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Perceived Efficacy Levels of Islamic Education Teachers in Jordan

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Abstract. The primary purpose of this study was to determine the perceived efficacy levels of Islamic education teachers in Jordan. A random sample of 130 Islamic education teachers was selected to respond to a validated instrument developed by Yilmaz (2008). The instrument comprised of five dimensions with 25 items distributed as follow: knowledge of Islamic education, selection and application of strategies, methods, and techniques related to Islamic education, material design and use related to Islamic education, in-class communication and classroom management, and measurement and evaluation. The results of the study indicated that self-efficacy of Islamic teachers was the highest far the knowledge of Islamic education with a mean value of 4.10. However, the lowest efficacy level of Islamic teachers was for in-class communication and classroom management with a mean value of 3.25. The rest of the dimensions had mean values above 3.50. The study ended by offering a number of theoretical and practical implications for the field of study.

Introduction and Theoretical Framework

In foe past two decades, a good deal of research has focused on improving the educational system for the sake of increasing students' learning and achievement. One promising area of research that may be foe cornerstone for the success of such effort is the teacher efficacy. Teacher efficacy has been defined as "teachers' belief or conviction that they can influence how well students learn, even those who may be difficult or unmotivated" (Guskey & Passaro, 1993, p. 3). Ross (1994) defined teacher efficacy as "the extent to which teachers believe their efforts will have a positive effect on student achievement" (p. 5). These two definitions indicate that the perception of one's ability affects one thought feelings, motivations, and actions toward students' success and learning (Morell & Caroll, 2003).

Today's teachers have multiple responsibilities including the ability to manage the classroom well; communicate clearly with students; design classroom materials; present the content knowledge effectively; provide learning, select and apply proper strategies and teaching techniques; and provide proper measurement and evaluation for students' learning and achievement. Therefore, teaching is a profession that needs more efficacy than ever before.

A good deal of research over the past two decades has demonstrated that efficacy beliefs influence behavior and performance through effecting on direction, intensity, and persistence of effort (Alqadoomy, 2006). Teachers with high efficacy perceptions can make an effort to create an effective educational environment in foe classroom using a variety of teaching methods and strategies (Alderman, 1999). Research has also emphasized that teachers with high efficacy perceptions believe they would perform and manage teaching in an effective manner; establish communication with all types of students including challenging students (problematic and struggling students); attempt to include families in toe education process of children; do their job affectionately through spending more time on instructional activities; motivate students and praise them more frequently; and have high expectations for students' academic achievement and success (Bandura, 1997; Eisenberger, Conti-D'Antonio, & Bertrando, 2005; Goddard, 2001; Larrick, 2004; Moore & Esselman, 1992; Ross, 2004; Ware & Kitsantas, 2007). Woolfolk (1990) added that teachers with high efficacy perceptions establish high aspirations for toe future and persist to attain their future goals.

Teacher efficacy comes from four sources (Bandura, 1993; Woolfolk & Hoy, 2000). The first sources is that related to prior mastery experiences (Agarwal & Stair, 2000; Bandura, 2007; Compeau & Higgins, 1995), which are regarded as the most prominent source of efficacy judgments because they are based on actual individual experiences (Bandura, 1982). Teachers use personal experiences to increase their teaching confidence. As social cognitive theory suggests, performance successes reinforce efficacy beliefs whereas failures create doubt and undermine self-beliefs of capability (Wood & Bandura, 1989). In general, therefore, as teachers experience on toe job success, they are more likely to feel effective and deliver high quality instruction (Abu-Alila, 2004). The second source of teacher efficacy is vicarious experience. Teachers increase their efficacy beliefs through observations, readings, and videos of other teachers who are highly effective and come to believe that they too can become effective. The third source of efficacy beliefs is social persuasion, where teachers use dialogue to convince, persuade, motivate and encourage each other to believe in their teaching effectiveness (Alzayat, 2001). Individual psychological conditions represent toe fourth potentially important source of efficacy perceptions. Strong emotional reactions to a task (teaching) are believed to provide cues about the level of success or failure that can be anticipated in completing that task (Pajares, 1997,2002; Semmar, 2006).

