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Intellectual Discourse
Vol. 32, No. 1, 2024

Contents

<i>Note from the Editor</i>	1
Research Articles	
‘Time’ in the Time of Empire: The Idea of Linear Time during the Era of Late Colonial-Capitalism from William Marsden to Munshi Abdullah <i>Farish A Noor</i>	9
A Theory of “Islamic Modernities:” Religion and Modernisation in Muslim History <i>Dietrich Jung</i>	31
Shaykh Yūsuf of Makassar (d. 1111 AH/1699 CE): A Bio-bibliographical and Doctrinal Survey <i>Syamsuddin Arif</i>	55
Bibliometric Analysis on Islamic Spiritual Care with Special Reference to Prophetic Medicine or <i>al-Ṭibb al-Nabawī</i> <i>Zunaidah binti Mohd Marzuki</i> <i>Nurulhaniy binti Ahmad Fuad</i> <i>Jamilah Hanum binti Abdul Khaiyom</i> <i>Normala binti Mohd Adnan</i> <i>Aida binti Mokhtar</i>	81
Sibling Sexual Abuse: Seeking Sharī‘ah-based Solutions <i>Anke Iman Bouzenita</i> <i>Feryad A. Hussain</i>	115
Developing <i>Sharī‘ah</i> -Compliant Asset Pricing Model in the Framework of <i>Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah</i> and Islamic Wealth Management <i>Igo Febrianto</i> <i>Norhayati Mohamed</i> <i>Imbarine Bujang</i>	133

Da'wah through Documentary Films Produced by Malayan Film Unit (MFU) and <i>Filem Negara</i> <i>Malaysia</i> (FNM), 1957-1970 <i>Chellitda Farhana Gunaish</i> <i>Mohd Firdaus Abdullah</i> <i>Saifulazry Mokhtar</i> <i>Norazilawati Abd Wahab</i> <i>Azian Tahir</i>	159
The Role of the Principal-Agent-Client Model in Understanding Corruption in the Public Procurement Sector in Malaysia <i>Hairuzzaki bin Mohd Yusof</i> <i>Danial bin Mohd Yusof</i> <i>Normala binti Mohd Adnan</i>	189
Exploring the Interdependence Model in Malaysia-Indonesia Relations: Insights from Sabah, Malaysia <i>Ramli Dollah</i> <i>Amrullah Maraining</i> <i>Adi Jafar</i> <i>Eko Prayitno Joko</i> <i>Nordin Sakke</i>	213
Averting the Existential Threat of the Planet: Islamic Environmental Ethics to Address the Contemporary Environmental Crisis <i>Adha Shaleh</i> <i>Md. Saidul Islam</i>	239
Causes of Climate Change: A Neglected Dimension <i>Umar Adam Musa</i> <i>Zainal Abidin bin Sanusi</i> <i>Hassan bin Suleiman</i>	265

<p>Do We Really Have to Talk about That? Avoiding COVID-19 Topics with Close Contacts <i>Tengku Siti Aisha Tengku Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen</i> <i>Aini Maznina A. Manaf</i> <i>Sharifah Sofiah Syed Zainudin</i></p>	291
<p>Revisiting the Relevance of Religion in the Post-Covid-19 Pandemic: A Critical Analysis through the Lense of Religious Scholarship – Freud, James, and Dewey <i>Mohammad Syifa Amin Widigdo</i></p>	319
<p>International Islamic University Malaysia’s (IIUM) Islamic Education Teacher Trainees’ Self-Efficacy during Teaching Practicum <i>Halim Ismail</i> <i>Azam Othman</i> <i>Syarifah Rohaniah Syed Mahmood</i> <i>Hasniza Ibrahim</i> <i>Noor Azizi Ismail</i></p>	341
<p>The Influence of Civil Society Organisations on Political Decision-Making in Iraqi Kurdistan <i>Jamal Mohammed Ameen Hussein</i> <i>Abdulwahed Jalal Nori</i></p>	369
<p>The Collapse of Economic Voting Behaviour in Turkish Politics <i>Caglar Ezikoglu</i></p>	393
<p>Challenges of ‘<i>Awrah</i> Coverage for Muslim Women Athletes in Malaysia: A Qualitative Review <i>Ahmad Akram Mahmad Robbi</i> <i>Saidatolakma Mohd Yunus</i></p>	411

Transliteration Table: Consonants

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
ب	b		ط	ṭ
ت	t		ظ	ẓ
ث	th		ع	‘
ج	j		غ	gh
ح	ḥ		ف	f
خ	kh		ق	q
د	d		ك	k
ذ	dh		ل	l
ر	r		م	m
ز	z		ن	n
س	s		ه	h
ش	sh		و	w
ص	ṣ		ء	’
ض	ḍ		ي	y

Transliteration Table: Vowels and Diphthongs

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
اَ	a		اَ، اِ، اِي	an
اُ	u		اُو	un
اِ	i		اِي	in
اَ، اِ، اِي، اِي	ā		اُو	aw
اُو	ū		اِي	ay
اِي	ī		اُو	uww, ū (in final position)
			اِي	iyy, ī (in final position)

Source: ROTAS Transliteration Kit: <http://rotas.iium.edu.my>

International Islamic University Malaysia's (IIUM) Islamic Education Teacher Trainees' Self-Efficacy during Teaching Practicum

Halim Ismail*

Azam Othman**

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Hasniza Ibrahim****

Noor Azizi Ismail*****

Abstract: This sequential exploratory mixed-methods study explores the self-efficacy (SE) of Islamic Education (ISED) teacher trainees in three domains (i.e., curriculum design and implementation, teaching and classroom assessment) as they experienced a four-month teaching practicum at various schools in Malaysia. The survey sample comprised 56 ISED undergraduates, aged 21 to 30, who were in their final year of teacher training at the Kulliyah of Education, IIUM. They completed a two-part Likert-type questionnaire with 23 items measuring their confidence levels in specific aspects of the three SE domains. The interview participants were four ISED trainees randomly

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selected from the survey sample. The survey data were analysed using descriptive statistics, while the interview data were scrutinised for recurring themes on trainees' SE beliefs and teaching practicum challenges. Consistent with many previous studies, the results indicated high levels of self-efficacy among the ISED teacher trainees, particularly in technology usage (89.3%) and collaborating with colleagues and administrators (85.7%). Five broad areas of self-efficacy improvement were identified, namely higher-order teaching, differentiating instruction, classroom management, learning assessment and lesson evaluation. The study recommends the use of lesson study and increasing the contact hours for microteaching to further develop teacher trainees' instructional competencies, thereby increasing their levels of self-efficacy in teaching ISED as a school subject.

