Methods for Enhancing Tafilah Technical University Students' Motivation Towards the Islamic Education Domain, in the Students' Point of View in the Light of Some Variables: a Field Study

Dr Abdullah Ali Al-Jazi

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Educational Sciences

Tafila Technical University, Jordan

E-mail: aaljazi@ttu.edu.jo

Abstract

This study aims at realizing methods ways of enhancing Tafilah Technical University students' motivation towards the Islamic Education domain, reflected through the students' point of view in the light of some variables: gender, college type and students GPAs. To achieve this aim a questionnaire was designed as a data collection instrument. After validating its psychometric properties, the questionnaire was distributed to the university students. Data analysis results revealed that the most effective ways of enhancing students motivation in the students' point of view was 'teacher's adoption of easy-to-read type of references for the Islamic Education domain. It also revealed existence of statistically significant difference in the level of motivation enhancement that can be attributed to interactional relationship between the two variables: 'gender and college'; and 'GPA and college type'.

Keywords: motivation enhancement, Tafilah technical University, Islamic Education domain.

Introduction

Islamic Education domain taught at the universities constitutes a paramount support to Islamic character reinforcement necessary in the university student's life. Necessity for the Islamic education is obvious to build a moderate Islamic character; to get rid of a lot of diseases human beings are suffering from such as fanaticism and (moral) deviation and other (I'laimat and Abul Shaikh, 2013). A university student needs to learn the religious duties, and Prophetic instructions (Sunnah), (societal and everyday-life) transactions, morals, and issues of Belief and Sharee'ah (religion) in accordance with the Islamic approach: this can never be attained except through Islamic Education provision, which supplies him/her with all what he/she needs of those issues – components of the Faith - (Al Mikhlafi, 2006).

Islamic Education is also considered the Muslim's message he/she should spread and inform as much of it as he can; since the Islamic Education issues constitute the criteria for judging righteousness/ unrighteousness of all matters and everyday events he witnesses. In this sense, it is the greatest contributor to maintaining prestigious and high status of the Islamic Nation (Hammad, 2004).

Having this importance, Islamic Education must be prompted: university students must be motivated as to study this essential domain.

Motivation is considered an important component of success and achievement   of a lot of necessary tasks in life. Learning is of great importance in man's life. Consequently, motivation to learning is considered so paramount. Motivation is an intrinsic state within the learner that orientates and motivates him/her to actively study and lively react with a learning situation. Motivation also functions as to promote such activity directed towards a learning situation until learning occurs (Touq, Qutami and Addes, 2002). To attain such learning motivation appropriately, there must be certain specifications in the teacher, and the place where the educational process is taking place. Of these specifications are availing appropriate conditions to attract students and evoke their interest, associated with conditions that insure continuity of such interest. In this respect, providing a suitable learning environment that encourages students' effective contribution to achieve appropriate learning objectives must be highlighted: this has an effective role in generating and enhancing motivation. Moreover, reinforcement and praising students for their contribution in the activities that achieve learning objectives are important factors in enhancing motivation (Touq et al., 2002).

Motivation has many functions. Most important of these are: generating and activating behavior that fulfills a need within the students, or achieves a certain objective for them. It also directs the students to the sources that lead to achieving the required objectives. Motivational intensity determines intensity and power of the students' behavior towards achieving the objectives (al Zaghlool, 2005). Motivation prompts behavioral activities towards achieving the promising objectives (Qutami and Addes, 2002).

Motivation can be defined as: intrinsic state that evokes behavior and sustains it (Woolfr, 2010). It can be divided into: intrinsic motivation resulting from personal internal factors such as the student's needs, interests, curiosity, entertainment; and extrinsic motivation

whose existence is caused by rewarding, incentive bonus and social pressure. Motivation of both types is so paramount for the student. A teacher or the educational material taught can evoke curiosity within the student (intrinsic motivation), but there must exist incentives and rewarding (extrinsic motivation), (Braphy, 1988: in Qassim1997).

Having this importance, a bulk of studies has been conducted. Haddah's (2013) study on the relationship between learning achievement as scoring and motivation within fourth intermediate graders in Algeria revealed existence of positive correlation between the two variables (scoring and motivation). The more motivational intensity the students have the better the students achieve (score). The study also indicated that there existed statistically significant differences in the motivational level between the high achievers and low achievers.

Al Zughbi and BaniDoomi (2012) tackled the impact of mixed learning in the Jordanian schools on (basic) grade four pupils' achievement as scoring in Mathematics, and measured their motivation. A sample of (# 71) male and female pupils in the four existing classes was divided into two groups. (# 38) were assigned into the experimental group; and (# 33) were assigned into the comparison group. The study revealed a statically significant difference in the pupils' achievement between the two groups in favour of the experimental group, due to correlational interaction between motivation and achievement.

Al Mas'oud's (2012) study aimed at exploring the teachers' level of using the different methods of motivation and attention enhancement with their mentally disabled students, and its correlation with variables of place of learning, academic level, specialization and students' level of disability. The participants sample constituted (# 98) teachers. The study revealed that there was a statistically significant difference that can be attributed to the variables of place of learning and the teachers' level of education. There were also statistically significant differences that can be attributed to the variables of the experience, specialization and students' level of disability.

Al Hasnawi (2007) studied the impact of studying 'Electronics of Electric Power' module in two different methods: computer-assisted, and Internet-assisted, on the students' motivation towards learning the subject; and their attitudes towards learning this way. The sample constituted (# 90) second level male and female students majoring in Chemistry at the Technical Institute in Al Nasryyah, Iraq. The study results indicated that the Internet group students surpassed the computer group: having more motivational intensity and better attitudes towards studying this way.