Based on the above discussion, it appears that efficacy beliefs of teachers are critical for the success of toe educational system as a whole and for toe success of each student. What is missing from literature is toe focus on self-efficacy of Islamic education teachers. Although efficacy perception of teachers is important for all disciplines, it has a distinct meaning in the Islamic education discipline. To elaborate, Islamic teachers should have focused and trough knowledge of the subject matter of the Holly Quraan (the words of Allah), the Sunna (a way of life for Muslims), and the basic laws and rules of Islam. These three pillars are important for Islamic education teachers to maximize their teaching efficacy. If Islamic education teachers' efficacy beliefs related to the above mentioned three pillars are high, then their teaching effectiveness will be maximized, Overall, the ultimate outcome would be the best of the education system and the success of the individual student. Therefore, it is important to investigate the efficacy beliefs of Islamic education teachers.

Statement of the Problem

Teacher efficacy has been reported as a key determinant of teaching effectiveness and is related to improvements in the educational system, which ultimately impact students' learning and academic achievement. A review of literature has indicated that little or no research studies have focused on toe self- efficacy perceptions of Islamic education teachers. To the researchers' best knowledge, no studies have been conducted in Jordan regarding the teacher efficacy beliefs. Therefore, toe primary purpose of this study is to determine the perceived efficacy levels of Islamic education teachers in Jordan as it relates to a number of competencies. Teachers who have thorough knowledge of toe subjects involved in Islamic education; the ability to design materials, select proper methods and strategies to teach Islamic education, and use proper evaluations; and have classroom management skills, are expected to exhibit higher efficacy beliefs than those who do not.

Research Questions

To achieve the primary purpose of toe study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the perceived efficacy levels of Islamic education teachers in relation to the following aspects?

a) Knowledge of Islamic education
b) Selection and application of strategies, methods, and techniques related to Islamic education.
c) Material design and use related to Islamic education.
d) In-class communication and classroom management.
e) Measurement and evaluation.

2- Are there any statistically significant differences in foe Islamic education teachers' perceived efficacy levels based on the following demographics: Gender and teaching experience?

Importance of the Study

The results of the study may benefit Islamic education teachers in Jordan because it begins to define their perceptions of self-efficacy and what types of professional development needs they have. It may also provide insight into their perceived deficits related to Islamic education and the required training workshops suited. The results of foe study may also provide an indication for the Ministry of Education as to the effectiveness of their Islamic education teachers. Based on the results of the study, public and private colleges and universities may begin to evaluate their Islamic education curriculums and how they may be redesigned as to better meet the needs of Islamic education teachers to enhance their teaching efficacy.

Research Methods and procedures

population and Sample

The target population for this study was all Islamic education teachers in the educational directorate of Zarqa in Jordan. The sample for this study comprised of 130 Islamic education teachers whom were selected randomly from a pool of 572 teachers. A total of 110 usable instruments were reformed with a response rate of 80%. The sample distribution was 45 males (40.9%) and 65 females (59.1%). With regard to teaching experience, 18 (16.4%) had less than 5 years; 24 (21.8%) between 5- 9 years; 25 (22.7%) between 10-14 years; 29 (26.4%) between 10-14 years; and 14 (12.7%) above 20 years of teaching experience.

Instrumentation

The instrument used to collect data in this study was a two-part questionnaire named the teacher efficacy scale (TES) adapted from Yilmaz (2008). The TES was partially modified to be more related to the Islamic education teachers. The first part of foe questionnaire included five sub-scales with 25 items and were rated on a Likert-type scale ranged as follow: 1 "Strongly Disagree", 2 "Disagree", 3 "Neutral", 4 "Agree", and 5 "Strongly Agree". These subscales were knowledge of Islamic education (3 items), selection and application of strategy, methods, and techniques related to Islamic education (8 items), material design and use related to Islamic education (4 items), in-class communication and classroom management (7 items), and measurement and evaluation (3 items). The second part of the questionnaire collected demographic information related to teachers' gender and teaching experience. The original version of the TES was developed through an extensive review of foe literature and a field test. The TES was shown to have both content and face validity. For indication of reliability, the Cronbach's alpha of the instrument was .78.