Keywords: Self-efficacy, teaching practicum, Islamic Education students, competency areas, classroom performance

Abstrak: Kajian kaedah campuran *sequential exploratory* ini meneroka efikasi sendiri pelatih guru Pendidikan Islam dalam tiga domain (iaitu, reka bentuk dan pelaksanaan kurikulum, pengajaran dan penilaian bilik darjah) yang menjalani praktikum pengajaran selama empat bulan di pelbagai sekolah di Malaysia. Sampel tinjauan adalah terdiri daripada 56 mahasiswa Pendidikan Islam, berumur 21 hingga 30 tahun, yang berada di tahun akhir latihan perguruan di Kulliyah Pendidikan, UIAM. Mereka melengkapkan soal selidik di dua bahagian skala Likert dengan 23 item bagi mengukur tahap keyakinan mereka dalam aspek khusus tiga domain efikasi sendiri. Peserta temu bual pula terdiri daripada empat orang guru pelatih Pendidikan Islam yang dipilih secara rawak daripada sampel tinjauan. Data tinjauan dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif manakala data temu bual diteliti untuk tema berulang tentang kepercayaan efikasi sendiri pelatih dan cabaran praktikum pengajaran. Selaras dengan banyak kajian lepas, keputusan menunjukkan tahap efikasi sendiri yang tinggi dalam kalangan pelatih guru Pendidikan Islam, terutamanya dalam penggunaan teknologi (89.3%) dan bekerjasama dengan rakan sekerja dan pentadbir (85.7%). Lima bidang peningkatan efikasi sendiri yang luas telah dikenal pasti, iaitu pengajaran aras tinggi, pengajaran terbeza, pengurusan bilik darjah, pentaksiran pembelajaran dan penilaian pelajaran. Kajian ini mengesyorkan penggunaan '*lesson study*' dan meningkatkan waktu pengajaran mikro untuk mengembangkan lagi kecekapan pengajaran guru pelatih, seterusnya meningkatkan tahap efikasi sendiri mereka dalam mengajar mata pelajaran sekolah Pendidikan Islam.

Kata kunci: Efikasi sendiri, pengajaran praktikum, pelajar Pendidikan Islam, bidang kompetensi, prestasi bilik darjah

Introduction

Self-efficacy beliefs have been proven many times as a factor that influences performance—no matter what the context or circumstance is. Put in the context of teaching, we can expect teachers' self-efficacy to be part of the formula that explains the effectiveness of an instructional activity. Research has so far demonstrated that self-efficacy (SE) is a powerful drive influencing the behaviour of teachers in the classroom and the effort they put in the endeavour (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

Malaysia strives to improve the performance of its teachers and the standard of instruction rendered in Malaysian classrooms. It has outlined some strategic initiatives and events as key to enhancing teacher quality and the teaching profession in its Education Transformation Development Plan 2013–2025 (Ministry of Education, 2013). We acknowledge that a comprehensive strategy is essential for effectively implementing such initiatives and attaining their intended goals but that comprehensive strategy must also factor in teachers' self-efficacy. We premise this argument on the fact that teachers must have strong efficacy beliefs—on top of a wide range of competencies—to be able to address the challenges and demands of 21st century education.

Teachers' readiness to confront challenges and fulfil their duties is intertwined with their perceptions of competence, as suggested by various studies (e.g., Casey, 2011; Coady et al., 2011; Pas et al., 2011). This perception of competence, or belief in one's capability, better known as self-efficacy, has been extensively studied in the various educational contexts (Bandura, 1994; Henson et al., 2000; Ross, 1995). Self-efficacy is a psychological and emotional state that directly impacts teachers' performance as it influences how they feel about their ability to execute their roles and responsibilities. Hence, self-efficacy indirectly impacts classroom dynamics and the overall educational landscape via teachers' performance. In addition, the construct influences how teachers set goals, motivate students, and handle difficult situations in the classroom. Therefore, understanding and fostering Malaysian teachers' self-efficacy can have significant implications for student outcomes, school performance and Malaysia's overall educational environment. To illustrate, compared to their counterparts with less self-efficacy beliefs, teachers with high self-

efficacy are more likely to use innovative teaching methods, persevere in the face of challenges, and engage in continuous professional development, all of which contribute to a positive learning environment and improved student achievement.

Strong self-efficacy beliefs are no less important for Islamic Education teachers than they are for Mathematics, Science and English teachers. In Noornajihan et al. (2016), Islamic Education teachers in Peninsular Malaysia were reported to have high levels of self-efficacy in domains like pupil involvement, classroom management and teaching strategies but lower efficacy in academic guidance and personal development. This created a grave concern for teacher educators because academic guidance and personality are two domains most critical to the classroom implementation of the subject and the fulfilment of the philosophy of Islamic Education. In Islamic Education (ISED), teachers must have the personality of *murabbis* and *muaddibs* and they must have the correct belief that they can execute these roles convincingly. Low efficacy beliefs among ISED teachers would undermine the teaching of the subject, hence its quality, and hinder the professional advancement of its teachers. This is counterproductive to ongoing efforts to elevate the status of Islamic Education as a valued school subject with moral and economic significance (Mohamad Tajuddin, 2018; Taufik et al., 2023). Given these arguments highlighting the link between teachers' efficacy beliefs and the effective teaching of Islamic Education, it is imperative that an assessment of teachers' self-efficacy levels, especially those of trainee teachers currently undergoing their practicum, be conducted. The purpose is to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses to improve current teacher training content.

