location of the respondent school districts. The school districts were divided into four groups: 1) districts located in industrial cities (Yunbu and Jubial), 2) districts located in rural areas (Umlej and Al Wajh), 3) districts located in urban areas (Eastern School District of Jeddah), and 4) districts located in the two holy cities (Mecca and Al Madina). Respondents based on their type of school district are reported in Table 24.

Table 24

Frequency Statistics for respondents based on their School District

School Type	Participant	Percentage
Urban	53	30.5
Holy Cities	38	21.8
Industrial Cities	42	24.1
Rural Area	41	23.6

A series of One-Way Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) were conducted to evaluate the role of different types of school districts in the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic Curricula. The independent variable was school district category with four groups: urban school districts, school districts in the two Holy cities, school districts in the two Industrial cities, and school districts in a rural area. The dependent variables were the five subscales of the Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education: Freedom of Opinion, Acceptance of Innovation, Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula, Innovation in the Method of Teaching, and Innovation in the Method of Assessment.

An examination of the histograms for the five subscale scores indicated that scores were approximately normally distributed with no extreme outliers. In addition, prior to the analysis, the Levene test for homogeneity of variance was used to examine whether there were serious violations of the assumption of homogeneity of variance across the five subscales, but no significant violations were found.

Statistically significant differences were found for the Freedom of Opinion subscale based on the type of school district with $F(3,173) = 2.81, p=.04$. This corresponded to an effect size of $\eta^2 = 0.047$; that is, about 5% of the variance in the first subscale (Freedom of Opinion) may be predicted by the type of school district. The effect size of 0.05 is considered a medium effect.

Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences among the four types of school districts using Bonferroni tests. Post-hoc comparisons of the four types of school districts indicated that school districts in industrial cities ($M=4.25$) had significantly higher ratings than the school districts in the two Holy cities ($M= 3.96, p<.05$). Comparisons between other types of school districts were not statistically significant, as seen in Table 25.

Table 25

The Freedom of Opinion Subscale means and standard deviations, and confidence intervals for each type of school district

	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Urban	53	4.17	.40	.05	4.06	4.28	2.89	4.89
Holy Cities	38	3.96	.55	.08	3.78	4.14	2.56	5.00
Industrial Cities	42	4.24	.41	.06	4.12	4.37	2.89	5.00
Rural Area	41	4.07	.50	.07	3.91	4.23	2.50	5.00
Total	174	4.12	.47	.03	4.05	4.19	2.50	5.00

There were no statistically significant differences on the four subscales based on school district; the second subscale (Acceptance of Innovation), $F(3,173) = .04$, $p > 0.05$, the third subscale (Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula), $F(3,173) = 0.26$, $p > 0.05$, the fourth subscale (Innovation the Method of Teaching), $F(3,173) = 0.52$, $p > 0.05$, and the last subscale (Innovation in the Method of Assessment), $F(3, 173) = 0.02$, $p > 0.05$. Table 26 shows analysis of variance results for all subscales by types of school district.

Table 26

One- Way analysis of variance results for the Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education subscale by type of school district

Subscale	F	Sig.
Freedom of Opinion	2.81	0.04
Acceptance of Innovation	0.045	0.98
Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula	0.269	0.84
Innovation the Method of Teaching	0.523	0.66
Innovation in the Method of Assessment	0.021	0.99

df for all subscales was (3, 173).

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the results of the statistical analysis for the data collected from 107 males and 67 females, who were teaching Islamic education at Saudi high schools in seven school districts during spring 2011. The research divided these school districts into four categories: urban area, industrial area, Holy city, and rural area. The chapter explored the pedagogical beliefs of high school Islamic education teachers and the perspectives of Islamic education teachers on the implementation of the innovative approaches when teaching Islamic education. The findings of the study were as follows:

1. There were no statistically significant differences on the five subscales for the Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education survey: Freedom of Opinion, Acceptance of Innovation, Innovation in the Content of Islamic Curricula, Innovation in the Method of Teaching and Innovation in the Method of Assessment in terms of teacher gender.
2. There were no statistically significant correlations between the five subscales for the Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education survey based on number of years teaching experience.
3. There was a statistically significant difference on the first subscale (Freedom of Opinion) in terms of academic qualifications. Teachers with Bachelor level ($M=4.18$) had significantly higher ratings than those with graduate level ($M= 4.00$, $p<.05$).
4. There were no statistically significant differences found for the four subscales: Acceptance of Innovation, Innovation in the Content of Islamic Curricula, Innovation in the Methods of Teaching, and Innovation in the Methods of Assessment based on teachers' academic qualifications.

5. There was a statistically significant difference on the first subscale (Freedom of Opinion) in terms of school district type. Comparisons of the four types of school districts indicated that school districts in industrial cities ($M=4.25$) had significantly higher ratings than the school districts in the two Holy cities ($M= 3.96$, $p<.05$). However, no statistically significant differences found for the four subscales: Acceptance of Innovation, Innovation in the Content of Islamic Curricula, Innovation in the Method of Teaching, and Innovation in the Method of Assessment based on type of school district.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the purpose of the study and the discussion of the findings of the research questions. Also included are the implications and the limitations of the current study, and recommendations for future research.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the current study was to explore, based on teachers' perspectives, the pedagogical beliefs of high school Islamic education teachers. In addition, the study explored the teachers' beliefs regarding the implementation of innovative approaches when teaching Islamic education. Furthermore, it also explored the role that teacher gender, number of years teaching experience, and academic qualifications might have on decisions regarding the implementation of innovative approaches used in Islamic education. The research was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the pedagogical beliefs that influence the way that Islamic education teachers implement Islamic curricula?
2. To what extent do Islamic education teachers implement innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?
3. Is the number of years of teaching experience related to the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?

4. Are the academic qualifications of Islamic education teachers related to the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?
5. Does teacher gender play any role in the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?

Discussion of Research Question Findings

Research Question 1

What are the pedagogical beliefs that influence the way that Islamic education teachers implement Islamic curricula?

The discussion of the findings for this research question was divided into five categories in order to explore the pedagogical beliefs that shape the role of Islamic education inside the classroom.

Static – Dynamic

This subscale is related to teacher's beliefs about the extent of change over time in knowledge. Teachers' responses to this subscale ranged from 2.71 to 2.97 which demonstrated that the means in the four items in the subscale are close. Teacher gender was statistically significant difference with a small effect size. Female teachers ($M=3.01$) had significantly higher ratings than male teachers ($M= 2.73, p<.05$). Additionally, school type was statistically significant as well with a medium effect size. School districts in Urban area ($M=3.08$) had significantly higher ratings than the school districts in the Industrial Cities ($M= 2.57, p<.05$). In fact, although teacher gender and the school type were statistically significant in terms of Static-

Dynamic subscale, their differences fall in the range that high school Islamic education teachers regardless of their gender or school types that they are in neither agreed nor disagreed whether there are effective changes in the subject matter of Islamic curricula or not.

The process of the development of the curricula of Islamic education has been a controversial issue in the Saudi society. In 2008, a Center of Religious Freedom published a comprehensive analysis of the curricula of Islamic education in Saudi Arabia. The report demonstrated that “yet overall the changes to the passages in question have been minimal” (p.12). In fact, there is a contradiction in the opinions among policymakers as to whether there has been an effective change or not. It seems that this public contradiction has influenced the finding of this subscale. Many still believe that the changes that have been made to the textbooks were solely rewriting, however, the meaning is still the same.

Easy – Hard

Teachers’ responses in this subscale ranged from 1.95 to 3.76 which are, based on the Likert scale, low to moderate ratings. There were no any significant differences in terms of teacher gender or school location for this subscale. The highest rating in this subscale was item 11, “Student must work hard in my class to understand the material” ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 1.02$). Islamic education teachers moderately believe that the subject of Islamic education requires a major effort from them. Moreover, Islamic education teachers moderately believe that the subject of Islamic education requires a high level of analytical thinking as reported for item 9, “The subject I teach demands a high level of analytical skill” ($M = 3.14$, $SD = 1.14$). However, when comparing Islamic curricula to other subjects, Islamic curricula teachers disagreed that the subject is hard for students as reported for item 7, “Compared to other subjects, the subject I

teach is hard for students” (M=1.95, SD=1.01). The simplicity of the subject may lead teachers not to demand more of themselves and of their students. Iluz and Rich (2008) stated that “the easy-hard continuum reflected the perceived difficulty of the school subject. Perceived difficulty pressures teachers to demand more of themselves and of their students and to display greater professional commitment, usually, the prestige of a subject is positively correlated with its perceived difficulty” (p.45).