Instrument Translation Process

To ensure equivalence of meaning of the items and constructs between the Arabic and English versions of the TES, a rigorous translation process was used and included forward and backward translation, subjective evaluations of the translated items, and pilot testing. The goal of the translation process was to produce an Arabic version of the TES with items that were equivalent in meaning to foe original English version (Lomi, 1992; Sperber, Devellis, & Boehlecke, 1994). One translator, (faculty member) bilingual in English and Arabic, translated the English version of foe TES into Arabic (forward translation). This translator was instructed to retain both foe form (language) and the meaning of the items as close to foe original as possible but to give priority to meaning equivalence. When foe Arabic translation was finalized, foe TES was then back-translated (from Arabic into English) by another faculty member, bilingual in English and Arabic. The back-translated items were then evaluated by a group of three faculties to ensure that foe item meanings were equivalent in both the original English version and the back-translated version. If differences in meaning were found between items, those items are put through the forward and back-translation process again until the faculties are satisfied for there was substantial meaning equivalence. The Arabic version of foe TES was then pilot tested with a group of 15 Islamic teachers to collect feedback about instrument content and usage. The feedback from the teachers emphasized that the instrument has both face and content validity.

Instrument Standardization

The instrument was pilot tested with a group of 29 Islamic education teachers who were excluded from the main sample of the study. Changes recommended by the validation panel and those identified as needed during the pilot test were incorporated into the instrument. These changes occurred in the wording of items and in the instructions for completing the instrument. The internal consistency of the instrument was determined using the same group of teachers used in the pilot study. The calculated coefficient alpha reliability for the five sub-scales was as follow: knowledge of Islamic education (a = .70), selection and application of strategy, methods, and techniques related to Islamic education (a = .81), material design and use related to Islamic education (a = .78), in-class communication and classroom management (a = .73), and measurement and evaluation (a = .76). These figures suggest that the instrument is suitable to measure the Islamic teachers' efficacy levels related to these constructs. Moreover, a minimum of three items under each dimension is acceptable.

Data Collection

The researchers distributed the instruments for Islamic education teachers hand to hand during the first semester of the academic year 2009/2010. The researchers explained to the participants the purpose of the study and encouraged them to read the statements carefully before ticking the appropriate choice. The participants were insured confidentiality and anonymity, participants were

also instructed to hand the instruments to the school principal, which later were collected by the researchers.

Data Analysis

Procedures for statistical analysis were discussed by each research question. The first research question was to determine the perceived efficacy levels of Islamic education teachers in Jordan. Descriptive statistics including means and standard deviations for each sub-scale and its items were utilized to answer for this question. The second research question concerned if differences exist in the perceived efficacy levels of Islamic education teachers related to gender and teaching experience. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to identify the differences in tire efficacy dimensions among the two aforementioned demographics. The scale scores for the efficacy dimensions were treated as the dependent variables, whereas !he different levels of the categorical demographic variables (e.g., gender and teaching experience) were treated as the independent variables. Each independent variable was tested separately. In the case where significant differences among levels of the independent variables were detected, MANOVA analysis was then followed with Univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) and post hoc comparisons utilizing Tukey's test at an alpha level of .05.

Results

The data collected from all participants were coded, input to the spss spreadsheets, and analyzed using software package SPSS version 11.5. Descriptive statistics for all variables in this study were examined using SPSS frequencies. The minimum and maximum values of each variable were examined for the accuracy of data entry by inspecting out of range values. An examination of these values did not detect any out of range values. Missing subjects were not detected either. Results of the study were addressed by each research question.

Results pertaining to Research Question 1

The first research question of this study was to determine the perceived efficacy levels of Islamic education teachers in Jordan. The mean values and standard deviations for teachers' responses to these items and the average of all items are presented in Tables (1) through (5).

