Designing Learning Using Infographic from Kitab Turath Syllabus

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Abstract: Kolej PERMATA Insan’s integrated Islamic gifted curriculum model emphasizes the use of research and innovation in the understanding of Islamic knowledge with modern science and technology subjects. Kitab Turath, the established traditional Islamic reference, delves deeply into the religion’s various disciplines and how they affect every aspect of human life. This paper aims to design a holistic infographic of the Kitab Turath text Tayyib Al-Ihsan Fi Tibb Al-Insan, an old Malay medical reference written by Wan Ahmad Ibn Wan Muhammad Zayn Al-Fatani. This assignment of Ulumuddin project was assigned to nine Level 2 students (17-year-old students), who attended a series of lectures given by an academic specialized in the Turath text. They were further assisted by the STEM lecturers, and Quran instructors to understand the information and knowledge of the text explained earlier. Toward the end of the project, each student created an infographic based on the selected topic explained, and their work was checked for accuracy by the respective lecturers. This paper discusses the preliminary findings to assess the effectiveness of the project and assignment process. The research team can utilize the data gathered here to improve and consider the Turath project as a form of teaching and learning enrichment process in the integration of Naqli and Aqli knowledge for the academic staff and college's students.

Kata kunci: Turath, INAQ, infographic, gifted students;
Introduction

Malaysian formal education began only during the British occupation. The curriculum and school system were the mirroring image of the colonial system established in their own country. The British civilization prioritised education as a human capital investment in producing elite and upper-class citizens to lead the highest echelons of its citizenship. The noble goal, however, was not available to all citizens of their colonised nations. The royal families, influential state or district leaders' children, and selected members of the administrative staff's children are among the privileged groups in Malaysia. During the early era of British colonialism in the country, the early form of education in the country was always based on the established English schools provided by the British administration and the missionary schools established by various Christian organisations or movements. For most of the Malay Muslims, Islamic education was the most trusted form of education for their children. As a result, many informal religious-based pondok institutes have sprouted up across the country, particularly in pre-independence Peninsular Malaysia.

The history of pondok education as one of the earliest education systems ever existed in this country has been well-documented and mentioned in much research done before (Shamsuddin, 2018; Dorloh and Hashim, 2019; Faudzinaim, 2012). Islam was introduced to Tanah Melayu long before Malacca became a successful trading centre in the region, attracting superpowers during the era. The influence of Islam in the lives of ordinary people, particularly Malays, encouraged them to send their children to Egypt, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and many other Arabic countries to further their studies and dedicate their lives to educating and spreading the teachings of Islam throughout the region. The Malay Archipelago had seen the birth of many established Islamic education institutions in the form of Islamic pondoks led by Ulama (Islamic religious scholars) educated from great Islamic universities such as Al-Azhar University in Egypt (Dorloh and Hashim, 2019).

Pondok designated as a Community Learning Centre

In the recent history of Malaysia, the Malay Muslim community had chosen the pondok education system since the 19th century as it offered Islamic studies as the main component in the curriculum. It was a common belief among the Malay society that their children should grow up and become an Ustaz (Islamic teacher) or hold a position related to religious position (Dorloh and Hashim, 2019). Concurrently, a pondok was opened to the public and those who wanted to continue their education in various Islamic subjects taught by the Ustaz or Ulama. In Islam, one should believe in lifelong learning and never stop learning and improving their knowledge, regardless of age or position. The existence of many pondoks serving the society across generations preserved the culture of Islamic knowledge.

Traditionally, the pondoks were built by local Islamic Scholars (Ulama) who lived in the same district or state. This practise can still be seen in Southern Thailand, Kelantan, and Kedah (Dorloh and Hashim, 2019). Ulama who used to study in religious school or pondok would further their studies in the Middle East before returning to their hometown to establish a new pondok or serve their old pondok or religious school. Members of society have a high regard for their local Ulama and believe that the best education should be provided in a local and convenient location. The old pondok had always been free, and contributions for infrastructure, facilities, and other needs would come from the general public.

The study of Turath reference texts has always been part of the academic curriculum in traditional pondok education, such as Tahfiz school. Turath reference texts, always referred to as Kitab Turath or Kitab Jawi or Kitab Kuning in Malay, are used as main references in religious classes in addition to the established main references of Al-Quran and Hadith. The Turath texts covered a wide range of Islamic studies topics, including Quran Tafseer, Fiqh, Hadith, Tasawwuf, and Aqidah. They were documented by known Islamic scholars of the time, and they spanned a long period of time because they were inherited (using the sanad method) through generations by referencing relatively early Islamic texts to maintain their accuracy and authenticity.