Sanctity of the Discipline

Teachers’ responses on this subscale ranged from 3.86 to 4.56. Teacher gender was statistically significant with a medium effect size. Female teacher (M= 4.46) had significantly higher ratings than male teachers (M= 4.05, $p < .05$). Islamic education teachers highly believe that the Islamic curricula are important and should be highly respected as reported for item 13, “It is important to me that students relate to the subject I teach with a great deal of respect” (M=4.56, SD=.89) and different from other subjects as reported for item 14, “when in class I want students to feel that the value of the subject I teach is different from other subjects” (M=4.48, SD=.94). On top of that, arguments against Islamic teachings are unacceptable as participants reported for item 15, “I will not tolerate arguments in class against our Islamic teachings in the subject” (M=3.95, SD=1.29). Although students are asked not to belittle interpretations they disagree with as in item 16, “It is very important to me that my students do not belittle interpretations they disagree with” (M= 3.86, SD=1.04), these interpretations must be within the range of the Islamic thought.

In fact, the sanctity of teaching religious education takes its sacredness from including in the content the elements and principles that are respected in a given society and also are treated

as inviolate and unassailable; therefore, religious curricula are deemed sacred, and they have pedagogical characteristics which distinguish them from other subjects. Aldridge (2006) discussed the role of teachers inside the religious education classroom. Teachers of religious subjects adopt models of instruction which enable them to maintain the information of the content so that the sacred topics remain secure from any attempts to alter their traditional meanings or deflate their venerable status.

As anticipated, the results surrounding the sanctity of the discipline for the current study has also been found in previous research. Iluz and Rich (2008) discussed in their study, “Internal and external Factors Shaping Educational Beliefs of High School Teachers of “Sacred” Subjects to Girls,” that teachers of sacred subjects perceived the topics they teach as holier than the teachers of secular subjects perceived their topics. They also reported that, “teachers of sacred subjects strive actively to cultivate an emotional attachment to the text and its messages, to foster a sense of reverence not only for the contents of the sacred subject but for the process of learning it as well” (p.49).

Student Learning and Achievement

For this subscale, teachers’ responses ranged from 2.96 to 3.64. The range indicated low to moderate ratings for students learning and achievement. A statistically significant difference was found when comparing male and female teachers in terms of the importance of grading and achievement. Female teachers ($M=3.32$) had significantly higher ratings than male teachers ($M=3.04$, $p<.05$). For example, Islamic education teachers gave a low rating for item 19, “Grades are an essential tool for assessing learning” ($M=2.79$, $SD= 1.23$). In addition, they gave a low rating to item number 18, “Success in teaching is manifested in the high grades of students” ($M= 2.69$,

SD= 1.31). Low to moderate ratings in this subscale may be reflective of the nature of assessment in religious education. Assessment in religious education may differ from the assessment of other subjects. McCreery, Palmer and Voiels (2007) discussed several forms of assessment inside the religious education classroom. First, assessment through observation is a very useful tool in the field of religious education, particularly during early childhood. This form of assessment may take place during learning through play or an independent activity. Second, students' learning in religious education may be evaluated through a form of self-assessment. It is an essential process in the field of religious education that students should be able to recognize their own progress so that they can evaluate their own work. Third, in contrast to self-assessment, peer assessment plays a big part in religious education. "This is a process by which children use the criteria that have been established for evaluating a task, but instead of applying it to their own work, they use it to evaluate their colleagues' work" (McCreery, Palmer and Voiels, 2007, p.125). Fifth, recording students' learning is an important way in assessing students' progress especially when teaching them, for example, the recitation of the Holy Quran. Therefore, a grade is one of the methods to assess students' learning but not an essential tool.

Teacher Role as Mentor

Teachers' response to this subscale showed that mentoring was highly practiced. Participants' responses ranged from 3.98 to 4.67. Female teacher (M= 4.42) had higher ratings than male teachers (M=4.20, $p<.05$). Being a good role model received a highest rating in this subscale as reported in item 23, "It is very important that I be a role model for my students" (M=4.67, SD=.76). In addition, teachers see themselves as shapers of students' personality as reported in item 22, "My main job as a teacher is to contribute to shaping the personality of the

student” (M=4.35, SD=.83). The most important thing for Islamic education teachers seemed to be as seen in item 25, “The most important thing to me is for my students to feel that they can come to me with any personal problem” (M=4.25, SD=.84). The emphasis of this subscale lies in exploring the essential purpose of teaching, and the perceived role of a teacher may differ from teacher to teacher and from subject to subject. Some teachers strongly feel that their vital professional purpose is to facilitate students’ knowledge acquisition, whereas others believe that their primary purpose is to see themselves as the shapers of students’ personalities.

Fenstermacher and Soltis (1992) identified three roles of teaching: the executive role, the therapist role, and the liberationist role. A teacher in the first approach plays a role of executor who is responsible to accomplish the curriculum objectives using the best skills and techniques possible. The therapist approach views the teacher as an empathetic person who is responsible to help students to grow personally and reach a high level of self-actualization. Finally, the liberationist approach views the teacher as a liberator of student’s mind, a developer of student’s knowledge, and an enhancer to student’s moral decision. The approach that most closely aligns with teaching religious education is ‘the therapist approach.’

An unsurprising corollary is that Iluz and Rich (2008) found that teachers of sacred subjects defined their role of teaching as “life guide” in shaping the coalescing personalities of their students in their study, “Internal and external Factor Shaping Educational Beliefs of High School Teachers of “Sacred” Subjects to Girls.” The role of mentoring was used by teachers of religious subjects more than their colleagues who teach secular subjects (p.49).

Research Question 2

To what extent do Islamic education teachers implement innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?

The discussion of the findings for this research question is linked to the pedagogical beliefs of Islamic education teachers. Teachers' beliefs are the key figures in constructing an innovative climate. Teachers need to have a clear vision, awareness and understanding of what innovation and creativity is and entails in order for teachers to fully comprehend how creativity and innovation can be enhanced in the classroom (Ferrari, Cachia, and Punie, (2009).

Freedom of Opinion

To what extent teachers implement Freedom of Opinion inside the classroom of Islamic education? Islamic education teachers highly agreed on creating a healthy atmosphere for innovative ideas to take place inside their classroom. Teachers also welcome any new ideas offered by students. However, Sanctity of the Discipline Subscale tells us that freedom has a ceiling. Students are welcome to express their ideas in which these ideas must be in line with the knowledge presented in the content of the Islamic curriculum as reported in item 13, "It is important to me that students relate to the subject I teach with a great deal of respect," (M=4.56, SD=.89). In addition, ideas offered by students are welcome unless they are against Islamic teachings as reported in item15, "I will not tolerate arguments in class against our Islamic teachings in the subject," (M=3.95, SD=1.29). Moreover, ideas are accepted even if they are against what is presented in the curriculum but still within the range of Islamic thought as stated in item 16, "It is very important to me that my students do not belittle interpretation they disagree

with,” (M=3.86, SD=1.04). Figure 1 explains how Freedom of Opinion Subscale is influenced by Sanctity of the Discipline Subscale.

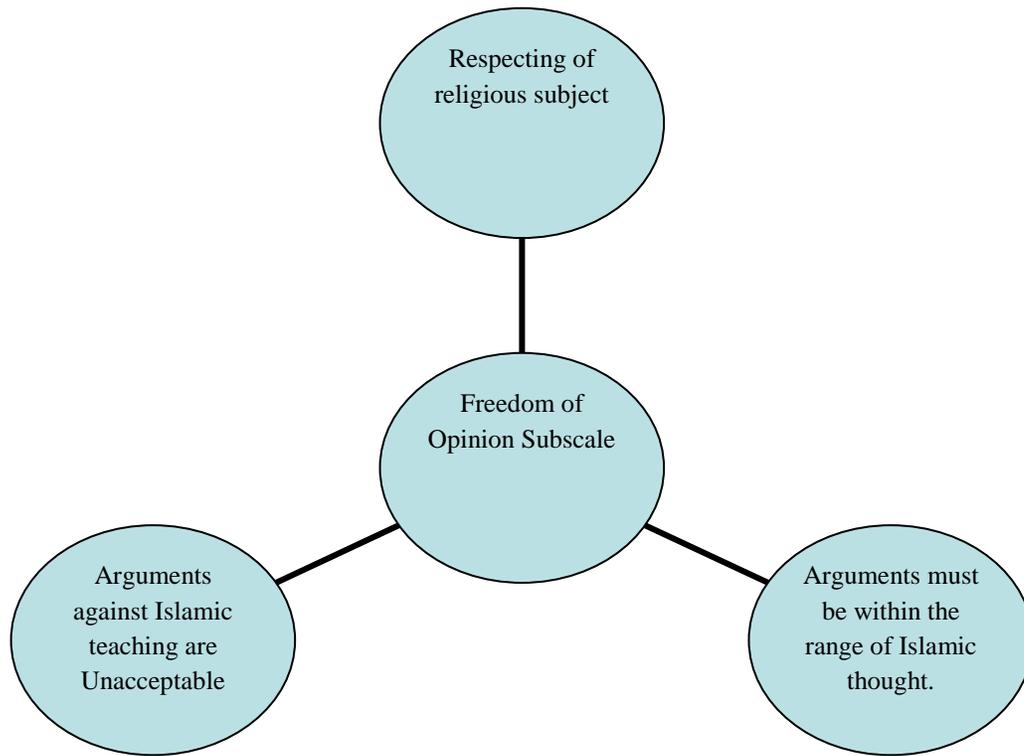


Figure 1. *Parameters of Freedom of Opinion as conceptualized by Teachers’ Pedagogical Beliefs*