According to Table 1, the overall mean score for all items related to Knowledge of Islamic education was (4.10), indicating, on average, high efficacy level regarding knowledge of Islamic education experienced by Islamic education teachers. Moreover, means of the items ranged from (4.04) to (4.17), reflecting high efficacy levels related to this dimension.

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations for the Items of the Knowledge of Mamie Education Dimension

Items	Means	Std, Deviation
1. 1 have sufficient knowledge concepts within the scope of the of Islam education course‹Islamic	4.17	.97
2. I can convey different sources and opinions about Islamic subjects to my students.	4.10	.93
3. 1 update my knowledge of Islamic education by keeping abreast of the scientific developments.	4.04	.83
Average	4.10	.64

On the other hand, results presented in Tables 2 and 3 revealed that the overall mean score for items of foe selection and application of strategies, methods, and techni‹}ues dimension ‹md material design and use were (3.85) and (3.99) respectively, indicating, on average, moderate-to-high efficacy levels regarding these dimensions. Further, all items in both dimensions were above the mean value of 3.50.

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations for ‹be Items of the Selection and Application of Strategies, Methods, and Techniques Dimension.

Items	Means	Std, Deviation
1. I know the strategies, methods, and techniques that may be required for effective teaching of Islamic education.	3.77	.90
2. I can use the concept maps effectively in teaching Islamic education.	3.87	1.20
3. I experience ease in using second- hand sources in teaching Islamic education.	4.20	.89
4. I can effectively make use of the computer technologies in teaching Islamic education.	4.24	1.14
5. 1 know the application-related problems in selection and design of strategies, methods, and techniques, and I am capable of planning accordingly.	3.80	.84
6. I would experience ease in determining the strategies and methods fitting tile skills.	3.63	.93
7. I would experience ease in planning activities aimed at skill	3.66	.84
8. I would experience ease in using excursion and observation activities for	3.66	.84

sufficient teaching of Islamic education.		
Average	3.85	.48

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations for the Items of the Material Design and Use Dimension.

Items	Means	Std, Deviation
1. I have the theoretical knowledge regarding use of materials in teaching Islamic subjects within tile scope of the Islamic education course.	4.15	.58
2.1 would experience ease in providing the material diversity in teaching Islamic education.	3.95	.73
3.1 can design the materials myself and use them in activities I design.	3.94	.77
4. I would experience ease while deciding when and how to use the materials.	3.94	77
Average	3.99	.61

Table 4 clarified that the overall mean score for all items of the in-class communication and classroom management was 3.25, indicating moderate level of efficacy among Islamic education teachers regarding this dimension. Item (1) had the highest mean value (3.93), whereas items (5, 6, ‘md 7) had the lowest mean values of 2.85,2.86, and 2.35 respectively.

Table 4. Means and standard Deviations for the Items of In- Class Communication and Classroom Management Dimension.

Items	Means	Std, Deviation
1. I see myself competent in creating the classroom environment required for effective teaching of Islamic education.	3.93	.77
2. I would experience ease in finding the sources of motivation problems my students may experience in connection with the Islamic education course and subjects.	3.85	.76
3. I have tile teaching qualifications required for creating a classroom environment with high level of motivation.	3.09	1.26
4. I can effectively involve my students actively in the lesson in teaching Islamic education.	3.86	.84
5. I can solve the motivation problems that may arise from individual differences through dialogues I will establish with my students.	2.85	1.19
6. I can enable my students to use tile Islamic concepts correctly.	2.86	1.40
7. I can enable my students to use tile link between today and the past.	2.35	.95
Average	3.25	.49

Finally, Table 5 indicated that mean of the items of measurement and evaluation was 3.70, reflecting moderate-to-high efficacy level of Islamic education teachers related to this dimension.

Table 5. Means and standard Deviations for the Items of the Measurement and Evaluation Dimension.