Research Context

The Bachelor of Islamic Education programme, offered by the Kulliyah of Education (KOED) IIUM, is designed to produce proficient graduates who meet the workforce requirements of secondary schools and the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Malaysia. Beyond merely meeting these demands, the programme strives to train and develop graduates who serve as exemplars for their peers and the wider community. Through a comprehensive curriculum, KOED equips students with the necessary instructional competencies, research skills, Islamic values, and mindsets to execute their roles as *murabbis* (mentors or guides),

muaddibs (character shapers), *mudarris* (teachers or instructors) and *mu'allims* (knowledge providers). ISED teachers, particularly, must also play the role of *murshids*, i.e., ones who guide others to good and goodness. The courses offered in KOED's teacher training programme place a significant emphasis not just on teaching abilities and but also on developing the right personalities and dispositions in trainees, ensuring that they can teach, guide and shape learners effectively. The overarching goal of KOED's teacher training programme is to foster well-rounded, competent, and knowledgeable individuals capable of making meaningful contributions to academia and society (IIUM, 2022).

The first year of the programme lays the essential groundwork for trainee teachers, giving them comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles and theories underpinning the teaching profession. Trainee teachers learn relevant theories about student learning, motivation, special needs education, technology usage, and the philosophy and sociology of education, alongside a dedicated study of Islamic Education encompassing courses such as *Fiqh 'Ibādāt*, *Fiqh al-Sīrah*, *Tajwīd* and *Hifz*, and the like. KOED employs a multifaceted approach to teacher education to ensure that its trainees are well-grounded in the broader educational context and well-acquainted with the distinctive nuances of Islamic content and pedagogy (IIUM, 2022).

In their foundational year, ISED teacher trainees are introduced to the intricate workings of educational institutions, gaining insights into the organisational structures of schools, the formulation of curricula, and the various components the Malaysian school syllabi integral to Islamic Education. The diverse courses trainees have to complete give them a holistic overview of both the Malaysian educational framework and the specialised domain of Islamic content and pedagogy. Through classes, learning tasks, collaborative work and assignments, trainees are primed to develop a nuanced understanding of the educational landscape they will later navigate (IIUM, 2024).

As the training programme progresses into its second year, the emphasis shifts towards deepening trainees' comprehension of Islamic Education, reinforcing the core content while concurrently initiating them into the practical intricacies of classroom instruction. This phase

represents a pivotal juncture where theoretical knowledge seamlessly integrates with real-world application as students are gradually introduced to the dynamics of teaching and learning within the classroom setting. Through a gradual and scaffolded approach, trainees are guided towards proficiency beyond mere theoretical understanding, fostering the development of practical skills essential for effective pedagogy (IIUM, 2024).

In essence, the structured progression designed into the training programme not only instils a robust foundation and comprehension of educational theory; it also ensures the cultivation of a holistic educator well-versed in both conventional educational practices and the specialised context of Islamic Education. By seamlessly integrating theoretical knowledge with practical application, the programme endeavours to nurture a cohort of ISED educators equipped to navigate the complexities and challenges inherent in the modern educational landscape while remaining grounded in the principles of Islamic pedagogy (IIUM, 2024).

Teaching practicum is done in the last semester of trainees' final year. It is the culmination of their three-and-half years of training and competency development process. During this period of internship, ISED trainees have the opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills in an actual classroom setting (Arifin et al., 2020). The school experience allows them to gain more confidence in their abilities as teachers and further develops their teaching skills in an authentic context. Since it is a crucial period of professional training and development, there must be systematic efforts to assess the self-efficacy of ISED teacher trainees during their teaching practicum. The assessment is intended to fully understand if KOED's training programme has been successful in developing adequate self-efficacy in ISED teacher trainees. This confidence is greatly needed by the trainees to be able to teach Islamic education effectively.

In the present research context, self-efficacy is the ISED trainees' belief or confidence in their ability to perform the tasks and responsibilities associated with teaching Islamic Education successfully during teaching practicum. Previous research has shown that self-efficacy plays a significant role in the teaching effectiveness

of educators. Demonstrably, teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to use effective teaching strategies, engage students in learning, and promote positive classroom outcomes than those that lack such efficacy (Al-Alwan & Mahasneh, 2014).

Statement of the Problem

Despite the generally high levels of self-efficacy among ISED teachers in areas such as student participation, classroom management, teaching strategies, academic guidance, and personality, there still remain competency areas that can be improved further. The study conducted by Noornajihan et al. (2016) indicates that while scores in these areas are high, they have not yet reached their optimal level, particularly in the domains of academic guidance and personal development. Consequently, research in Islamic Education must actively identify the areas for improvement and take concrete steps to enhance ISED trainees' self-efficacy. This proactive approach can lead to even more effective teaching practices and better outcomes for their students (Noornajihan et al., 2016).

While numerous studies have explored self-efficacy in education, there is a paucity of recent research specifically focusing on the self-efficacy of ISED teacher trainees as they experience teaching practicum. With the evolving landscape of education, heavily characterised by technological advancements, diverse student populations, and changing pedagogical approaches, it is crucial to investigate how these factors intersect with pre-service teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy in real-world teaching scenarios. Furthermore, the transition from student to teacher presents unique challenges and opportunities that may influence self-efficacy levels.

Little is known about how those experiences impact novice educators' development and maintenance of self-efficacy beliefs. Hence, the purposes of this study are to examine the level of ISED teacher trainees' self-efficacy during teaching to understand their beliefs, and also to explore the challenges they face during their teaching practicum. Based on the findings, the study will propose necessary recommendations for the improvement of existing classroom practices at KOED specifically and suggest avenues for future research into teacher self-efficacy.

