

ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

An Assessment of
Strengths, Gaps, and
Opportunities

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مبادرة طابة للدراسات المستقبلية
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Foreword

Islamic Education at the elementary and secondary school level has become the primary means through which generations of Muslim children in the Arab region are learning about their religion. In many cases, school-based learning is the only means of direct religious instruction that young people receive. As a result, contemporary Islamic Education curricula and pedagogy bear an immense responsibility for shaping religious identity that was in previous generations more evenly distributed across society. This responsibility has been amplified and increased due to the problems of religious extremism with which the region has been afflicted over the last two decades. In societies across the region, public debates and discussions on religion, extremism and the modern world have often implicated the content of Islamic Education curricula as a major causal factor of extremism. However, many of these debates have not relied on informed studies of the issues around Islamic Education. As part of our commitment to broadening the comprehension of issues concerning religious discourse in the contemporary context, Tabah Futures Initiative has engaged this task in the context of the United Arab Emirates. This report is the culmination of that effort and we hope it offers a model for similar studies to take place elsewhere in the region and provides meaningful insights for aiding and complementing the many existing efforts of education specialists and institutions in the United Arab Emirates.

Summary

This report examines the issue of Islamic Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Through in-depth interviews with Islamic scholars, educational professionals, administrators of schools and teachers of Islamic Education, as well as parents of students who attend UAE schools, this report explores issues around curriculum content, opportunities and challenges faced by teachers, quality of teaching and learning, suggestions by parents and areas for improvement of Islamic Education in the UAE. Based on responses from participants in this study, the report identifies two primary areas of focus that concern Islamic Education: (1) the content of the curriculum, which is primarily the domain of religious scholars; and (2) structural issues that affect teacher training and professional development, which are primarily the domain of educational authorities and schools.

Part 1: Introduction

Background

The issue of Islamic Education curricula and pedagogy has gathered a significant amount of attention in recent years. Islamic Education in the UAE is a vital component of the educational curricula that students, in both private and public schools, are required to learn. This research report explores the theme of 'Islamic Education' in the UAE, particularly focusing on the experiences of various stakeholders in Abu Dhabi. Our interest in putting this report together began in 2017 when Tabah Futures Initiative hosted a panel discussion in Abu Dhabi on contemporary challenges and opportunities in Islamic education. The panel's presentations and discussions demonstrated the diverse array of issues affecting contemporary Islamic Education. In order to broaden our understanding of these issues, Tabah Futures Initiative commissioned this report in conjunction with two well-respected scholars, with a focus on the UAE. The UAE's rapid development since unification, the diversity of its population and the constructive efforts of the Ministry of Education and Abu Dhabi's Education Council in improving the experience of Islamic Education for stakeholders offers an interesting and intriguing context for assessing Islamic Education more broadly. This study aims to form an introductory report on the issue of Islamic Education in the UAE. We hope that this report can provide a model for further comprehensive studies to be undertaken in other countries in the region.

This report was produced by the Tabah Futures Initiative in conjunction with Professors Mariam Alhashmi, of Zayed University and Nadeem Memon, of University of South Australia's Centre for Islamic Thought and Education, both of whom have worked extensively in the field of Islamic Education in the UAE as curriculum directors and consultants.

The Research Study

Researchers from the Tabah Futures Initiative engaged in extensive consultations with experts in the field of Islamic Education to develop a sound approach to exploring this issue in the UAE. Through these consultations, various themes were identified to form the basis

of this report's analysis. Additionally, these consultations yielded an extensive list of potential participants to inform the study. The types of participants interviewed in the study included educational professionals, administrators of schools and teachers of Islamic Education, as well as parents of students who attend UAE schools. The educational professionals who were interviewed were primarily consultants who have worked in curriculum development and pedagogical professional development, as well as board members of various schools in GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) nations. Both English and Arabic, as well as public and private Islamic Education teachers were interviewed. All teachers interviewed had between 13 and 22 years' teaching experience in the UAE Islamic Education curricula and were therefore well versed in the content of the curriculum as well as the challenges and opportunities presented by the programme, and had a wealth of practical experiences. In addition to speaking to educational professionals, we also felt it was important to speak with parents of students who study Islamic Education as they offered insights into the topic from a different perspective. In total, just over a dozen participants were interviewed for this study. Interviews were lengthy, in-depth conversations ranging from 45 minutes to an hour, posing open-ended questions relating to participants' experiences with Islamic Education in schools, their views regarding challenges and opportunities for Islamic Education in the region, and their insights on areas of concern. This report does not attempt to present an exhaustive set of data findings, but rather explores some of the lived experiences of various stakeholders with the intent of constructing a basic understanding of some of the concerns, challenges, opportunities and relevant insights regarding Islamic Education in the UAE.