Items	Means	Std, Deviation
1. I can perform effective measurement and evaluation in teaching Islamic education.	3.64	1.09
2. I would experience ease in using tile student product files in tile measurement and evaluation process.	3.78	.90
3. 1 would not experience difficulties in spreading measurement and evaluation over the process in teaching Islamic education.	3.68	.97
Average	3.70	.65

Results Pertaining to Research Question 2

Research question 2 concerns foe significant differences among efficacy level dimensions and the following individual demographics of Islamic education teachers in Jordan: gender and teaching experience. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) statistical procedures were used because this research question involved multiple dependent and independent variables. The five dimensions of efficacy level were treated as the dependent variables, whereas categorical level variables (e.g., gender and years of teaching experience) were used as the independent variables. The results for each independent variable were reported separately. MANOVA analysis yielding significant differences was followed with ANOVA analysis and post hoc comparisons, respectively. All post hoc comparisons utilized Tukey’s test at an alpha level of .05.

Gender

Gender was used as an independent variable to determine whether perceptions of efficacy level dimensions differed for males versus females. Pillai’s Trace was selected as foe test statistic to

evaluate the presence of differences across gender, with regard to foe set of dependent variables. MANOVA analysis revealed no significant differences across levels of gender (see Table 6). As shown in the table, the calculated value of Pillai's Trace was .04 (F = .78, df = 5, p = .27) indicating that differences did not exist for male and female respondents across the dependent variables.

Table 6. Multivariate Tests ٠٤ Slgnificauee, Effect size, and Power for Gender.

MANOVA Test	Value	F	df	Sig.
Pillai's Trace	.04	.78	5	.57
Wilks' lambda	.95	.78	5	.57
Hotelllng's Trace	.04	.78	5	.57
Roy's Largest Root	.04	.78	5	.57

Years of Teaching Experience

The respondent's total years of teaching experience was treated as an independent variable to determine if significant differences in perceptions of efficacy level dimensions emerged across these categories. The years of experience were grouped into five categories. MANOVA analysis showed no statistically significant differences across categories of teaching experience. The calculated value of Pillai's Trace was .19 (F = 1.01, df=20,p = .45) (see Table 7).

Table 7. Multivariate Tests of Significance, Effect Size, and Power for Years of Experience.

MANOVA Test	Value	F	df	Sig.
Pillai's Trace	.19	1.01	20	.45
Wilks' lambda	.83	.99	20	.47
Hotelllng's Trace	.20	.98	20	.49
Roy's Largest Root	.08	1.65	5	.15

Discussion

Improving the educational system for the sake of increasing students' learning and achievement has been an area of great concern for the past two decades. One promising area of inquiry that may be the cornerstone for the success of such effort is the teacher efficacy. Even though teacher efficacy has been investigated for science teachers, English teachers, and social studies teachers, the investigation of Islamic education teacher efficacy is rather limited. Moreover, no research addressing this issue was located in Jordan. Therefore, the goal of this study was to determine the perceived efficacy levels of Islamic education teachers in Jordan. One-hundred ten Islamic education teachers were given a valid and reliable instrument in which they were asked to provide demographic information and respond to 25 statements classified into five dimensions using a 5-point Likert-type scale.

The results of this research indicate that Islamic education teachers have moderate-to-high level of efficacy as indicated by its overall mean values for all dimensions except for the dimension of in-class communication and classroom management which received moderate mean value as follow: knowledge of Islamic education (4.10), selection and application of strategies, methods, and techniques related to Islamic education (3.85), material design and use related to Islamic education (3.99), in-class communication and classroom management (3.25), and measurement and evaluation (3.70).

With regard to foe knowledge of Islamic education dimension, it appears that Islamic education teachers have sufficient knowledge of Islamic concepts, which helps in conveying different opinions about Islamic subjects to students. Moreover, teachers update their knowledge of Islamic education by keeping abreast of the scientific developments in their field of specialty. Similarly, Islamic education teachers believe in their ability to select and apply strategies, methods, and techniques related to Islamic education. Specifically, they know how to utilize the best strategies, methods, and techniques that may be required for effective teaching of Islamic education. Some of these strategies and techniques include concept maps, second-hand sources, computer technologies, application-related problems, and excursion and observation activities. Further, Islamic education teachers believe in their abilities to plan and determine the strategies and methods aimed at improving skills.