Literature Review

Self-Efficacy in Islamic Education

Self-efficacy essentially means belief. In Islam, the word *faith* (*Īmān*) (al-Ghazali, n.y.; Noornajihan et al., 2012) is used to explain the concept of belief which constitutes an unshakeable belief in the oneness of God. In the Islamic context, *Īmān* entails one's practical and moral commitment to living a righteous and virtuous life in accordance with the teachings of Islam. (Mohd Nasir et al., 2017)

In the context of education and teaching, an efficacious teacher would attribute student success and failure to instructional efforts within their control. Teacher efficacy has consistently been found to be a factor that makes a difference in student learning (Barni et al., 2019; Mohamad Sahari et al., 2017). Noornajihan et al. (2012) assert that the role of Islamic Education teachers is clear. It is to educate and mould learners to become individuals of academic excellence and good character in this world and prepare them well for the next life. This task is more challenging now than ever before. The heavy responsibility as *murabbis* (educators) should be carried out by teachers by appreciating the concepts of *amānah* (trustworthiness) and self-efficacy. As *murabbis*, ISED trainees require a sound mental and physical preparation for school teaching, and effective teaching can only be achieved if ISED trainees have high self-efficacy.

Past studies have found ISED teachers in Malaysian secondary schools to have generally high levels of self-efficacy (Noornajihan & Ab. Halim, 2013), particularly excelling in the domains of “pupil involvement,” “classroom management” and “teaching strategies.” However, they are reportedly lacking in two SE domains, i.e., academic guidance and personality development. This warrants further research into ISED teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and the SE domains needing further improvement.

Self-Efficacy in Curriculum Design and Implementation

The work of Bandura (1993) delves into the intricate interplay between perceived self-efficacy and cognitive development, emphasising its profound implications for curriculum design and educational practices. His findings underscore the importance of nurturing students' self-efficacy beliefs to facilitate cognitive growth and academic success.

Meanwhile, Bandura's seminal work (1997) comprehensively examines self-efficacy, elucidating its theoretical underpinnings and practical implications across diverse domains, including education. His insights lay a solid foundation for understanding how self-efficacy influences learning outcomes, increases instructional effectiveness, and informs curriculum design strategies. Bandura's research continues to be instrumental in shaping educational approaches that foster students' self-efficacy, ultimately enhancing their academic performance and overall development.

In a study involving science teachers, Khanshan and Yousefi (2020) pointed out the significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and teaching practices, where an increase in the former was associated with improvements in the latter. This suggests that teachers' confidence in their abilities plays a crucial role in shaping their instructional decisions and effectiveness in the classroom. As modern-day classrooms are beset with challenges, having high self-efficacy would empower teachers to navigate these obstacles with confidence and resilience, enabling them to adapt their teaching strategies effectively and maintain a positive learning environment for their students.

Self-Efficacy in Teaching

A study by Teng (2006) involving 420 teachers from 18 secondary schools in Kuching found teachers' self-efficacy to be high. On the other hand, Khalid et al. (2009) who studied novice teachers in Sabah found their self-efficacy to be moderate. In terms of SE domains, teachers reported feeling confident about classroom management, first and foremost, followed by the domains of teaching strategies and student involvement. These reports were also documented in Rahmah et al. (2006).

Kazan's study (2016) explored factors affecting teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and attitudes towards technology integration, revealing that these factors significantly impacted students' grades and interaction, particularly for students with special needs. Additionally, the study found that trained teachers were more adept at utilising technology in the classroom compared to untrained teachers. Their findings suggested that teachers' knowledge and beliefs play a crucial role in their intent to incorporate technology, as demonstrated by the integration of information and communications technology (ICT) into lesson plans,

with a significant positive correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and knowledge.

The findings of Rosas et al. (2009) revealed that both preservice and in-service teachers were confident in their ability to manage classroom discipline. However, notable differences in beliefs were observed between these two groups. This discrepancy underscores the importance of enhancing teacher education programmes to emphasise effective classroom management strategies more robustly. Such strategies are essential for effectively redirecting disruptive student behaviour and maintaining a conducive learning environment. Therefore, there is a clear need to enhance the training and preparation provided to future teachers to better equip them with the skills necessary for managing classroom dynamics effectively.

Self-Efficacy in Classroom Assessment

Reportedly, primary school teachers are generally more optimistic about their ability to implement the various classroom assessment strategies. The study by Oppong et al. (2023) found that teachers have a high level of confidence in their classroom assessment practices. It also revealed no significant gender differences in teachers' confidence in implementing classroom assessment. In contrast, other studies have found teachers' procedural knowledge in conducting school-based assessments to be just moderate ($M = 3.27$) not high (Veloo et al., 2015). Although teachers in Veloo et al.'s (2015) study reported knowing about school-based assessment, the mean score of $M = 3.09$ suggested just a moderate efficacy in this SE domain. Our comparison of the two means reveals that teachers' belief in their knowledge to implement school-based assessment (SBA) was stronger or higher than their actual readiness to practise the assessment. This means that although teachers thought they had the knowledge to conduct SBA, they were not fully ready to include SBA in their classroom practices.

Methodology

Research Design

To ascertain the self-efficacy of KOED's Islamic Education students in the three SE domains during teaching practicum, the study employed

the sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, wherein quantitative survey data were collected first, followed by the collection of qualitative data to provide further insights and explanations for the quantitative results. For the quantitative part, the study adopted the *ex-post facto* research design using cross-sectional survey as the data collection method. In the subsequent qualitative part of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with four ISED teacher trainees to probe deeper into their teaching practicum experiences and perspectives in regard to self-efficacy. The interviews were conducted online via video conferencing, allowing for an in-depth exploration of their self-efficacy in the three domains.