Many educators are highlighting its importance to the young generation of Tahfiz students (Shamsuddin, 2019; Dorloh and Hashim, 2019). While reading, understanding, and synthesising the contents could only be done by those who had studied and understood the Turath references, the information contained is too valuable to be ignored by the modern academic curriculum. This study shows the importance of learning Turath syllabus in Tahfiz curriculum to ensure that the mastering of al-Quran as holistic understanding can be achieved.
Islamic Education—Turath

According to 'Ali Jum'ah (2007), 'turath' refers to works produced by Muslim intellectuals throughout the long history of human civilisations. Turath has been considered as works of inheritance because they were kept accurate using the "sanad method". The works were originally based on the Quran and Sunnah and covered a broad spectrum of Islamic jurisprudence and interpretation of Islamic values in accordance to the contemporary environment, society, and individuals. Islamic evidence serves to justify issues and discussions about the topics under deliberation. It covers a wide range of topics including usul fiqh, fiqh, saraf (syntax), nahu (grammar), khat (calligraphy), balaghah (literature) and related Islamic subjects. The works were produced by Muslim scholars near the end of the second Hijrah century and have been in existence for more than a century.

Islamic Gifted Education with INAQ

In Kolej PERMATA Insan, the Islamic gifted curriculum is a hybrid combination of academic and Ulumuddin subjects such as Quran education, Pengajian Syariah Islamiah and Pendidikan Al-Quran dan Al-Sunnah (Zakaria et al., 2021; Spawi et al., 2022). The STEM subjects are the core components of the curriculum and are based on the Ministry of Education, Malaysia the standard national curriculum for secondary school (KSSM). The Ulumuddin component of the college includes Quran education, Pengajian Syariah Islamiah and Pendidikan Al-Quran dan Al-Sunnah education, with students memorising and understanding the Quran as part of their Quran education program.

All academic programs at Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia use the Integration of Naqli and Aqli Knowledge (INAQ) teaching and learning approach. This is also regarded as a strategy to ensure that knowledge, particularly science and technology, is not estranged from the religious worldview in understanding the theories, discoveries, and innovations made in the field of science and technology. The Western worldview on science and technology has always been based solely on human ability and intellect to discover new knowledge and any form of invention, with no reference to knowledge found in religious references. In short, it is widely held that both types of knowledge are incompatible and should therefore be studied separately in the Western academic world.

Turath within STEM Education

Turath, as the book of knowledge, encompasses a wide range of subjects and topics, even though it is not specifically written to cover STEM subjects. It is not a science-related text per se, but there are related topics on health or medical matters in some turath texts, as in the case of the turath studied for this project by the students of Kolej PERMATA Insan (Tg Abdul Rahman et al., 2022). The academic and Quran teachers had consulted a few Turath experts in USIM and later decided on using Tayyib Al-Ihsan Fi Tibb Al-Insan, an old Malay medical reference authored by a respected ulama, Wan Ahmad Ibn Wan Muhammad Zayn Al-Fatani.

Kitab Tayyib Al-Ihsan Fi Tibb Al-Insan

This book comprises 14 chapters that discuss the traditional treatment of a disease. In the preface, Sheikh Ahmad al-Fatani shares some of his views on traditional medicine in the Malay world. He emphasizes that Malays should take pride in their region's plant resources, as many of them possess valuable medicinal properties. Furthermore, he advises Malay rulers to support and fund individuals who are interested in studying these plants (Abd Hamid et al, 2008).

The method of detecting diseases in Malay medicine is explored through Shaykh Ahmad Al-Fatani's manuscript titled "Tayyib Al-Ihsan Fi Tibb Al-Insan," focusing on the first five chapters. These initial sections explain the techniques for identifying and diagnosing diseases in patients. This study centres on the version transliterated by Dr. Mohd Affendi, a medical lecturer at the International Islamic University of Malaysia. The original text is in classical Malay and written in Jawi script, necessitating transliteration for ongoing research (Salleh et al, 2019).

This book contains a wide range of scientific and medical knowledge such as diagnosis of stroke disease, treatment for hematuria, gallstones, nausea, and insomnia using herbs and natural products (Wan Ahmad, 2018).