Part 2: The Context

Moderate Islamic Values in the UAE

Globally, Islamic Education, like any form of religious education, is intended to foster a strong sense of identity, inculcate values rooted in a religious tradition, and nurture the student's responsibility toward self, community and humanity broadly. An essential component of Islamic Education is imparting *adab*, often translated as 'etiquette' or commonly consistent with character education, but at its root it intends for students to become good human beings who uphold both civic responsibility and moral uprightness¹.

The terms 'Islamic Education' and 'values' have been frequently exploited and misconstrued

1- Al-Attas. "Preliminary Thoughts on the Nature of Knowledge and the Definition and Aims of Education", in S.S. Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education, Jeddah: King Abdulaziz University, 1979, pp. 19-45.

in various contemporary discourses related to Islam, Muslims and global affairs. This has led many mainstream religious institutions to qualify normative understandings of Islam with the description “moderate” that is rooted in Quranic Arabic words signifying balance, moderation and the middle-path. UAE government documents commonly precede the terms ‘Islam’, ‘Islamic Education’ or ‘Islamic values’ with ‘moderate’, in order to distinguish a

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national perspective on Islamic education and values: “Ambitious and responsible Emiratis will successfully carve out their future, actively engaging in an evolving socio-economic environment, and drawing on their strong families and communities, moderate Islamic values, and deep-rooted heritage to build a vibrant and well-knit society. [Emphasis added]” ²

As a nation that charted a path of rapid economic development and internationalisation including being open and accepting to the world’s cultures and religions, the UAE has maintained the centrality of their own national identity while defining their stance on Islamic Education and values.

To our knowledge, the term ‘moderate Islamic values’ has not been specifically defined in any policy document but one can assume through the indigenous Islamic tradition of the UAE and the understanding of Islam disseminated through the nation’s senior Islamic authority, the Awqaf, what it entails. An emphasis on social responsibility to humanity, interreligious and cross-cultural dialogue, and an aversion to politicisation of religion are key features of the UAE’s religious tradition.

The Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Community Development (now known as the Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development) defined an ‘Ideal Citizen of the UAE’ as being loyal, religious, educated, fluent in Arabic, connected to the Arab world, open and interactive to the whole world, positive and able to take initiative, empowering of women, productive, ethical, aware of one’s history, endowed with a strategic vision, family-oriented, and hospitable³. Furthermore, Vision 2021 states that the UAE aspires to foster “deep rooted heritage to

2-UAE Vision 2021. <https://www.vision2021.ae/en/our-vision/united-responsibility> Accessed Dec. 9, 2017

3-Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Community Development (2009). Current website of the Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development is <https://mckd.gov.ae/sites/MCYCDVar/en-us/pages/faq.aspx> Accessed September 6, 2013.

build a vibrant and well-knit society,” one that embraces “moral values,” “in the face of multiculturalism.”⁴ Piecing these and other statements together illustrates that religious values are indeed an important part of UAE national identity and one that schools play a significant role in imparting.

Islamic Education Curriculum in the UAE

The Islamic Education curriculum taught in all public and private schools across the UAE is provided and regulated by the Ministry of Education. All Muslim students in the UAE are provided with Islamic Education as part of the school daily programme with the allocated time ranging between 90 and 180 minutes weekly depending on the type of school and the grade level.

“ The Islamic Education curriculum attempts to maintain the interaction of the presented concepts with real-life issues, while fostering the development of the students’ thinking skills”

The Islamic Education curriculum attempts to maintain the interaction of the presented concepts with real-life issues, while fostering the development of the students’ thinking skills. As the official 2011 UAE National Islamic Education Curriculum document asserts, “the Qur’an and the Prophetic tradition are not dealt with as materials to be memorized only, rather, they are also the material for generating topics and constructing ideas and arguments.”⁵ The curriculum is value-based and states that “values are an aim for every component of this curriculum and are a behavioral objective for every part of it.”⁶ Consequently, values and attitudes are highlighted in every lesson of the Islamic Education textbook. The curriculum is also based on “a practical vision of Islam that nurtures a human being who is an active citizen and who makes positive contributions to their society.”⁷ Within this vision, tolerance is placed as a core tenant of the developed curriculum.