Acceptance of Innovation

In terms of Acceptance of Innovation Subscale, Sanctity of the Discipline plays a huge role in determining acceptable innovation from unacceptable innovation. Allowing students to change their opinion ($M=4.17$, $SD=.72$), helping students to reach alternative solution for one particular topic ($M=4.15$, $SD=.68$), researching deeply ($M=4.05$, $SD=.81$), allowing students to introduce their unusual ideas ($M=4.06$, $SD=.99$), and implementing untraditional activity inside the classroom ($M=3.97$, $SD=.96$) heavily depend upon how teachers value innovative ideas or activities offered by students. Figure 2 illustrates how Acceptance of Innovation is influenced by Sanctity of the Discipline Subscale.

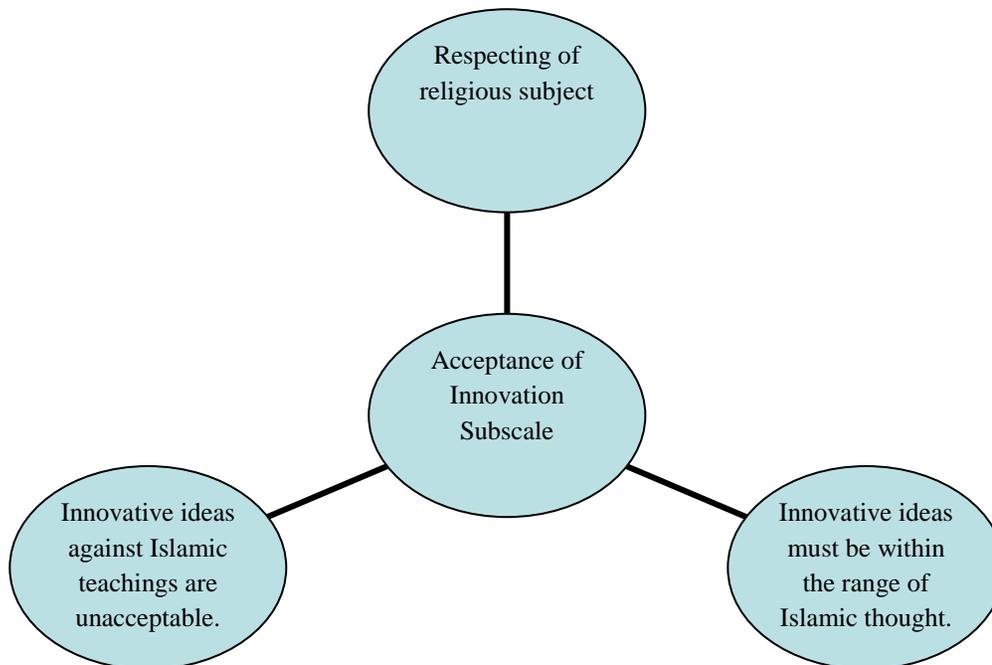


Figure 2. *Parameters of Acceptance of Innovation as conceptualized by Teachers' Pedagogical Beliefs*

Innovation in the Content of Islamic Curricula

For the third subscale, Innovation in the Content of Islamic Curricula, teachers' responses were positive in implementing innovative methods when presenting the knowledge of religious education. However, there is agreement in the literature that static and prescriptive curriculum hinders innovation and creativity (Ferrari, Cachia, and Punie, 2009). In fact, Bedaiwi (1998) demonstrated that Saudi religious curricula remain static except for minor modifications. A static curriculum has a greater influence than the role of innovative teachers inside the classroom. A static and prescriptive curriculum leads teachers to present the content of the Islamic curricula as a moral prescription or a blind indoctrination (Hashim, 2005).

True innovation in education requires a paradigm shift in both format and methodology. This entails a constant and total renovation, regardless of previous effectiveness (Ferrari, Cachia, and Punie, 2009). Static curriculum deprives both teachers and students from working together in sharing and creating the knowledge. Static curriculum does not take into its consideration students' prior knowledge. An innovative curriculum as suggested by Craft (2005) puts emphasis on valuing students' knowledge, developing common knowledge and problematising knowledge. Consequently, the implementation of innovative approaches when presenting the religious knowledge is limited. Figure 3 shows the role of static curriculum in affecting religious education teachers when presenting the knowledge of Islamic Curricula.

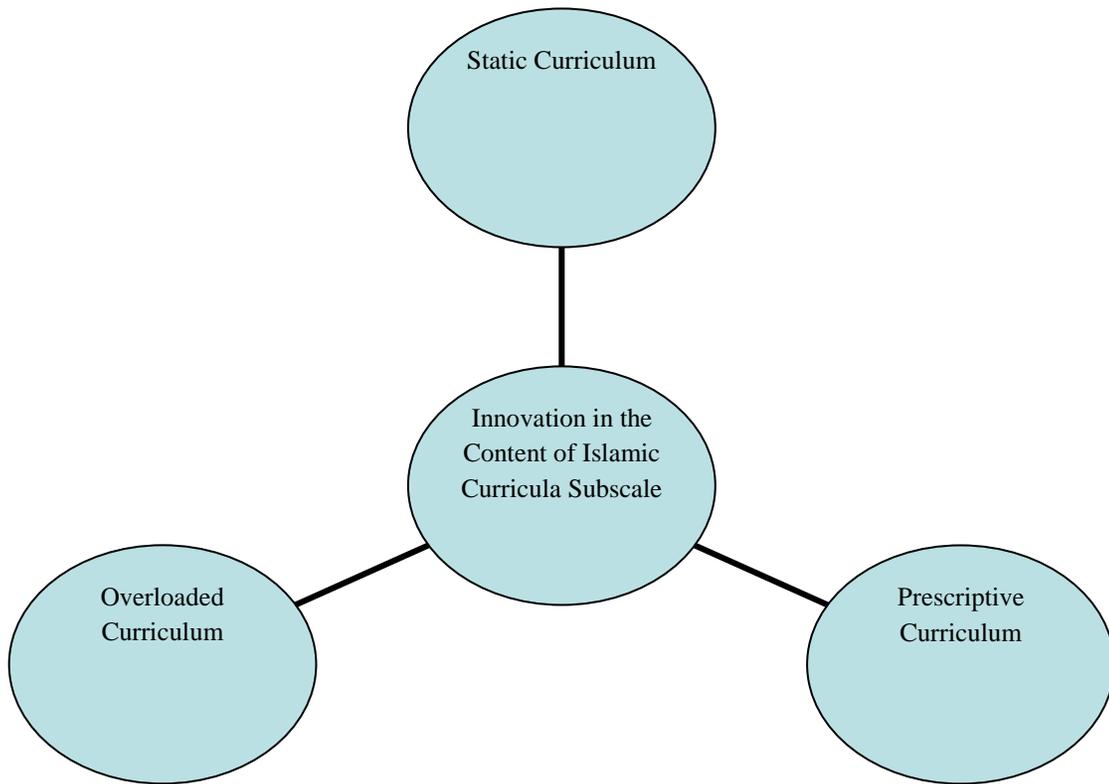


Figure 3. *Parameters of Innovation in the Content of Islamic Curricula as conceptualized by Teachers' Pedagogical Beliefs*

Innovation in the Methods of Teaching

For the fourth subscale, Innovation in the Methods of Teaching, teachers' responses were highly positive. However, some factors derived from the Pedagogical Beliefs may give us a clear image of the situation inside the classroom of Islamic education in Saudi Arabia. Static and prescriptive curriculum impedes innovative teachings. In addition, national curriculum with a large content may affect teaching format (Diakidoy & Kanari, 1999). A large content national curriculum as it is in Saudi Arabia requires teachers to cover all the materials. Ferrari, Cachia, and Punie (2009) stated that overloaded curriculum puts pressure on teachers to cover all the topics of the curriculum.