Throughout the interviews, careful attention was paid to probing questions, enabling the teacher trainees to share their thoughts freely. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy and facilitate analysis. An inductive thematic content analysis was employed as the primary data analysis procedure, enabling the identification of recurring themes and patterns in the narratives provided by the trainees. By systematically analysing the interview transcripts, this phase of the study aimed to uncover ISED students' beliefs in their instructional abilities that could later be used to augment the survey results.

Sample

For the survey, the respondents were 56 undergraduate students majoring in Islamic Education who, at the time of data collection, had completed the teaching practicum component of their preservice teacher training programme at KOED, IIUM. The sample represented 70% of the population of ISED students for that particular batch doing teaching practicum. They were randomly selected from a sampling frame based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) parameters for deciding a minimum sample size. For the semi-structured interviews, four students randomly selected from the sample were recruited.

Research Instruments

Two instruments were used to collect the quantitative and qualitative data for the study, namely a survey questionnaire and a set of interview protocol.

Survey Questionnaire

The research instrument was a two-part Likert questionnaire adapted from Yüksel (2014). The first part sought background information on the respondents' gender, ethnicity, marital status and age. The second part contained 23 items on self-efficacy in three domains, i.e., curriculum design and implementation, teaching, and classroom assessment. The respondents were asked to indicate their confidence in various aspects of the three domains based on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Not Confident at All*) to 5 (*Highly Confident*). The SE domains and their corresponding number of items and reliability estimates are indicated in Table 1:

Table 1: Self-Efficacy Domains, Number of Questionnaire Items and Reliability Estimates

SE Domain	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1) Curriculum Design and Implementation	6	.89
2) Teaching	12	.95
3) Classroom Assessment	5	.86
Total	23	

Interview Protocol

A semi-structured interview session was held between 27 and 28 November 2023 involving four (4) informants selected using the purposive sampling method. All interviews were conducted online using the Google Meet application with two (2) female teachers and two (2) male teachers who were directly involved in teaching practice. The researcher interviewed each of them in turn to ensure that in-depth information was obtained from all four informants. The recorded interview results were translated into written transcripts and analysed using thematic analysis to obtain related themes and sub-themes.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed using descriptive statistics (i.e., frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations). Meanwhile, the following guidelines by Mustika (2009), shown in Table 2, were used to interpret

the respondents' level of self-efficacy (i.e., confidence) based on their self-ratings of the questionnaire items.

Table 2: Guidelines for Interpreting Students' Confidence Levels Based on Mean Ranges (Mustika, 2009)

Mean Range	Level of Confidence
1.00—2.33	Low Confidence
2.34—3.66	Moderate Confidence
3.67—5.00	High Confidence

Results

Sample Demographics

The sample, which was predominantly female (67.9%), comprised 56 undergraduate ISED students between the ages of 21 and 30. A majority were in the 21-25 age group (91.1%; n = 51), while the rest (8.9%) were in the 26-30 bracket (n = 5). Most respondents were single (87.5%) and all were Malaysians of either the Bumiputra or Malay origin. Table 3 shows their background characteristics by age group, gender, ethnicity, and marital status.

Table 3: Sample Distribution by Gender, Age and Marital Status

	Variable	n	%
Gender	Male	18	32.1
	Female	38	67.9
Age Group	21-25	51	91.1
	26-30	5	8.9
Marital Status	Single	49	87.5
	Married	7	12.5

The interview was conducted with four students slated to undergo teaching practicum for the Islamic Education Programme in the year 2023. Among these four students were two men and two women, reflecting a balanced gender representation. These students fell within the age range of 22 to 25 years old,

ISED Students' Level of Self-Efficacy During Teaching Practicum

This section reports on ISED students' self-efficacy (SE) during teaching practicum based on their responses to items in the three SE domains, namely curriculum implementation, teaching and classroom assessment. The response categories showing the levels of SE comprised "Not Confident at All," "Not Confident," "Slightly Confident," "Confident," and "Highly Confident." Using Mustika's (2009) guidelines, the levels are described as *low*, *moderate*, or *high* based on their mean scores. The five categories are collapsed into three levels to represent low SE (comprising *Not Confident at All* and *Not Confident* responses), moderate SE (*Slightly Confident* responses) and high SE (*Confident* and *Highly Confident* ratings).

Self-Efficacy in Curriculum Design and Implementation

Table 4 shows the sample's responses to six items measuring their self-efficacy in the domain of curriculum design and implementation. The responses are categorised into three levels of confidence or SE, i.e., low, moderate and high.

Table 4: Self-Efficacy in Curriculum Design and Implementation (N = 56)

Item	Level of Confidence			M	SD
	Low	Moderate	High		
1. Confidence in ability to develop ISED lessons that meet the needs of diverse learners.	1 (1.8)	13 (23.2)	42 (75)	3.89	0.68
2. Confidence in conducting a needs assessment for ISED lessons.	-	8 (14.3)	48 (85.7)	4.25	0.69
3. Confidence in identifying appropriate learning objectives for ISED lessons.	-	6 (10.7)	50 (89.3)	4.16	0.60
4. Confidence in ability to design effective assessments to measure student learning outcomes in ISED.	1 (1.8)	17 (30.4)	38 (67.8)	3.89	0.78

5. Confidence in selecting appropriate instructional materials to support student learning in ISED.	11 (19.6)	45 (80.4)	4.16	0.73
6. Confidence in ability to evaluate the effectiveness of an ISED lesson.	4 (7.2)	11 (19.6)	41 (73.2)	3.89 0.91
Average			4.04	0.73

Note: Low = Not Confident at All & Not Confident; Moderate = Slightly Confident; High = Confident and Highly Confident

The pattern of responses shows that most ISED undergraduates in their final year doing their teaching practicum felt highly confident in most aspects of curriculum design and implementation. In particular, they expressed a high level of SE in three aspects, i.e., identifying appropriate learning objectives (89.3%), conducting a needs assessment (85.7%), and selecting appropriate learning materials (80.4%). The mean scores for these three aspects exceeded the 4-point mark indicating “high SE” or “high confidence” as proposed by Mustika (2009). Although a majority of the students (i.e., 75%) agreed they could develop ISED lessons that meet diverse learner needs ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.68$), the sample mean placed their overall SE at *moderate* for this competency. The same pattern was observed for two other competencies, i.e., designing effective assessments ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.75$) and evaluating lesson effectiveness ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.91$). Self-ratings of low SE in competencies related to curriculum design and implementation were either extremely rare or non-existent among this sample. Overall, it can be deduced that final year ISED students doing their teaching practicum had a high level of SE or confidence in curriculum design and implementation.