The seven areas under which the learning outcomes of the Islamic Education curriculum are organised are: “Islamic values and purposes, divine revelation, Islamic rules and character, mentality of faith, biography, identity and belonging, and the human and the universe.”⁸ These categories do not resemble traditional approaches to Islamic Sciences. Rather, they

4-UAE Vision 2021. <https://www.vision2021.ae/en/our-vision/united-responsibility> Accessed Dec. 9, 2017

5/6/7-The National Developed Document for the UAE Islamic Education Curriculum 2011, p. 9. <http://recording.moe.gov.ae/curriculum/Islamic.pdf> Accessed Dec. 20, 2017

8-The National Developed Document for the UAE Islamic Education Curriculum 2011, p. 17. <http://recording.moe.gov.ae/curriculum/Islamic.pdf> Accessed Dec. 20, 2017

indicate an attempt to apply a concept-based curriculum through the use of discipline aligned concepts. The use of these conceptual lenses adds depth to the material and fosters synergetic thinking⁹. The curriculum standards reflect an approach towards a concepts-based curriculum as opposed to a facts-based curriculum at a high level as resembled by the seven curricular themes.

The themes and standards are further detailed in a separate document, published in 2014¹⁰. This separate curriculum document identifies what students should know and be able to do in a particular discipline of knowledge¹¹. The curriculum textbooks and teaching guides are produced and provided to all schools by the Ministry of Education and are completely aligned with the developed standards. An exception to this was the Islamic Education curriculum provided to the Muslim non-Arabic speaking students. The adopted English Islamic Education curriculum, up to the academic year 2016-2017, was the 'I Love Islam' series¹². However, starting from the academic year 2017-2018, the Ministry of Education made an English version of the locally developed curriculum available to all schools. Islamic Studies Textbooks serve as a guide for instruction, including the means and ends of instruction. Additional teaching and assessment strategies are included in separate teachers' manuals.

Part 3: The Findings

The Complexities of Islamic Education in the UAE

Primary and secondary schooling in the UAE is a complex phenomenon with multiple realities. The considerable expatriate community has fuelled the need for a massive private

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education sector, which includes British, American and other Western curriculum-based schools, in addition to the public school system. Islamic Education in the public school system

9-Erickson, H. (2002). *Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction: Teaching Beyond the Facts*. California: Corwin Press.

10-Islamic Education National Curriculum Standards 2014.

<https://www.moe.gov.ae/Arabic/Docs/Curriculum/Learning%20Standard/UAE%20Islamic%20Framework.pdf> Accessed Dec. 20, 2017

11-Ornstein, A. & Hunkins, F. (2009). *Curriculum: Foundations, Principles, and Issues*, 5th edition. Boston: Pearson.

12-I Love Islam Books. <http://www.iloveislambooks.com/> Accessed Dec. 20, 2017

is strictly regulated by the Ministry of Education, with stringent rules in place to ensure strong standards of teachers, adequate time allotment for the subject, as well as a general culture that gives importance to the subject matter. Islamic Education in the private system is also regulated by the Ministry of Education, which enforces similar rules to the public sector. However, in the private sector, the level of importance given to Islamic Education is greatly influenced by the school's culture and the administrative teams within the schools. Some private schools place a high priority on engendering Islamic values in their student body. Such schools will make strident efforts to integrate Islamic teachings and values throughout their curricula in addition to offering students the Islamic Education curriculum that is mandated in the UAE. Hence, Islamic Education and values of the UAE national identity are integrated within the school through a cross-curricular approach to inculcate a sense of Islam as a lived reality. Islam forms an essential component of the DNA of such private schools and is instilled within the administration of the school, which provides the vision for the educational landscape, through to the teachers who develop lessons that are engrained with Islamic and national identity values. At the other end of the spectrum, some schools have a culture that emphasises academic excellence and may not promote Islamic values as a part of their core identity. Such schools view their institution as responsible for providing academic tools and training that will lead to the pursuit of higher education. Although these schools may not promote the notion that Islamic values are incompatible with academic success, they have ultimately devalued the importance of Islamic Education in the process of attaining academic excellence. Most private schools in the UAE fall somewhere between these two types of school culture in relation to their promotion of Islamic Education and values.