In addition, student's matriculation examination is another factor that may influence innovative teaching. In the current study, students matriculation examination received a moderate rating ($M=3.64$, $SD=1.19$). This factor may pressure teachers to emphasize on preparing the students for examination. Moreover, Fryer and Collings (1991) added an important factor that affects teaching format called, "constrained atmosphere," or as named in the current study "Sanctity of the Discipline." Figure 4 show how innovative methods of teaching is influenced by three subscales of Pedagogical Beliefs: Static-Dynamic Subscale, Sanctity of the Discipline Subscale, and Student Learning Achievement Subscale.

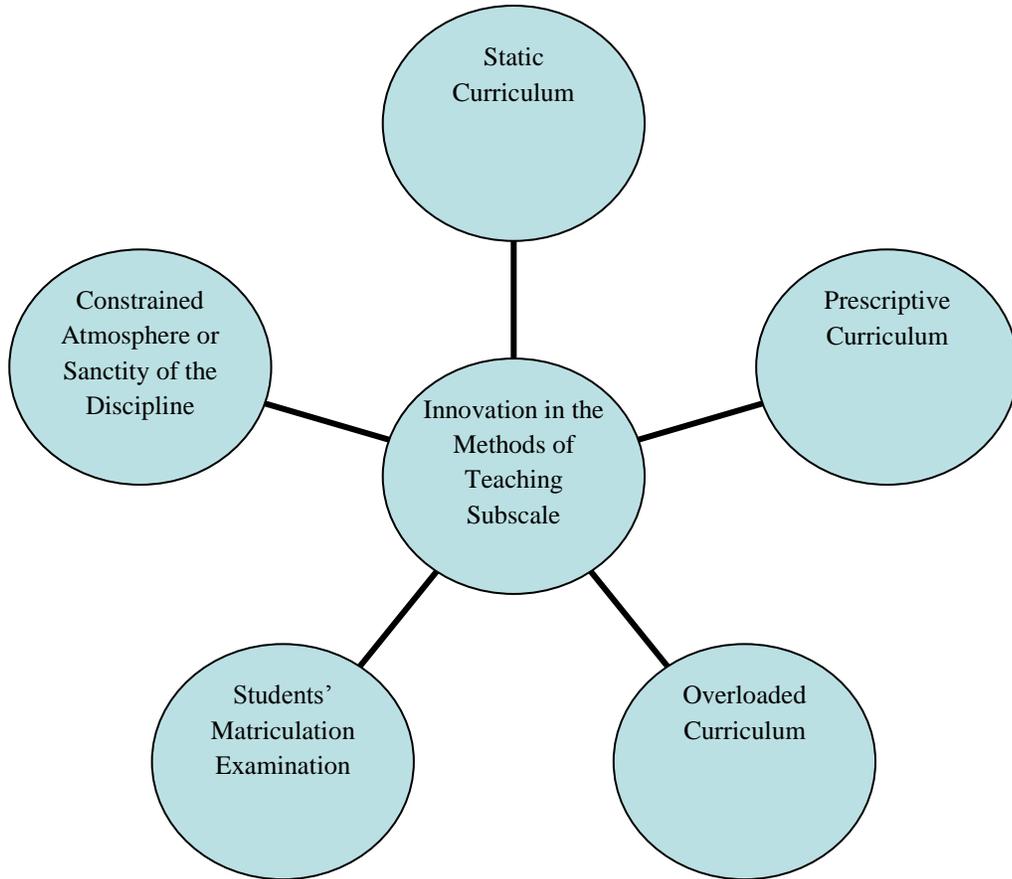


Figure 4. *Parameters of Innovation in the Methods of Teaching as conceptualized by Teachers' Pedagogical Beliefs*

Innovation in the Methods of Assessment

In terms of the last subscale, Innovation in Methods of Assessment, teachers' responses were high as well. Fostering innovative assessment requires innovative curriculum and teaching methods (Ferrari, Cachia, and Punie, 2009) innovation has to be implemented throughout the whole educational process from designing the curriculum to assessing students' achievement. Teachers showed a high rating in implementing skills of analysis and synthesis when assessing their students as in item 42, "I focus on methods of assessment that develop the skills of analysis and synthesis," (M=4.14, SD=.78). In addition, teachers showed a strong agreement in applying innovative techniques in their assessment such as, considering individual differences (M=4.43, SD=.64), encouraging unique answers (M=4.33, SD=.94), and enhancing scientific thinking (M=4.24, SD=.75). However, static and prescriptive curriculum hinders or allow with limitations implementing innovative techniques when designing assessment of religious education.

Easy- Hard Subscale may give more details about innovation in the methods of assessment. Ferrari, Cachia, and Punie (2009) stated that an important element of assessment is to challenge students' thinking. Challenging students thinking requires some level of difficulty, not extreme difficulty because it leads to discouragement. Teachers' response about the difficulty of Islamic curricula showed a strong disagreement as in item 7, "compared to other subjects, the subject I teach is hard for students," (M=1.95, SD=1.01). Islamic education teachers moderately believe that Islamic education requires a high level of analytical thinking as in item 9, "The subject I teach demands a high level of analytical skills," (M=3.14, SD=1.14). Figure 5 illustrates factors affect implementing innovative methods of assessment.

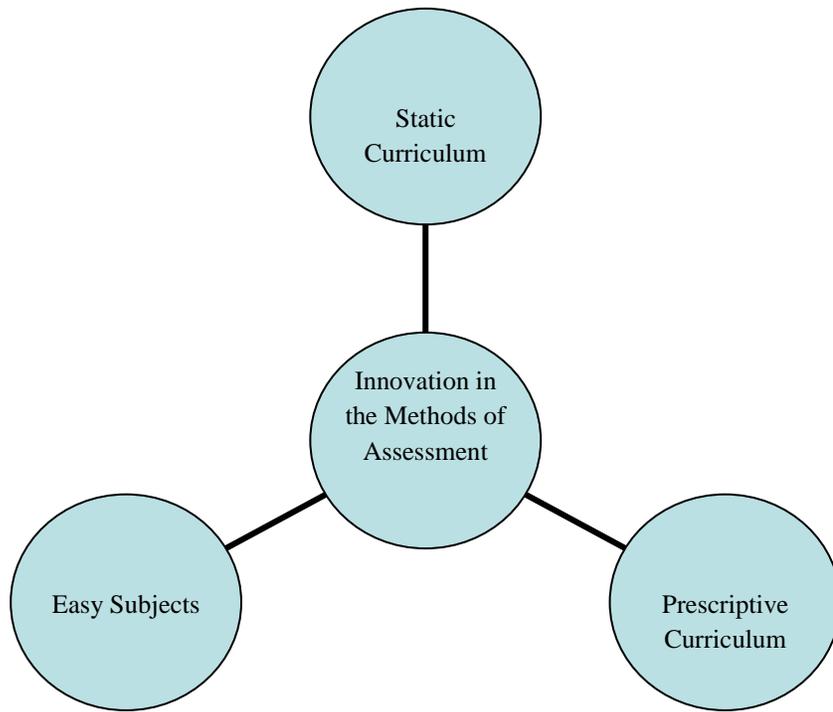


Figure 5. *Parameters of Innovation in the Methods of Assessment as Conceptualized by Teachers' Pedagogical Beliefs*

Research Question 3

Is the number of years of teaching experience related to the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?

Data surrounding this research question showed no statistically significant correlation between the number of years teaching experience and the five domains of innovative approaches: Freedom of Opinion, Acceptance of Innovation, Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula, Innovation in the Method of Teaching, and Innovation in the Method of Assessment. The researcher believes that the lack of statistically significant correlation may be reflective of the quality of programs offered to educate teachers of religious subjects, particularly after 9/11. The Ministry of Education pays much attention to preparing, training, and equipping teachers with techniques and skills necessary to be creative in their teaching regardless of the number of years teaching experience. Therefore, these programs may help to reduce the gap between those teachers who have been teaching for 5 or 15 years.

Several studies were reviewed in preparation for the current study. Generally speaking, the results of previous research that measured the role of teaching experience on the effectiveness of teaching were varied. A few studies have been conducted on the correlation between the number of years teaching experience and teachers' self- efficacy. Ross, Cousins, and Gadalla (1996) found mixed support for the role of teaching experience on teachers' self- efficacy. Other studies, such as Ghaith and Yaghi (1997), have found a negative correlation between the numbers of years teaching experience on teachers' self- efficacy. Another study was conducted by Wolters and Daugherty (2007), which used a large size (N= 1,024) from the United States. This study aimed to examine the role of teaching experience on teachers' self-efficacy

and goal structures. The researchers divided teachers into four experience groups: less than 1 year, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, and 11+ or more years of experience. The results indicated very modest effects on self- efficacy for instructional strategies.