The third dimension which received moderate-to- high efficacy level is material design and use related to Islamic education. Islamic education teachers indicated that they have the theoretical and tactical knowledge regarding their decision on how to design and use of materials in teaching Islamic subjects and have foe ability to provide the material diversity in teaching Islamic education. The dimension of measurement and evaluation as well received moderate-to-high efficacy level indicating that Islamic education teachers have foe ability to perform effective measurement and evaluation when teaching Islamic education. The last diemsnion of teacher efficacy is in-class communication and classroom management which was moderate in efficacy as indicated by Islamic education teachers. To elaborate, Islamic education teachers believe in their competence to create the classroom environment with high level of motivation; actively involve students in the lesson and enable students to use concepts related to Islamic education correctly; and can solve the motivation problems that may arise from individual differences through dialogues with students. In short, it

appears that Islamic education teachers have acceptable level of confidence related to teaching Islamic education in Jordan, which is an indication of effective teaching leading to improved students' learning and performance. Another strand of results regarding demographic variables of Islamic teachers indicated that gender and years of teaching experience did not have any significant effects on the efficacy dimensions. This result opens the door for more demographic variables to be included in further research.

Implications and Recommendations

Several implications can be drawn from this research. First, the results of this study suggest that the efficacy level is well within foe accepted range to maximize students' learning and increase their academic achievement. However, the dimension of in-class communication and classroom management needs further attention. The study results and implications suggest the following recommendations for practice and theory.

From a practical standpoint, the following recommendations are suggested: (a) the Ministry of Education should prepare seminars, training workshops, and materials about self-development of teachers especially those related to in-class communication and classroom management skills; (b) school principals should stress on the importance of the work environment and school culture as a change agent to enhance foe efficacy beliefs of Islamic education teachers; and (c) higher education institutions should evaluate their Islamic education curriculum related to the above five aforementioned dimensions to provide the school system with Islamic teachers with high teaching efficacy. From a theoretical standpoint, the population of the future research should be expanded to include all Islamic education teachers in Jordan. The study should also compare between private and public schools, geographic regions, educational levels of respondents, and so on. Other studies should not only study the efficacy believes of in-service teachers but also pre-service teachers. Another recommendation for future studies would be to include a qualitative part in any investigation to provide a clearer picture of the results obtained.

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مستوى الثقة بالنفس لدى معلمي التربية الإسلامية في الأردن

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(قدم للنشر في ١٤٣١/٢/٣هـ؛ وقبل للنشر في ١٤٣١/٧/٣٠هـ)

الكلمات المفتاحية: الثقة بالنفس، التربية الإسلامية، المعلمون، الأردن.

ملخص البحث: هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى تحديد مستوى الثقة بالنفس لدى معلمي التربية الإسلامية في الأردن. وقد تكونت عينة الدراسة من ١٣٠ معلما ومعلمة للتربية الإسلامية تم اختيارهم بالطريقة العشوائية من يجتمع الدراسة للإجابة على أداة الدراسة والتي تم تبنيها من يلمان (yilmaz،٢٠٠٨).

تكونت أداة الدراسة من ٢٥ سؤالا موزعة على خمسة مجالات كالآتي: المعرفة بالتربية الإسلامية، اختيار وتطبيق الاستراتيجيات المتعلقة بالتربية الإسلامية، تصميم المواد التعليمية المتعلقة بالتربية الإسلامية، إدارة الصف والاتصال، القياس والتقويم. وقد أشارت نتائج الدراسة إلى أن مستوى الثقة بالنفس لدى معلمي التربية الإسلامية كانت في أعلى مستوياته عند مجال المعرفة بالتربية الإسلامية وبمتوسط حسابي مقداره ٤.١٠ وعلى النقيض بلغ مستوى الثقة أدنى مستوياته عند مجال إدارة الصف والاتصال داخل الصف بمتوسط حسابي مقداره ٣.٢٥. المجالات الأخرى بلغت متوسط حساباتها أعلى من ٣.٥٠ وانتهت الدراسة إلى تقديم عدد من التوصيات البحثية والنظرية في مجال الدراسة.