Relevance of Islamic Education

Participants in the study strongly felt that Islamic Education was an important subject. Furthermore, they impressed that students also felt that it was important. All stakeholders, whether they were educational professionals, administrators, teachers or parents, felt that the primary purpose of Islamic Education was to learn about the basics of Islamic teachings and values. This entailed learning foundational aspects of Aqidah (creed and beliefs), Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence, specifically referring to how to perform the rituals of Islam such as prayer, ablution, etc.), Islamic ethics and morals, and other essential aspects of the religion. In other words, Islamic Education in schools was primarily meant to lead to an understanding of the basic fundamental aspects of the religion, combined with instilling Islamic values. Parents described how Islamic Education in schools was of particular importance to them because of

busy work schedules, as well as their lack of some of the basic qualifications to formally teach their children about the subject.

Achievements, Challenges, Opportunities and Areas of Concern

Curriculum: Overwhelmingly, all stakeholders who participated in this study described the paramount importance of the role of the teacher in Islamic Education. All participants clearly expressed that the effectiveness, the practicality, and the students' enthusiasm for the course was dependent on the teacher. As such, no major concerns were raised regarding the efficacy and relevance of the curriculum itself. Most participants felt that the Islamic Education programme did a good job of teaching the basics of Islam and provided a good foundation for essential Islamic values. Participants expressed that the curriculum had important and useful content and that genuine efforts have been made to render it adaptable and relevant to the needs of students in the context of the UAE in the 21st century. Participants described how the Islamic Education curriculum in the UAE made strong efforts to encourage tolerance, acceptance of diversity, and global citizenship, which they felt was refreshingly unique compared to other Islamic Educational curricula in the region. However, some stakeholders raised an important consideration. Although the current Islamic Education curriculum is designed to address the realities experienced in contemporary UAE society such as the diversity of peoples and cultures, it must also make provision for preparing students to engage the ideas, questions and values that a globalised world evokes. In general, participants felt that whatever potential benefits or shortcomings may exist within the curriculum pale in comparison to what the teacher brings to the programme.

Teachers: Teachers possess the power to make Islamic Education a vital component in the educational process, or a completely irrelevant course for students. Teachers who have

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been described as the most effective in teaching the programme are able to connect the course content with real-life situations, as encouraged by the curriculum. These teachers are able to demonstrate how Islamic Education is not simply a theoretical form of knowledge,

but has practical and relevant applications for students' daily lives. Furthermore, effective teachers, according to participants, incorporated differentiation in their teaching activities. These teachers avoided teacher-centred approaches, such as lecturing or showing a video for the full class period. Rather, they incorporated multiple approaches to engage students as active participants in the learning process. This included undertaking group activities, creating spaces for children to demonstrate what they have learned, engaging in group discussions, incorporating audio visuals, offering variations in assessment techniques such as oral testing, producing original content, challenging students to use higher order cognition, providing websites and other online tools for supplemental materials, and finding ways for students to practically apply Islamic Education in their daily lives. Good teachers, according to participants, were not only passionate about the subject matter, but viewed the topic as an immense responsibility with which they had been entrusted. Such teachers did not simply view the job as a means of acquiring a monthly salary. Unfortunately, many teachers are not able to be this dedicated due to impracticalities and challenges inherent in their schools' structure. Participants frequently described the structuring of Islamic Education in the private school system as posing a number of challenges.

As previously discussed, the inherent dynamics of private and public schools create different practicalities for Islamic Education in these settings. As most private schools have a smaller student population than public schools, there are fewer sections of Islamic Education courses taught at each grade level compared to the public system. As such, in order for Islamic Education teachers to have a complete workload, they are usually required to teach multiple grade levels. Some participants explained that they had to teach as many as seven different grade level groups. In this scenario, teachers need to be familiar with multiple curricula for the various grade levels, as opposed to being able to specialise in one or two grade levels. Many private school teachers are overburdened with course preparation and learning the content of the different curricula and seldom have the time or energy to employ differentiated practices in the classroom. As such, it comes as little surprise that school inspection results from the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) and the Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEC) over the past two years in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi private schools reveal that no school has achieved 'outstanding' in Islamic Education and Arabic, not even the top rated schools in the country¹³.