Self-Efficacy in Teaching

Table 5 shows ISED students' self-efficacy in twelve teaching competencies where they reported high SE in eight of the competencies. The highest efficacy was reported for “*using technology effectively to support student learning in ISED*” ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 0.68$). Close to 90% of the students rated themselves highly on this competency, while none reported low efficacy on this aspect of teaching.

Table 5: Self-Efficacy in Teaching (N = 56)

Item	Level of Confidence			M	SD
	Low	Moderate	High		
1. Confidence in ability to teach engaging ISED lessons	2 (3.57)	7 (12.5)	47 (83.93)	4.18	0.86
2. Confidence in own skills and knowledge to teach effective ISED lessons.	2 (3.57)	7 (12.5)	47 (83.93)	4.00	0.76
3. Confidence in managing classroom and student discipline.	5 (8.93)	16 (28.57)	35 (62.5)	3.84	1.02
4. Confidence in ability to teach lessons that can positively impact students' academic performance	2 (3.57)	8 (14.29)	46 (82.14)	4.05	0.82
5. Confidence in ability to provide effective feedback to students.	4 (7.14)	6 (10.71)	46 (82.14)	4.00	0.81
6. Confidence in ability to motivate students to learn	2 (3.57)	11 (19.64)	43 (76.79)	4.02	0.80
7. Confidence in ability to handle challenging students.	4 (7.14)	21 (37.5)	31 (55.36)	3.63	1.00
8. Confidence in ability to collaborate effectively with colleagues and administrators to improve student outcomes.	1 (1.79)	7 (12.5)	48 (85.71)	4.29	0.76

9. Confidence in ability to identify and address the diverse learning needs of students.	3 (5.36)	9 (16.07)	44 (78.57)	3.95	0.84
10. Confidence in ability to use technology effectively to support student learning in ISED	-	6 (10.71)	50 (89.29)	4.39	0.68
11. Confidence in ability to create a positive and inclusive classroom environment.	2 (3.57)	6 (10.71)	48 (85.71)	4.16	0.83
12. Confidence in ability to help students to think critically.	3 (5.36)	8 (14.29)	45 (80.36)	3.96	0.83
Average				4.04	0.83

Note: Low = Not Confident at All & Not Confident; Moderate = Slightly Confident; High = Confident and Highly Confident

The second highest SE rating was reported for the competency of “collaborating effectively with colleagues and administrators to improve student outcomes” ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.76$), where 85.71% of the students ($n = 48$) ranked themselves highly in this aspect of teaching. Less than 15% expressed either low (12.5%, $n = 7$) or no confidence (1.79%) in this competency.

Students also expressed high efficacy in creating “a positive and inclusive classroom environment” ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.83$), and “engaging” ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.86$), “effective” ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.76$), and “impactful” ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.82$) ISED lessons, where more than 82% rated themselves highly on these four competencies. Meanwhile, moderate levels of SE were reported for “managing classroom and student discipline” ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 1.02$) and “handling challenging students” ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.00$).

Self-Efficacy in Classroom Assessment

Table 6 displays ISED students' self-efficacy in five classroom assessment competencies. As with the previous two domains, the students reported

high SE and confidence levels in all aspects of classroom assessment. For instance, the same percentage of students (83.9%) expressed a high level of confidence in the ability to “use various assessment tests” ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.85$), “reflect on own assessment practices and identify areas of improvement” ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.82$), “seek professional development activities to improve classroom assessment practices” ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.67$), and “use assessment data to improve instruction and student learning” ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 0.79$). The least SE was reported for “giving feedback to students” ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 0.76$), although still a large majority indicated being highly competent in this aspect (80.4%). The pattern of distribution suggests that most ISED students felt highly confident in their ability to implement appropriate classroom assessment during teaching practicum.

Table 6: Self-Efficacy in Classroom Assessment (N = 56)

Item	Level of Confidence			M	SD
	Low	Moderate	High		
1. Confidence in using various assessment tools in teaching (e.g., MCQs, short-answer tests, essay tests, etc.)	2 (3.57)	7 (12.50)	47 (83.93)	4.16	0.85
2. Confidence in using data from classroom assessments to improve instruction and student learning.	2 (3.57)	7 (12.50)	47 (83.93)	4.04	0.79
3. Confidence in giving feedback on students' performance on classroom assessments.	2 (3.57)	9 (16.07)	45 (80.36)	4.04	0.76

4. Confidence in reflecting on own classroom assessment practices and identifying areas for improvement.	2 (3.57)	7 (12.50)	47 (83.93)	4.09	0.82
5. Confidence in seeking professional development opportunities to improve classroom assessment practices.	1 (1.79)	8 (14.29)	47 (83.93)	4.05	0.67
Average				4.08	0.78

Note: Low = Not Confident at All & Not Confident; Moderate = Slightly Confident; High = Confident and Highly Confident

Semi-Structured Interview Findings

Based on the findings of the interview analysis, several main themes and sub-themes can be shown as follows.