Alzu'bi, Alhawamlah, and Alshowdayfat (2009) conducted a study in Jordan that aimed to investigate the relationship between teaching experience and the extent of Islamic education teachers in motivating innovation among secondary school pupils. The findings of the study revealed that there were no statistically significant differences in terms of teaching experience. In other words, expert teachers did not show any differences in the use of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic education curricula.

Research Question 4

Are the academic qualifications of Islamic education teachers related to the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?

Statistically significant differences were found between teachers' ratings for the first subscale (Freedom of Opinion) of the innovative approaches questionnaire in terms of their academic qualifications. Teachers with bachelor level had higher ratings than those who have graduate level. However, the effect size of the difference was very small. The other four subscales Acceptance of Innovation, Innovation in the Content of the Islamic curricula, Innovation in Method of Teaching, and Innovation in the Method of Assessment, did not reveal any statistically significant differences based on teachers' academic qualification.

These results were in line with the previous research. Renzulli (1978) reported that many researchers have found that an accomplishment of creativity is not necessarily a function of measured intelligence. Several research studies regarding the relationship between academic aptitude tests and professional achievement were reviewed. Wallach (1976) stated that:

Above intermediate score levels, academic skills assessments are found to show so little criterion validity as to be a questionable basis on which to make consequential decisions about students' futures. What the academic tests do predict are the results a person will obtain on other tests of the same kind (p. 57).

Wallach (1976) pointed out that the upper ranges of the academic qualifications do not necessarily reflect the potential for creative or productive accomplishment. Another study conducted by Holland and Astin (1962) found that getting good grades in college had little connection with any kind of achievement. In fact, the study found that in some colleges, the higher the students' grades, the less likely it is that he is a person with innovative potential.

Moreover, Munday and Davis (1974) found in their study, “Varieties of Accomplishment after College: Perspectives on the Meaning of Academic Talent,” that there was no statistically significant correlation between academic talent (including test scores, high school grades, and college grades) with professional accomplishments. However, the study did find a statistically significant correlation between non-academics, such as extracurricular activities, with professional accomplishments.

Hoyt (1965) reviewed 46 studies regarding the relationship between traditional indications of academic success and post-college performance in the fields of business, teaching, engineering, medicine, scientific research and other areas such as ministry, journalism, and government professions. The findings of the study demonstrated that traditional indications of academic success have no more than a very modest correlation with various indicators of success in the adult world. Hoyt (1965) stated that, “there is good reason to believe that academic achievement (knowledge) and other types of educational growth and development are relatively independent of each other” (p.7). Alzu’bi, Alhawamlah, and Alshowdayfat (2009) conducted a study in Jordan that aimed to investigate the relationship between academic qualifications and the extent of the Islamic education teachers in motivating innovation among secondary school pupils. The findings of the study did not reveal any statistically significant difference in terms of academic qualifications.

Research Question 5

Does teacher gender play any role in the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula?

No statistically significant differences in the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching Islamic curricula were found in terms of teacher gender. The findings can also be found in the previous research. Basow and Silberg (1987), Centra and Gaubatz (1998), and Nuhfer (2002) found that the gender of instructor was not a significant predictor of overall student evaluations.

Feldman (1993) stated that although some studies tend to find no gender differences when measuring their teaching effectiveness, the gender of the teachers may interact with other factors in which those factors may give differences between male and female teachers. Smith (2009) stated that since 1960s, studies that have shown difference when comparing between male and female teachers were built upon students' evaluation. "Student evaluations of teaching effectiveness are used primarily for feedback to faculty for instructional improvement and for making personnel and administrative decisions such as promotion and tenure, merit increases, and awards whether local or national" (p. 615). While student evaluations are the most common measure of effective teaching, using student evaluations are somewhat controversial (Rifkin, 1995; Donahue, 2000).

Basow and Montgomery (2006) discussed several factors that may lead to differences when comparing between male and female teachers, such as discipline differences. Class discussions may be more likely in the humanities than in science and engineering. Another factor, divisional affiliation, may also interact with gender differences. For instance, because

female teachers are less likely to be in the physical sciences and engineering, their presence in physical sciences may be interpreted as gender-inappropriate and thus female teachers may be negatively evaluated.

Limitations of the Study

The study has a number of limitations as follows:

1. This study focused on Islamic education teachers in secondary schools in seven school districts: Jeddah, Madina, Mecca, Jubial, Yunbu, Umledg, and Al Wajh.
2. The survey was administered during the spring 2011.
3. The researcher did not enter a female school, so the researcher chose a female teacher who was fully aware of the purpose of the study and its procedures to administer the questionnaires inside the female school.
4. The result of the study will not be generalizable to other schools such as vocational and trade schools, scientific institutes, or private schools.

Implications

The purpose of this study was to provide information about the extent of Islamic education teachers' efforts to implementing innovative approaches in teaching high school. The results of the study could assist researchers in the field of religious education in understanding, testing, and adapting new innovative approaches that may not have yet gained popular support or recognition. Opening the door to discuss these new approaches emphasizes the importance of adopting a philosophy before designing religious curricula. This study implies that being knowledgeable in Islam is not sufficient to design Islamic curricula. A philosophy of education should be explored because the process of implementing any new philosophy "does not exist in a vacuum but within a particular socio-historical context, and what is regarded as its legitimate

practices is conditioned by that context" (Kleinig, 1989, p.1). Adopting a philosophy of education for any learning program is an essential part of reforming it.

Recommendations for Policy-Makers and Future Research

Based on the results of the study, the researcher recommended the following suggestions:

1. The Educational Supervision Department and the General Curricula Department in the Ministry of Education should work together to conduct workshops concentrating on all the innovative approaches mentioned in chapter two of this study in order to create a healthy atmosphere for creativity to take place.
2. Although the results of the study showed positive outcomes towards implementing those innovative approaches when teaching religious subjects, a more qualitative research study is encouraged to accurately measure to what extent those innovative approaches are implemented.
3. It is recommended that the current study be applied in other types of high schools, such as School of the Memorization of the Holy Quran, the private schools, and the international schools.
4. It is also recommended that the School of Education in Saudi Arabia include in their programs courses that provide pre-services teachers with solid ground for innovation and creativity in education in general and for teaching religious education in particular.

5. Teacher education institutions should work to uncover many of the teachers' beliefs about the nature of teaching and learning and understanding how these teachers' beliefs interact with the content and pedagogy of the existing teacher education programs.

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Appendix A

Approved by the Human Subjects Committee University of Kansas, Lawrence Campus (HSCL). Approval expires one year from 3/29/2011. HSCL #19347
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The Questionnaire (English Version)

Information Statement

The Department of Curriculum & Teaching at the University of Kansas supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

This study will focus on a specific group of Saudi Arabian high schools' Islamic education teachers in Saudi Arabia, in order to investigate to what extent Islamic education teachers implement new approaches in their teaching, and the role that a teacher's gender, teaching experience, and academic qualifications play. This will entail your completion of a 74-item questionnaire, which contains both demographic information and a section where you will rate items according to your perspective about the extent to which Islamic education teachers implement new approaches in their teaching, using a 5-number scale (where 1=strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree). The questionnaire packet is expected to take 30 minutes to complete.

The content of the questionnaire should cause you no more discomfort than you would experience in your everyday life. Although participation may not benefit you directly, we believe that the information obtained from this study will help us gain a better understanding of the role of implementing new approaches in teaching Islamic studies.

Your name will not be associated in any way with the research findings.

If you would like additional information concerning this study before or after it is completed, please feel free to contact us by phone or email. Completion of the survey indicates your willingness to participate in this project and that you are at least eighteen. If you have any additional questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call (785) 864-7429 or write the Human Subjects Committee, Lawrence Campus (HSCL), University of Kansas, 2385 Irving Hill Road, Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7563, or email mdenning@ku.edu.

Researcher Contact Information:

Bander Almatari

Curriculum and Teaching

School of Education

The University of Kansas

May1977@ku.edu

Cell phone: 785-304-2677

Researcher Advisor:

Professor Steven H. White

Curriculum and Teaching

School of Education

The University of Kansas

s-white@ku.edu

Appendix B

Please rate each item according to your perspectives about the extent that you as an Islamic education teacher are implementing the innovative approaches when teaching Islamic curricula.

Part I: Personal Information.

1	Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male.
2	Academic Qualifications: <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate. <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate.
3	Teaching Experience: 1 ,2 ,3 ,4 ,5 ,6 ,7 ,8 ,9 , 10,... Please Specify: ().
4	School District: City Name:

Part II: The Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula.

1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, and 5= strongly agree.