Islamic Education teacher workloads are less of an issue in the public school system, which tends to have more students at each grade level and therefore more sections for Islamic Education at each grade level. Hence, many public school teachers are able to teach multiple

13-Road to Outstanding: A Qualitative Analysis of UAE School Inspection Reports. White Paper. Abu Dhabi University Knowledge Group: Abu Dhabi, UAE, 2017.

sections in fewer grade levels and can specialise, as well as fully familiarise themselves with the course content for these classes. As less time is spent on class preparation, due to the fewer grade levels taught, public school teachers theoretically have more opportunities to create engaging and differentiated lessons for their students.

Teacher Development: Another factor which has brought about challenges for teaching Islamic Education is that teachers across subject areas have very high turnover rates in the region and are also mostly expatriates, particularly in private schools. Therefore, they are more likely to be risk averse and will be reluctant to try innovative and differentiated practices out of fear that they may be violating cultural norms or face reprisal for their actions. Many teachers will shy away from trying new and innovative approaches that may or may not have a positive and enlightening impact and will prefer to employ placid techniques to avoid drawing unnecessary attention to themselves. Teachers also discussed how there is a lack of opportunity available to them for professional development, which is built into teachers' timetables. However, using spare periods towards professional development for a number of Islamic Education teachers becomes challenging, particularly in the private school sector. Participants mentioned that in order for professional development to be meaningful it would require a full day or at least a half day in order for teachers to learn effective approaches and techniques to incorporate into their teaching. Most teachers are allotted roughly an hour and a half in the week for professional development, which is scantily enough time to learn and incorporate meaningful knowledge and skills.

Pedagogy: Participants also described a certain culture associated with teaching methods of Islamic Education, which posed challenges. Islamic Education teachers are required to have formal training in Islamic Studies in addition to teacher training. In a technical sense, teachers are qualified to teach the content of the course in most cases. Furthermore, the

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structuring of Islamic Education curricula in the UAE as concept-based, organised around seven key areas, attempts to make the curriculum adaptable within a schooling context.

However, participants observed that the methods employed to teach Islamic Education were more traditional in nature and differed from most subjects in a primary or secondary school setting. One can argue the merits of traditional approaches to teaching Islamic Education, which resembles how theology is taught in seminaries. However, this style of teaching may be somewhat disconnected to how students in primary and secondary schools are accustomed to learning. Participants discussed how students engage with their Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, Sciences and other subjects in one way, but when they attend their Islamic Education courses, some of their Islamic Education teachers' teaching style was very different and not conducive to stimulating student interest. Furthermore, this traditional style of teaching, described by participants, placed less emphasis on tying the course content in with students' everyday experiences. In other words, participants felt that these traditional approaches failed to make the course relevant for the students.

Part 4: Conclusion

Recommendations

Resoundingly, all participants felt that teachers are the critical factor when it comes to the effectiveness of Islamic Education. Teachers represent the crucial asset for making the Islamic Education curriculum a relevant, vibrant and beneficial class for their students. From this initial exploration of Islamic Education in UAE schools, we have developed three recommendations based upon our extensive discussions with educational professionals, administrators, academics, teachers and parents. It is important to bear in mind that the findings of this study are not comprehensive or definitive. Participants described their experiences based on what they have observed within their specific schools. As such, these recommendations are suggestions that may be implemented at the school level and not beyond.

1. Provide enrichment materials and invest heavily in teacher training and professional development:

Efforts should be made to supplement the current curriculum with materials that increase student literacy to confidently engage in the global marketplace of ideas. The interplay of