Theme 1: High confidence during teaching practice

Findings from semi-structured interviews found that students have high confidence in planning teaching sessions in the classroom and planning assessments:

a. Confidence in planning the lessons

The part I am most confident about is the preparation and planning part. (Participant 1)

The part I am most confident in is the teaching part in the classroom. Before going to school to do the practicum, I reviewed and referenced 21st-century teaching methods. (Participant 4)

b. Design an assessment

The students who were interviewed also found that they have confidence in evaluating:

For me, the most confident part is the evaluation part. I will repeat what I teach in class with evaluation so I can focus and identify whether the students can understand or not with my presentation. (Participant 2)

Theme 2: Low confidence during teaching practice

In the areas where students are less confident during the practicum, the average practicum student expressed low confidence in controlling students in class.

The part I am least confident about is the part that uses one teaching skill. It is quite difficult for us to master that matter. We need one skill to control the whole class (Participant 3)

When we teach, some students play, and even once in my class, they fight. It is very challenging, especially when managing the classroom. (Participant 2)

Next, how to control this student's attitude. So, I am less confident about my teaching technique. (Participant 1)

Theme 3: Loss of confidence during teaching practice

Based on the interviews conducted, there are also trainee teachers who lose confidence during teaching training:

At one level, I could not control the situation in the class or the situation of the students. The students tend to be noisy in the class until they disturb the adjacent class for teaching and learning sessions. (Participant 3)

I think I lost confidence. I lost my ability to be a good educator when students have problems, especially in their attitude. (Participant 2)

Discussion

The general pattern discernible from the SE data indicates that ISED students in their final year doing teaching practicum at various schools under IIUM supervision felt highly positive and confident about their competencies in curriculum implementation, teaching and classroom assessment. The means reported for the three domains passed the 4-point mark indicating high SE (Mustika, 2009). The SE means reported in this study are consistent with those reported in Noornajihan

and Ab. Halim (2013), Teng (2006), and Khalid et al. (2009), who found that Islamic Education teachers in Malaysian secondary schools have incredibly high levels of self-efficacy. In terms of curriculum design and implementation, the study's results corroborate the findings of Khanshan and Yousefi (2020), who discovered a significant correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and their teaching practices.

Two areas the ISED students were most confident in were using technology for teaching and collaborating with colleagues and administrators to improve student outcomes. The former suggests that ISED students feel proficient and assured in leveraging digital technology for instructional delivery. Being Gen-Z, they may have developed this confidence from their familiarity with technology-enhanced learning environments that involve plausibly online resources, Web 2.0 tools, social media, or multimedia-rich presentations. The ISED students involved in this study were among those affected by COVID-19 who had experienced extensive online learning due to the pandemic, which had given them a substantial exposure to diverse learning technologies. Their affinity for social media and disruptive technology is a factor that may push the integration of digital technology into the teaching of Islamic Education in the near future. This is a positive finding that offers support for Kazan and El-Daou's (2016) assertion that self-efficacy beliefs can influence teachers' intent to use technology for greater student learning.

As for the latter result (i.e., confidence in being able to collaborate with colleagues and administrators), it shows ISED students' readiness to engage in cooperative endeavours aimed at enhancing instructional practices and fostering student success. Collaboration with peers and administrators enables them to exchange ideas, share best practices, and collectively address challenges, ultimately contributing to a more supportive and collaborative professional learning environment.

The results highlight several aspects of ISED students' SE that require attention and further improvement from the IIUM's Kulliyah of Education. Seven aspects fell below the 4-point mark of high efficacy—they can be broadly categorized into the following five competency areas, namely (1) helping students to think critically; (2) creating differentiated instruction based on students' diverse learning needs; (3) managing the classroom and student discipline; (4) creating effective

learning assessments; and (5) evaluating the quality of ISED lessons. These five areas, visualized in Figure 1, should be prioritised, and given more emphasis in the future training of ISED students at the Kulliyyah.

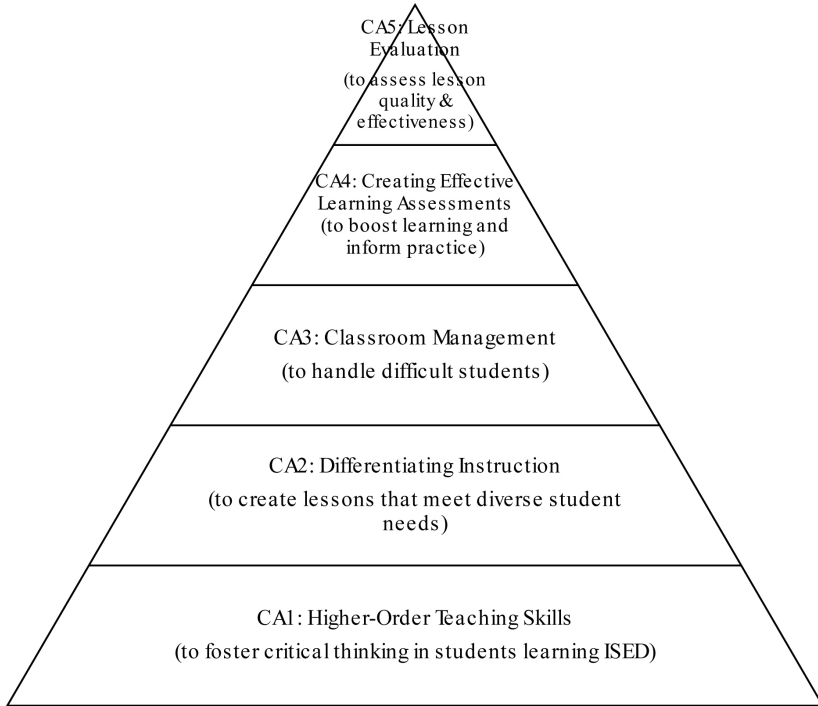


Figure 1: Five Competency Areas Needing Improvement for ISED Trainees
Note: CA = Competency Area requiring greater emphasis and training