Research Methodology

This research aims to design a holistic infographic for the topics in Kitab Turath by adding the scientific value to the authentic text of Malay medicine. The whole research process applied the qualitative approach by implementing document analysis in this project. There are 3 phases for this research which are analysis, design and develop; and lastly evaluate. The project starts in April 2022 and ended by December 2022.
In analysis phase, the students extract the content of the Kitab Turath and summarise the content in each topic given to them. The student must validate the data on scientific views. Next, in design and development phase, the student must design infographic draft on their topic, by adding some image or outsource explanation that will help the reader understand the topic. Finally, at evaluation phase, the infographic will be evaluated by Subject Matter Experts (SME).

The infographics produced by the students would later be analysed for contents accuracy and acceptability to ensure their meaning interpretations were on par with the original text. The production of the infographics would be closely monitored by the assigned STEM lecturers to ensure the medical facts and information were thoroughly checked and verified. The continuous monitoring and discussion took place over eight weeks with weekly meetings between the students and lecturers.

The students and academic team were involved in the following stages of this project as they attempted to analyse the contents of the text on traditional Malay medical practises. The Biology lecturers participated to help students understand, plan, write, and produce the infographics. The nine students were chosen among the Level 2 students involved in this project due to the expertise of their supervisors in Ulumuddin field. Hence, purposive sampling was used in this research.

Generally, the cycle of activities involved throughout the project are as follows:

Analysis phase:
• Lecture – In this first step, the Turath expert of the chosen text, Tayyib Al-Ihsan Fi Tibb Al-Insan, was a lecturer from Centre for Core Studies, USIM. He had been consulted over this project, and had his class planned over eight sessions to enable the students and team to go over the contents carefully. The sessions were conducted in workshop style and students listened to the lecture during the scheduled sessions. All sessions were recorded to allow the team to review the presentation and explanation during the later stages. Students were required to take notes and prepare simple points review and present them during the consultation sessions with the academic and Ulumuddin team who would guide them in the following steps.
• Discussion – Next, the sessions would be followed by the discussion stage. The understanding process required question-and-answer session after each lecture to check students’ ideas had been formed as expected. Even the academic and Ulumuddin team were involved in deep discussion on the serious matters brought up during the lecture. The talaqqi-style (face-to-face session) was explained as the method used in the teaching and learning process practised in the traditional pondok. Though, the pondok students and their Guru (religious) were usually sitting in a semi-circle, the sessions in Kolej PERMATA Insan were setup as a replica of similar environment to give them the taste of the traditional religious classroom.
• Consultation—After each lecture session, the students would sit with the STEM academic and Ulumuddin team to discuss their takeaways from the Turath lecture and understanding the data on scientific views. Each participant would share their points and ideas based on what they understood. Their findings would be checked and verified for accuracy. This was an important phase for everyone because the students should understand the information clearly and accurately. They would later be assisted with comments and suggestions by the advisory team. The scientific terms and concepts were thoroughly examined before the preparation of the next stage by the participants.

Design and development phase:
• Infographic design — The focus of the infographic was the accuracy of the contents, interpretation, and explanation. To ensure that all participants were able to produce accurate infographic, they would present their extracted contents and ideas and present them to the lecturers. Once approved, they would be given the green light to conceptualise their infographic. For this part, students were given the freedom to come up with their own creative design. They were encouraged to play with the ideas of producing a design that would suit the biological depiction of anatomical structure found in their main textbook or references. The loosely chosen theme was to avoid any unnecessary pressure on students because the focus of the creation of the infographics was the relevant concepts, ideas and information rather than the design. Quality infographics should be accurate information designed to attract the readers and easy for them to understand and capture the message and idea. The infographic should be appreciated for its wonderful information and knowledge-savvy in its presentation.
• Review and amendments – Once the infographic draft has been designed by the
students it was reviewed for information accuracy. The academic advisors advised the participants for further improvements in terms of idea presentation and clear illustration of ideas. The readers should understand the information easily and help them to remember the ideas and concepts visually.