various religions, cultures and worldviews necessitates that younger generations in the UAE are prepared to confidently engage with them. The Islamic Education curriculum is well-placed to offer this, since religion is the bedrock of culture, values and identity in the nation, and thus a crucial actor in fortifying and enhancing a UAE national identity that is neither rigid to the point of being closed to the world, and soluble to the point of losing itself in the global space. Furthermore, there needs to be a stronger emphasis towards professional development. Professional development is something that is encouraged in schools across the UAE, however, practically speaking, most teachers are not able to benefit from the time that is allotted to them. Instead of having professional development built into teachers' schedules as a small apportioned amount of time over the span of a week, a more effective and useful approach would be to give larger chunks of time incrementally across the school year. Teachers need at minimum half a day or more to learn useful and important skills and how to implement them in a classroom setting. This type of professional development will have a more meaningful and lasting impact for teachers. The timings that teachers felt would be most useful for professional development were during downtimes in the school year. Such times could be in the autumn before students return to school, at the end of the year when students finish exams, or right after mid-year testing and holidays. This approach places professional development in the hands of the school's administrative team and does not place the burden on teachers who do not have ample opportunities to engage in professional development during their spare periods. Professional development needs to be practical, accessible and relevant. In order to come up with these professional development opportunities, there should be consultations with teachers themselves to ascertain their needs and challenges.

2. Facilitate teacher specialisation and support:

When a teacher is required to teach five or six different grade levels, a situation is created whereby teachers are overburdened by classroom preparation. In such a scenario, teachers are often learning the curriculum as they are teaching it to their students. Concrete steps need to be taken to help reduce the lesson preparation burden. Some possible approaches could include creating lesson plan databases, facilitating and encouraging teacher collaborative work and offering Islamic Education resources and online learning support materials to teachers. This is not an exhaustive list of suggestions, however it provides some direction to help decrease classroom preparation time. By relieving some of the content burden for teachers, more opportunity would be gained for studying the grade-specific curricula and becoming grade level specialists in its content. When teachers have strong expertise in course content, they can teach dynamic lessons, make efforts towards enrichment, create innovative lesson plans and develop resources that can better facilitate a robust learning environment.

Participants' comments strongly suggested that teachers need to become more specialised to effectively teach grade level Islamic Education classes. Students are more engaged when

“ Participants' comments strongly suggested that teachers need to become more specialised to effectively teach grade level Islamic Education classes”

teachers have expert knowledge on the content and teachers will have more time to be innovative and creative with their lessons. Furthermore, if teachers are making efforts to engage in enriching activities for their classes, they should be given occasional release time to develop educational materials including course websites, educational games, digital media and other relevant digital learning tools.

3. Teacher retention, autonomy and reducing risk aversion:

As teaching in the UAE is a profession with a high turnover rate, one of the greatest challenges for schools is retaining talented teaching staff. As previously stated, teachers are the most valuable asset that a school can have for its Islamic Education department. Measures should be taken to ensure that good teachers want to stay for the long term. Experienced teachers not only have a stronger experiential knowledge base, but can also provide mentorship to younger teachers who are still learning the profession. Additionally, if schools are seeking innovative teachers that can stimulate students' interest in Islamic Education, teachers need to be less risk averse. Teachers need to feel a stronger sense of security if they are to try new and innovative practices in the classroom. Teaching needs to occur in a safe space where teachers are less concerned with being penalised for trying different teaching practices, and can expend more energy finding innovative ways to make Islamic Education relevant and accessible to students. Hence, schools need to make concerted efforts to prepare teachers through comprehensive professional development programmes (recommendation one), and encourage teacher autonomy so that they can exercise their professional judgment in the classroom. Teachers will not feel afraid to try new approaches in their classes if they are assured that they will not be punished for trying new teaching methods that may or may not work. Furthermore, for teachers to be willing to try new and innovative practices, there needs to be a cultural shift in how Islamic Education within a schooling context is viewed. Primary and secondary schools are not seminaries and pupils are not theology students. The methods utilised by teachers should employ student centred approaches to learning, incorporating audio visuals, engaging in group work activities and encouraging discussion

and debate in the class. When students feel more involved in the learning process, they will be more engaged and will find it easier to make connections between course content and their lived experiences. However, in order to effectively encourage teacher autonomy, it is essential that teachers be provided with ample opportunities for professional development (recommendation one) and that they attain grade-specific specialisation of course content (recommendation two) to empower and prepare them to go beyond the basics of the curriculum.

Concluding note

This study is not an exhaustive exploration into the field of Islamic Education in the UAE. Rather, it has provided a snapshot of some of the realities of Islamic Education based upon the lengthy years of experience of educational experts in the field. We hope that this introductory exploration into the topic helps to facilitate a more thorough in-depth analysis of the issues brought up by this report.



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