A number of strategies can be employed by the Kulliyyah to develop students' self-efficacy in the five competency areas. For instance, the lesson study method can be used to equip ISED students with the ability to evaluate lessons and develop the metacognitive thinking skill required of teachers. Classroom observations, school visits and consultations with expert or excellent teachers can be done to increase the efficacy in competency areas 1 to 4. KOED's teaching staff must also incorporate more real-world content and practices in their training of ISED students. The students themselves must be encouraged and trained to do more action research on issues that affect their overall effectiveness as teachers, for instance, on how to be proactive in dealing with student misbehaviour. Rosas et al. (2009) suggest that teacher

education programmes must emphasise equipping trainee teachers with practical strategies for managing classroom dynamics and handling disruptive behaviours. Such strategies are crucial for helping teachers reduce classroom disruption, use instructional time more fruitfully, and stay focused in their teaching. They also help to curb burnout among new teachers. Additionally, ISED majors should seek mentorship from experienced educators—this can give them valuable insights and strategies for managing challenging student behaviours.

Another competency area worth paying attention to is giving feedback on students' work. About one fifth of the sample expressed a lack of confidence in this aspect. Sardareh (2016) wrote that most of the time, Malaysian teachers tend to give feedback to students in the form of praise—when what students really need is informative and constructive feedback on their work and performance. Hence, the training of ISED majors as future teachers of the subject must include comprehensive instruction on the principles and techniques of providing effective feedback and what such feedback looks like. Such instruction can be embedded in their microteaching classes. More importantly, KOED's training of ISED majors must provide opportunities for them to practice giving feedback in various contexts and classroom settings. Simulated classroom scenarios should be used to allow ISED majors to develop proficiency in tailoring feedback to meet the individual needs of their students.

Research Limitations

Our study's primary limitation is its small number of respondents. This was due to the fact that the target population was also small ($N = 80$). That being the case, we expect the generalisability and utility of our results to also be somewhat limited. However, this should not limit the Kulliyah of Education from recognising the insights gained from the results and utilising them as a basis for further research and pedagogical development of its teacher trainees.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall, this research, albeit small, has effectively collected noteworthy information regarding the self-efficacy of ISED students in teaching practicum, addressing a void not previously covered by comparable

investigations. Its results suggest that while ISED students may feel well-prepared in certain areas, there are clear opportunities for improvement in others, particularly in designing higher-order lessons that promote critical thinking, differentiating instruction to meet learner needs, developing innovative assessments, and managing challenging classroom dynamics. Addressing these areas of lower confidence can lead to better teacher performance and greater student outcomes.

Its limitations notwithstanding, the study makes the following recommendations for the improvement of existing classroom practices at KOED specifically, and future research into teachers' SE:

1. In terms of research, future studies should conduct extensive lesson observations using well-validated and psychometrically sound rubrics or rating scales to ascertain, with empirical evidence, the actual levels of teachers' efficacy and compare them to their reported self-efficacy. The domains to be examined in these observations should include instructional competency, classroom questioning, provision of feedback and technology use. Such data will enable us to establish the alignment between teachers' perceived abilities and their demonstrated performance in the classroom. The results of this exercise can be used to support evidence-based decision making regarding appropriate instructional interventions for teachers, teacher evaluation, professional development planning, and resource allocation.
2. In terms of improving current classroom practices, teacher training providers must include in their courses greater hours for microteaching. Increased microteaching sessions give trainee teachers more opportunities to put theory into practice, develop their pedagogical skills through repeated practice and feedback loops, build confidence in implementing instructional strategies, and refine their classroom management techniques. Teacher training institutes should, by this point, already be considering the use of lesson study (Kusanagi, 2021)—an approach to professional development that originated in Japan some 150 years ago—as a viable method for developing teachers' efficacy in the various competency areas.

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(i) direct quotation, write as 30:36

(ii) indirect quotation, write as Qur'ān, 30:36

Reference:

The glorious Qur'ān. Translation and commentary by A. Yusuf Ali (1977). US: American Trust Publications.

Ḥadīth

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(i) Al-Bukhārī, 88:204 (where 88 is the book number, 204 is the ḥadīth number)

(ii) Ibn Hanbal, vol. 1, p. 1

Reference:

(i) Al-Bukhārī, M. (1981). *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.

(ii) Ibn Ḥanbal, A. (1982). *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*. Istanbul: Cagri Yayinlari.

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Anke Iman Bouzenita & Feryad A. Hussain

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Igo Febrianto, Norhayati Mohamed & Imbarine Bujang

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Chellitda Farhana Gunaish, Mohd Firdaus Abdullah, Saifulazry Mokhtar,

Norazilawati Abd Wahab & Azian Tahir

Da‘wah through Documentary Films Produced by Malayan Film Unit (MFU) and *Filem Negara Malaysia* (FNM), 1957-1970

Hairuzzaki bin Mohd Yusof, Danial bin Mohd Yusof & Normala binti Mohd Adnan

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Ramli Dollah, Amrullah Maraining, Adi Jafar, Eko Prayitno Joko & Nordin Sakke

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Adha Shaleh & Md. Saidul Islam

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Umar Adam Musa, Zainal Abidin bin Sanusi & Hassan bin Suleiman

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Tengku Siti Aisha Tengku Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen, Aini Maznina A. Manaf & Sharifah Sofiah Syed Zainudin

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Mohammad Syifa Amin Widigdo

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Halim Ismail, Azam Othman, Syarifah Rohaniah Syed Mahmood, Hasniza Ibrahim & Noor Azizi Ismail

International Islamic University Malaysia’s (IIUM) Islamic Education Teacher Trainees’ Self-Efficacy during Teaching Practicum

Jamal Mohammed Ameen Hussein & Abdulwahed Jalal Nori

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Caglar Ezikoglu

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Ahmad Akram Mahmud Robbi & Saidatolakma Mohd Yunus

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