Evaluation phase:
- Evaluation – For the final stage, students' work would be evaluated by the advisory team of the STEM academic and Ulumuddin lecturers. Comments and amendments could still be made to enhance the presentation of the information and the knowledge shared with the readers. Synthesizing the Turath’s information included the verification by the Turath expert from Centre for Core Studies and medical experts from Faculty of Medicine and Health Science as well. They analysed the infographic and shared their opinions on the presentation of the topics in the early lecture. These processes helped the validation of the information presented and written in the Turath text that they studied for this project.

Results and discussion

In this initial Turath understanding project, students were instructed to take the necessary steps in perceiving the lessons from Turath reference and work on developing an infographic to retrieve the vital information that they could identify from the reference texts. This project's goal is to enhance students’ ability to synthesize the main points from the Turath reference and translate them into the visual form of science infographics. Since the study was designed to use the VARK approach, the content presentation had been determined to be in infographic form. This was to encourage them to study and understand the contents in a more interesting way as they would be more comfortable using the medium of content. Based on the survey done on the college students, majority of them preferred the ideas and concepts visually.

Documents the lecture: The Turath lecture series should be recorded and documented as a form of academic teaching and learning materials. They should be organised based on subjects and topics for easy referencing. The INAQ process would benefit greatly from it as students and academics could integrate them into their lessons and assignments.

- Deeper discussion and understanding on specific topic: The talaqqi concept is a good method in serious discussion between a teacher and the students. Two-way communication and in-depth look at the contents of the reference book being studied is what learning by reading a book from-to-cover would mean. This reading and research skill was a traditional way of learning yet it could be proven to be more effective in learning and studying the reference text such as Turath text. Moreover, the students made comparative studies with published articles in indexed journals to validate the medical and science information from Turath. For example, it was stated in the Turath that black pepper could be used to diagnose and treat stroke and this information is aligned with the fact that black pepper contains a chemical named piperine, functioned as anti-depressant-like activity and a cognitive-enhancing effect (Wattanathorn et al., 2008).

- Learning in the visual form: Gifted Muslim students are known to have their varied learning styles and preferred method of reading and interpreting their study materials. Past studies have also proven this similar observation in understanding gifted students ability and skill which apply to the basic visual, audiovisual, read and kinaesthetic (VARK) learning style (Zakaria et al., 2021, Zakaria et al., 2022).

- Integrated assignment and assessment: The IGED curriculum concept proposed the use of integrated methods and approaches in teaching and learning. INAQ process could be well-developed using this assignment as a form of research and assessment where students are required to perform the task of referencing the resources from both the modern academic syllabus together with the Ulumuddin subjects.

- Critical Thinking and Bloom’s Taxonomy: This Turath project adopts the important elements of learning found in Bloom’s taxonomy. Each phase encouraged the participants to apply the skills mentioned in the taxonomy—remember, understand, apply, analyse, evaluate and create. The Turath project is the accumulation of all the thinking skills combined. In each phase the participants went through encouraged them to instil the required skills and ability to absorb the ideas, concepts and notions existed in the reference text as well as the academic
references and textbooks found in their normal syllabus. Getting them to repeat the process would enhance their awareness of each skill and develop the critical thinking ability needed in integrating both the Naqli and Aqli knowledge in their learning process.

Example of a holistic infographic integrating all the elements needed in describing the information from the Turath reference text:

Another example of student’s work designed was in Malay language. Student’s clear understanding on the type of health problem was illustrated clearly in this poster:

Conclusion

The integration of Naqli and Aqli has always been the educational approach affirmed at Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, and efforts have been made to bridge the STEM and Ulumuddin subjects gap in all academic programs carried out at the university. The learning experiences given to students are part of the process of providing them some exposure of learning from various sources of knowledge known as Islamic sciences or subjects of knowledge.

In this Turath Scientific Information project, both the teaching staff and students embarked on the challenge to unearth and reveal the scientific knowledge that had been recorded in the form of Turath reference texts. The availability of rich scientific knowledge in the traditional texts is not easy to read and understand by the normal STEM academics as the Turath reference texts need to be studied and explored by the trained mind. As in this case, the experienced and well-versed academic is from Centre for Core Studies, USIM. It was a learning process not only for the KPI students involved but also the academicians in STEM as well as Quran education in the college.
Documenting the information found in the Turath reference texts was a valuable project from the standpoints of science and Quran education, as it allows students and academics to truly understand the topics discovered through the INAQ process. The project led to the beginning of more similar assignments that could be introduced as a form of learning activity and integrated assessments to be implemented in Islamic gifted education curriculum in college.

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