I. Static- dynamic		
1	There are constant changes in the subject I teach.	1 2 3 4 5
2	The body of knowledge comprising my subject is constant changing.	1 2 3 4 5
3	The body of knowledge in my subject is not in a process of change.	1 2 3 4 5
4	In my subject you can still teach today what they taught 30 years ago.	1 2 3 4 5
5	The knowledge in my subject is constantly developing.	1 2 3 4 5
6	High school students must learn the core body of knowledge which does not change much over time.	1 2 3 4 5
II. Easy – Hard		
7	Compared to other subjects the subject I teach is hard for students.	1 2 3 4 5
8	I want my students to think that the subject I teach requires a major effort	1 2 3 4 5

	from them.	
9	The subject I teach demands a high level of analytical skill.	1 2 3 4 5
10	Even students who succeed in other subjects might not do very well in my subject.	1 2 3 4 5
11	Students must work hard in my class to understand the material.	1 2 3 4 5
12	I make significant academic demands from the students who study my subject.	1 2 3 4 5
III. Sanctity of the Discipline		
13	It's important to me that students relate to the subject I teach with a great deal of respect.	1 2 3 4 5
14	When in class I want students to feel that the value of the subject I teach is different from other subjects.	1 2 3 4 5
15	I will not tolerate arguments in class against our Islamic teachings in the subject.	1 2 3 4 5
16	It is very important to me that my students don't belittle interpretations they disagree with.	1 2 3 4 5
IV. Student Learning and Achievement		
17	Grades are an impetus to high quality learning.	1 2 3 4 5
18	Success in teaching is manifested in the high grades of students.	1 2 3 4 5
19	Grades are an essential tool for assessing learning.	1 2 3 4 5
20	High grades are essential for my students to get ahead in life.	1 2 3 4 5
21	My students' matriculation examination scores are very important to me.	1 2 3 4 5
V. Teacher role as Mentor		
22	My main job as a teacher is to contribute to shaping the personality of the student.	1 2 3 4 5

23	It is very important that I be a role model for my students.	1 2 3 4 5
24	I feel great responsibility to help my students develop personality strengths that will help them cope with important issues in life.	1 2 3 4 5
25	The most important thing to me is for my students to feel that they can come to me with any personal problem.	1 2 3 4 5
26	My chief role is to serve as guide and leader for my students.	1 2 3 4 5
27	It is important that my students remember me as a guide in life.	1 2 3 4 5
28	My role as a teacher is to guide students towards a particular value system.	1 2 3 4 5

Part III: The Innovative Approaches in Teaching Islamic Education.

1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, and 5= strongly agree.

I. Freedom of Opinion.		
1	Students can express their opinion toward anything that might impede their learning.	1 2 3 4 5
2	Students are open to discuss new ideas.	1 2 3 4 5
3	I provide sufficient time for students to think of any issue.	1 2 3 4 5
4	I encourage students to express their complaints toward any activity that may seem contradictory to prior experience.	1 2 3 4 5
5	I help students to feel comfortable throughout my class.	1 2 3 4 5
6	I accept ideas that are offered by students.	1 2 3 4 5
7	I encourage students to freely express their opinion.	1 2 3 4 5
8	I encourage students to talk about their thoughts and feelings.	1 2 3 4 5
9	I encourage students to ask about the purpose of studying any topic.	1 2 3 4 5

II. Acceptance of Innovation.						
10	I open the discussion for students to introduce their ideas even if these ideas sound unusual.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I allow students to disagree with me.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I give rewards to talented students.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I work hard to reveal what impedes student's innovation.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I allow students to provide alternative solutions for any particular situation.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I allow students to change their opinion about any topic.	1	2	3	4	5
16	I implement untraditional activities in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
17	I encourage students to adopt different opinions.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I give talented students a chance to help lower achieving students.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I encourage extracurricular activities which enhance innovation.	1	2	3	4	5
20	I allow students to research deeply about any particular topic.	1	2	3	4	5
21	I enable students to focus on a particular topic in order to understand it well before moving to a new topic.	1	2	3	4	5
III. Innovation in the Content of the Islamic Curricula.						
22	I guide students to know how to apply their learning outside school.	1	2	3	4	5
23	I present information which interests high school students, by using open ended questions which leads to further research.	1	2	3	4	5
24	I concentrate on explaining the role of human effort in developing knowledge over time.	1	2	3	4	5
25	I focus on the performance of the students in understanding the knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
26	I organize the elements of lesson in a logical way.	1	2	3	4	5
27	I give my students a chance to discuss a particular topic from multiple viewpoints.	1	2	3	4	5
28	I enable my students to discover multiple solutions for one problem.	1	2	3	4	5
29	I present problems that challenge students' thinking.	1	2	3	4	5

30	I allow students to recognize the religious background of a particular view.	1	2	3	4	5
IV. Innovation in the Method of Teaching.						
31	I encourage students to reach the right answer.	1	2	3	4	5
32	I help students to distinguish between what s/he produces from what others produce.	1	2	3	4	5
33	I guide students to discover multiple aspects of what is taught.	1	2	3	4	5
34	I focus on diversifying methods of presenting the knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
35	I give my opinion after discussing students' opinion.	1	2	3	4	5
36	I concentrate on the current methods of teaching such as, discussing, brainstorming, and solving problems.	1	2	3	4	5
37	I reinforce students who raise new ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
38	I utilize students to gather information independently.	1	2	3	4	5
39	I focus on methods of teaching that focus on a student-centered-classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
V. Innovation in the Method of Assessment.						
40	I present to my students a problem with a full freedom and independence to reach to the solution.	1	2	3	4	5
41	I present questions that have many answers.	1	2	3	4	5
42	I focus on methods of assessment that develop the skills of analysis and synthesis.	1	2	3	4	5
43	I try to use an assessment which enhances scientific thinking.	1	2	3	4	5
44	I use an assessment that considers the individual differences among students.	1	2	3	4	5
45	I encourage unique answers.	1	2	3	4	5
46	I try to make sure that the students have solely mastered the lesson.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C

Arabic Version for the questionnaire:

Approved by the Human Subjects Committee University of Kansas, Lawrence Campus (HSCL).
Approval expires one year from 3/29/2011. HSCL #19347

بيان قبول المشاركة في الاستبيان

To What Extent Do High School Islamic Education Teachers in Saudi Arabia Implement Innovative Approaches in Their Teaching?

Do Teacher Gender, Academic Qualifications, and Teaching Experiences Matter?

إلى أي مدى يقوم معلموا ومعلمات التربية الإسلامية في المرحلة الثانوية في المملكة العربية السعودية باستخدام الاتجاهات الحديثة في تدريسهم؟

هل يلعب الجنس (معلم/معلمة)، عدد سنوات الخبرة، و المؤهلات الأكاديمية أي دور في استخدام الاتجاهات الإبداعية في التعليم؟

معلومات الدراسة:

إن قسم المناهج وطرق التدريس بجامعة كانساس يدعم تطبيق حماية المشاركة في البحوث الإنسانية . المعلومات الآتية مقدمة لك لإعطائك الخيار في المشاركة في هذا البحث. كما أنه في حالة الموافقة فإنه لك الخيار في الانسحاب من المشاركة في أي وقت.

هذه الدراسة سوف تركز على مجموعة معينة من معلمي ومعلمات التربية الإسلامية للمرحلة الثانوية في المملكة العربية السعودية والتي تهدف إلى التعرف على مدى ممارستهم للاتجاهات الحديثة في تدريس التربية الإسلامية، كما تهدف الدراسة إلى معرفة دور عدد سنوات الخبرة، المؤهلات الأكاديمية، والجنس (المعلمين – المعلمات) في ممارسة الاتجاهات الحديثة. ولتحقيق أغراض الدراسة، فإنه يتطلب على المشارك أو المشاركة فيها إكمال 74 فقرة في الاستبيان الذي يتضمن قسمين: القسم الأول خاص بالمعلومات الشخصية مثل الجنس وعدد سنوات الخبرة والمؤهل الأكاديمي . أما في القسم الثاني، فإنه خاص بالاستبانة والذي يتم تعبئته من خلال وجهات نظر المعلمين والمعلمات في استخدام الاتجاهات الحديثة في تدريسهم كما أنه من المتوقع إنهاء الاستبانة في خلال 30 دقيقة.

. لقد أخذت الاستبانة معيار ليكرت والذي هو على الشكل التالي:

غير موافق بشدة	غير موافق	لا رأي لي	موافق	موافق بشدة
1	2	3	4	5

تعتمد هذه الدراسة على الإجابة على عبارات الاستبيان فقط وبالتالي ليس هناك أي ضرر من المشاركة في هذه الدراسة . على الرغم من أن المشاركة في هذه الدراسة ليس لديها أي فوائد مباشرة إلا أن الإجابة عليها بشكل دقيق سوف يساعد الباحث لفهم أفضل حول استخدام الاتجاهات الابداعية في تدريس التربية الإسلامية . جميع المعلومات التي سوف يتم تجميعها من المشارك أو المشاركة سوف تكون محاطة بالسرية التامة ولن تستخدم إلا لأغراض البحث العلمي . مع العلم أنه بإمكان المشارك أو المشاركة في هذه الدراسة التواصل مع الباحث كما هو موضح في معلومات الاتصال . إن إكمال الاستبانة في هذه الدراسة يشير إلى موافقة في المشاركة في الدراسة وأن العمر الحالي لا يقل عن 18 عاما . لمزيد من المعلومات حول الدراسة وعن حقوق المشاركة فيها يمكن الاتصال

الرقم: 864-7429 (785) على الرقم:

أو مكاتبة

the Human Subjects Committee, Lawrence Campus (HSCL), University of Kansas, 2385 Irving Hill Road, Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7563, or email mdenning@ku.edu.

Researcher Contact Information:

Bander Almatari
Curriculum and Teaching
School of Education
The University of Kansas
May1977@ku.edu
Cell phone: 785-304-2677

Researcher Advisor:

Professor Steven H. White
Curriculum and Teaching
School of Education
The University of Kansas
s-white@ku.edu

أولاً: المعلومات الشخصية

1	الجنس: <input type="checkbox"/> ذكر <input type="checkbox"/> أنثى
2	المؤهلات الأكاديمية: <input type="checkbox"/> بكالوريوس دراسات إسلامية. <input type="checkbox"/> دراسات عليا.
3	عدد سنوات الخبرة في التدريس: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10.....الرجاء التحديد () .
4	المنطقة التعليمية: المدينة :

ثانياً: المعتقدات التعليمية لمدرسي ومدرسات التربية الإسلامية

الرجاء قراءة كل عبارة بتمعن كامل ومن ثم وضع دائرة حول الرقم الذي تراه/ترينه مناسباً في تحديد درجة موافقتك لها.

غير موافق بشدة	غير موافق	لا رأي لي	موافق	موافق بشدة
1	2	3	4	5

ضع دائرة حول رقم واحد فقط

الثبات والتغيير						
1	يوجد تغييرات مستمرة في المادة التي أدرسها .	1	2	3	4	5
2	يوجد تغييرات مستمرة في المحتوى المعرفي للمادة التي أدرسها .	1	2	3	4	5
3	المحتوى المعرفي للمادة التي أدرسها غير خاضع لعمليات التغيير .	1	2	3	4	5
4	في مادتي، ما أدرسه اليوم هو ما تم تدريسه في السنين الماضية .	1	2	3	4	5
5	المحتوى المعرفي في مادتي الدراسية خاضع لعمليات تغيير مستمرة .	1	2	3	4	5
6	طلاب المرحلة الثانوية لا بد أن يتعلموا الجزء الأساسي من المحتوى المعرفي للمادة التي أدرسها والذي لا يتغير مع مرور الزمن .	1	2	3	4	5
السهولة والصعوبة						
7	بالمقارنة بالمواد الأخرى، المادة التي أقوم بتدريسها صعبة على طلابي.	1	2	3	4	5
8	أريد من طلابي أن يعرفوا أن المادة التي أدرسها تتطلب الكثير من الجهد.	1	2	3	4	5

5	4	3	2	1	المادة التي أدرسها تحتاج الى مستوى عال من مهارات التحليل.	9
5	4	3	2	1	أداء الطالب في المواد الأخرى بشكل جيد لا يعني بالضرورة أن يكون أداؤه جيدا في مادتي.	10
5	4	3	2	1	فهم مواضيع المادة التي أقوم بتدريسها يستلزم من طلابي المذاكرة بشكل جيد.	11
5	4	3	2	1	ألزم طلابي بالكثير من المتطلبات الأكاديمية في المادة التي أدرسها.	12

قداسة المادة الدراسية						
5	4	3	2	1	من المهم بالنسبة لي أن يتعامل الطلاب مع المادة التي أدرسها بقدر كبير من الاحترام.	13
5	4	3	2	1	أثناء تدريسي، أريد من طلابي أن يشعروا بقيمة المادة التي أدرسها وأنها تختلف عن المواد الأخرى.	14
5	4	3	2	1	لن أتساهل مع النقاشات التي تتعارض مع التعاليم الإسلامية في مادتي.	15
5	4	3	2	1	من المهم بالنسبة لي أن لا يقلل طلابي من أهمية التفسيرات والآراء التي لا يتفقون معها.	16
التعلم والمستوى التحصيلي للطلاب						
5	4	3	2	1	الدرجات المرتفعة هي الدافع لجودة تعليم عالية.	17
5	4	3	2	1	قياس نجاح المعلم في تدريسه يظهر جليا من خلال درجات الطلاب المرتفعة.	18
5	4	3	2	1	الدرجات هي أداة أساسية لتقييم التعلم.	19
5	4	3	2	1	الدرجات العالية أمر أساسي لطلابي من أجل التقدم في الحياة.	20
5	4	3	2	1	مستوى الطلاب في اختبارات القبول في الجامعة أمر مهم بالنسبة لي.	21
دور المعلم كمرشد						
5	4	3	2	1	عملي الأساسي كمعلم يكمن في المساهمة في تشكيل شخصية الطالب.	22
5	4	3	2	1	من المهم بالنسبة لي أن أكون قدوة لطلابي.	23
5	4	3	2	1	أشعر بمسؤولية كبيرة لمساعدة الطلاب على تطوير نقاط القوة في شخصيتهم والتي تساعدهم على التعامل مع القضايا الهامة في الحياة.	24
5	4	3	2	1	من المهم بالنسبة لي أن يشعر الطالب بأنه يستطيع أن يأتي إلى أي مشكلة شخصية.	25

26	دوري الأساسي يكمن في تقديم نفسي كمرشد وقائد لطلابي.	1	2	3	4	5
27	من المهم بالنسبة لي أن يتذكرني الطلاب كمرشد لهم في الحياة.	1	2	3	4	5
28	دوري كمعلم يكون في ارشاد الطلاب نحو نظام محدد من القيم.	1	2	3	4	5

ثالثاً: الاتجاهات الابداعية في تدريس التربية الاسلامية.

الرجاء قراءة كل عبارة بتمعن كامل ومن ثم وضع دائرة حول الرقم الذي تراه /تريه مناسباً في تحديد درجة موافقتك لها.

غير موافق بشدة	غير موافق	لا رأي لي	موافق	موافق بشدة
1	2	3	4	5

ضع دائرة حول رقم واحد فقط

حرية التعبير	
1	يعبر المتعلم عن تدمره من كل ما من شأنه إعاقة تعلمه.
2	المتعلم منفتح على الأفكار الجديدة والفريدة.
3	أوفر الوقت الكافي للتفكير في أي أمر.
4	أشجع المتعلم على أن يعبر عن تدمره من النشاطات التي يظهر أنها متناقضة.
5	أساعد المتعلم على أن يشعر بالحرية والمحبة أثناء التدريس.
6	أتقبل الأفكار التي يطرحها المتعلمون.
7	أشجع المتعلم على أن يعبر عن آرائه بحرية.
8	أشجع المتعلم على أن يتحدث عن حقوقه ويفصح عنها.
9	أشجع المتعلم على أن يسأل عن سبب تعلمه شيئاً ما.
تقبل الابداع	
10	أفتح المجال لكل المتعلمين لتقديم أفكارهم مهما كانت غريبة.
11	أفتح المجال لتقبل رأي المتعلم عن شكه بصحة ما يقوله المعلم.

5	4	3	2	1	أقدم مكافآت للمتعلمين المبدعين.	12
5	4	3	2	1	أسعى للكشف عن معيقات الابداع عند المتعلمين.	13
5	4	3	2	1	اسمح للمتعلمين بتقديم أكثر من بديل للموقف الواحد.	14
5	4	3	2	1	افتح المجال للمتعلمين لكي يغيروا وجهة نظرهم حول موضوع معين.	15
5	4	3	2	1	أشجع على ممارسة الأنشطة غير التقليدية في الصف.	16
5	4	3	2	1	أشجع الاختلاف بين طلابي في المواضيع المطروحة.	17
5	4	3	2	1	أعطي الطلبة المبدعين فرصة لمساعدة الطلبة الضعفاء في الصف.	18
5	4	3	2	1	أقدم الأنشطة غير الصفية التي تنمي مهارات الابداع.	19
5	4	3	2	1	افتح المجال للمتعلم للبحث في شيء محدد بعمق.	20
5	4	3	2	1	أمكن المتعلمين بالانشغال بموضوع معين من أجل فهمه جيدا قبل الدخول إلى موضوعات أخرى.	21

الابداع في موضوعات مناهج التربية الاسلامية						
5	4	3	2	1	أرشد المتعلمين إلى كيفية الاستفادة من المعلومات واستخدامها في الواقع.	22
5	4	3	2	1	أعرض المعلومات التي تناسب المرحلة الثانوية وذلك باستخدام أسئلة مفتوحة قابلة للبحث.	23
5	4	3	2	1	أركز على بيان أثر الجهد البشري في تطور المعارف وتقدمها وتنوعها.	24
5	4	3	2	1	أركز على الأداء الشخصي للمتعلم في فهم المعرفة.	25
5	4	3	2	1	أنظم عناصر الدرس بشكل متسلسل ومنطقي.	26
5	4	3	2	1	افتح المجال للنظر للموضوع المطروح من زوايا متعددة.	27
5	4	3	2	1	أمكن المتعلمين من تقديم حلول متعددة للمشكلة الواحدة.	28
5	4	3	2	1	أقدم المشكلات التي تتحدى تفكير المتعلمين.	29
5	4	3	2	1	افتح المجال للتعرف على النزعة الدينية للمعرفة.	30

الابداع في طرق التدريس						
5	4	3	2	1	31	أشجع المتعلمين للوصول إلى الإجابة الصحيحة.
5	4	3	2	1	32	أساعد المتعلم على فهم أوجه تميز ما ينتجه عما ينتجه الآخرون .
5	4	3	2	1	33	أوجه المتعلمين لاكتشاف أنماط متعددة للظاهرة المدروسة.
5	4	3	2	1	34	أركز على تنوع طرائق وأساليب التدريس في تقديم المعلومة.
5	4	3	2	1	35	أقوم بتقديم رأيي في الموضوعات المطروحة بعد رأي الطلبة.
5	4	3	2	1	36	أركز على طرق التدريس الحديثة كالمناقشة , العصف الذهني, وحل المشكلات.
5	4	3	2	1	37	أحث المتعلمين على إثارة أفكار متعددة حول الموضوع الواحد.
5	4	3	2	1	38	أساعد المتعلم كي يصل إلى المعلومة بنفسه.
5	4	3	2	1	39	استخدم طرائق التدريس التي تركز على دور المتعلم في عملية التدريس.

الابداع في طرق التقويم						
5	4	3	2	1	40	أقدم المشكلة للمتعلمين على أساس حرية الاختيار والاستقلالية في الحل.
5	4	3	2	1	41	أقدم للمتعلمين أسئلة متعددة الإجابات.
5	4	3	2	1	42	أركز في التقويم على تنمية مهارات التحليل والتركيب والاستنتاج
5	4	3	2	1	43	أسعى إلي أن يكون التقويم مشجعا على التفكير العلمي.
5	4	3	2	1	44	أحرص على أن يراعي التقويم الفروق الفردية بين المتعلمين.
5	4	3	2	1	45	أصف المتعلم بالتميز إذا كان حله مختلفا عن حلول الآخرين.
5	4	3	2	1	46	أسعى للتأكد من إتقان المتعلم لما ورد في الدرس فقط.

مع خالص الشكر والتقدير لكل من ساهم في تعبئة هذه الاستبانة

Appendix D

The original and the back translation for the first questionnaire:

The Pedagogical Beliefs of Teachers of Islamic Curricula

The Original Version for the first questionnaire:

1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, and 5= strongly agree.

I. Static- dynamic		
1	There are constant changes in the subject I teach.	1 2 3 4 5
2	The body of knowledge comprising my subject is constant changing.	1 2 3 4 5
3	The body of knowledge in my subject is not in a process of change.	1 2 3 4 5
4	In my subject you can still teach today what they taught 30 years ago.	1 2 3 4 5
5	The knowledge in my subject is constantly developing.	1 2 3 4 5
6	High school students must learn the core body of knowledge which does not change much over time.	1 2 3 4 5
II. Easy – Hard		
7	Compared to other subjects the subject I teach is hard for students.	1 2 3 4 5
8	I want my students to think that the subject I teach requires a major effort from them.	1 2 3 4 5
9	The subject I teach demands a high level of analytical skill.	1 2 3 4 5
10	Even students who succeed in other subjects might not do very well in my subject.	1 2 3 4 5
11	Students must work hard in my class to understand the material.	1 2 3 4 5
12	I make significant academic demands from the students who study my	1 2 3 4 5

	subject.	
III. Sanctity of the Discipline		
13	It's important to me that students relate to the subject I teach with a great deal of respect.	1 2 3 4 5
14	When in class I want students to feel that the value of the subject I teach is different from other subjects.	1 2 3 4 5
15	I will not tolerate arguments in class against our Islamic teachings in the subject.	1 2 3 4 5
16	It is very important to me that my students don't belittle interpretations they disagree with.	1 2 3 4 5
IV. Student Learning and Achievement		
17	Grades are an impetus to high quality learning.	1 2 3 4 5
18	Success in teaching is manifested in the high grades of students.	1 2 3 4 5
19	Grades are an essential tool for assessing learning.	1 2 3 4 5
20	High grades are essential for my students to get ahead in life.	1 2 3 4 5
21	My students' matriculation examination scores are very important to me.	1 2 3 4 5
V. Teacher role as Mentor		
22	My main job as a teacher is to contribute to shaping the personality of the student.	1 2 3 4 5
23	It is very important that I be a role model for my students.	1 2 3 4 5
24	I feel great responsibility to help my students develop personality strengths that will help them cope with important issues in life.	1 2 3 4 5
25	The most important thing to me is for my students to feel that they can come to me with any personal problem.	1 2 3 4 5
26	My chief role is to serve as guide and leader for my students.	1 2 3 4 5

27	It is important that my students remember me as a guide in life.	1 2 3 4 5
28	My role as a teacher is to guide students towards a particular value system.	1 2 3 4 5

Back Translation Version for the first questionnaire:

1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, and 5= strongly agree.

Consistency and Change		
1	There are continuous changes in the subject that I teach.	1 2 3 4 5
2	There are continuous changes in the cognitive content of the course which I teach.	1 2 3 4 5
3	The cognitive content of the course that I teach is not subject to changing processes.	1 2 3 4 5
4	In my course, what I teach today is what has been taught in the previous years.	1 2 3 4 5
5	The cognitive content of the course that I teach is subject to changing processes.	1 2 3 4 5
6	High school students need to learn the basic component of the cognitive content of the course that I teach, which does not change over time.	1 2 3 4 5
Easiness and Difficulty		
7	In comparison to other courses, the course that I teach is difficult to my students.	1 2 3 4 5
8	I would like my students to know that the course which I teach requires a lot of effort.	1 2 3 4 5
9	The course which I teach requires high levels of analytical skills.	1 2 3 4 5
10	The good performance of a student in other courses does not necessarily mean that his/her performance will be good in my course.	1 2 3 4 5
11	Understanding the topics of the course that I teach requires my students to study well.	1 2 3 4 5
12	I request many academic requirements from my students in the course that I teach.	1 2 3 4 5
Holiness of the subject		

13	It is important for me that the students deal with the course I teach with much respect.	1 2 3 4 5
14	During my teaching, I would like my students to feel the value of the course I teach and to realize that it is different from the other courses.	1 2 3 4 5
15	I will not tolerate the discussions that contradict the teachings of Islam in my course.	1 2 3 4 5
16	It is important for me that my students do not underestimate the importance of the accounts and opinions with which they disagree.	1 2 3 4 5
Learning and Students' Level of Achievement		
17	High grades are the motive for a high quality of learning.	1 2 3 4 5
18	The measurement of the success of a teacher in his/her teaching appears clearly through the students' high grades.	1 2 3 4 5
19	Grades are a basic tool to assess learning.	1 2 3 4 5
20	High grades are a basic thing for my students to make progress in life.	1 2 3 4 5
21	The level of the students in University placement tests is an important thing to me.	1 2 3 4 5
The Role of the Teacher as a Guide		
22	My main task as a teacher is to participate in shaping the student's personality.	1 2 3 4 5
23	It is important for me to be an example to my students.	1 2 3 4 5
24	I feel that I have a huge responsibility to assist students to develop the strength points in their personalities, which help them handle the important issues in life.	1 2 3 4 5
25	It is important for me that the student feels that he or she can come to me concerning any personal problem.	1 2 3 4 5
26	My main role lies in introducing myself as a guide and leader of my students.	1 2 3 4 5
27	It is important for me that my students remember me as a guide for them in life.	1 2 3 4 5
28	My role as a teacher is to guide the students towards a specific system of values.	1 2 3 4 5