Al Shawashrah (2007) aimed at studying the impact of an orientational programme on evoking motivation of a student suffering from low motivation for achievement. The student received educational orientations in accordance with determined time plan in the educational orientation room at the school. The study revealed that the programme was so effective in evoking the student's motivation and improving his academic achievement.

Reviewing related literature demonstrated that the current study is in line with previous studies in respect of the importance and necessity of finding methods and techniques for

enhancing students' motivation. Distinguishably this study tackles methods and techniques for enhancing motivation towards the Islamic Education domain in particular. This is done through detecting students' opinions using a questionnaire.

The research problem

Islamic Education as a domain taught at different universities contributes to providing a university student with a holistic vision and portrait about the Islamic faith. It supports student's understanding of this religion away from the effect of any distortion. Based on his commonsense knowledge and observation as a teacher of the Islamic Education modules, the researcher noticed weak students' enrolment in this domain. And when they are enrolled, their indifference and carelessness is noticeable during the lectures. This is an indication of weak motivation towards this domain; the fact that justifies this study's author's search for methods and techniques for enhancing students' motivation towards the Islamic Education domain through their own points of view.

The research questions

This study attempts to answer the following two questions:

First question: what are the methods/techniques that enhance students' motivation for studying Islamic Education most, in the Tafilah Technical University students' opinions?

Second question: are there any differences in the methods of enhancing students' motivation for studying the Islamic Education domain at the university that can be attributed to the variables of 'gender', 'college type (humanistic or scientific)', and GPAs (good or less and very good or more)'?

Research objectives

This study aims to highlight the best methods and techniques the students view as effectively contribute to enhancing motivation for studying the Islamic Education domain at Tafilah Technical University.

Significance of the study

Importance of the study lies in its contribution so effectively to develop the Muslim's character through providing him/her with a comprehensive portrait of his religion. To the researcher's knowledge, this study is the first of its kind.

Scope of the study

- Place scope: Al Tafilah Technical University.

- Time scope: the second term of the academic year 2016 / 2017.

- Context scope: Al Tafilah Technical University students at the humanistic and scientific colleges.

Definition of terms

First, methods of enhancing motivation: are a set of procedures and processes that function as to attract students to enroll in the Islamic Education domain, and continue to study and show interest.

Second, Al Tafilah University students: are all students studying at Al Tafilah Technical University humanistic and scientific faculties/colleges.

Third, the Islamic Education domain: is one of the selective subjects/courses at the university that provides a general comprehensive vision about the Islamic faith.

The research methodology

In this section of the study the study population, sample and sampling procedures, data collection instrument, and data analysis techniques used are described.

Population of the study: this constitutes all (# 3575) Tafilah Technical University students in the academic year 2016/2017. These are divided into (# 1267) female students and (# 2308) male students; incorporating (# 2635) at the scientific faculties and (# 940) at the humanistic faculties.

(# 1927) of the scientific faculty students are male; and (# 708) are female. The humanistic faculty / college students' distribution is: (# 381) male students, and (# 559) female students. This is according to the Admission and Registration Department (ARD) records for the academic year 2016/2017.

Sample of the study: the sample was based on 'systematic sampling', a modified form of simple randomization techniques. A percentage of approximately10.5% was considered as a basis in selecting the sample number for each sub-category of gender and college affiliation to make a total sample of (# 380) male and female students composing 10.5 % of the accessible population. Table 1 shows distribution of the sample.

Table 1. Description of the Sample in terms of gender, college type and GPAs

College Type		Scientific	Humanistic	Total
Gender	Male	204	40	244
	Female	76	60	136
GPAs	Good or less	200		
	Very good or more	180		
Gross total				**380**

Data collection instrument: to achieve aims of the study a questionnaire was designed. This was composed of three major sections (the teacher, references for the Islamic Education subject, and technical aspects at the university), with a total of 25 items.

A 5-point Likert-type scale was used for the participants' responses: that is [strongly disagree (1 mark value), don't agree (2 marks), neutral (3 marks), agree (4 marks), strongly disagree (5 marks)].

The instrument was built on basis of these two technique styles:

- Firstly, an open-ended question concerned with the best method for enhancing their motivation for the Islamic Education domain was brain-stormed/addressed to the participants; then students' responses were classified, and thoughts were elicited and organized into the appropriate section in the questionnaire.

- Secondly, reviewing previous literature in relation with the current study's issue to elicit major items for the instrument; then modifying and including them within the questionnaire items.

Instrument validity: having the primary version of the questionnaire prepared, it was distributed to a jury of experts: staff members at the University of Jordan who were specialists in the fields of Curriculum and Teaching Methods, Educational Psychology, Evaluation and Assessment, and Sharee'ah (Islamic Faith). They were requested to give their opinions about the questionnaire in terms of appropriateness. Having the jury's comments, the questionnaire was modified accordingly; and thus validity was ascertained.

Instrument reliability: to assure reliability of the instrument it was applied to a sample (# 20 students) of the accessible population, and outside the study's population. Two methods were used to ascertain instrument reliability: First, the half-split method; and secondly, using Alpha Cronbach's correlation co-efficient. Table (2) shows the tests results.

Table 2. Reliability co-efficient tests results using half-split method, and Alpha Cronbach's correlation tests

Spearman-Brown co-efficient	.774
Cronbach's Alpha	.910

The table shows an acceptable reliability co-efficient:.774 using the half-split method. The internal Alpha Cronbach's correlation co-efficient was.910. This calculated value indicates a highly positive correlation in Hinkle's et. al. (2003).

The study procedures

- The data collection instrument (questionnaire) was distributed – when validity and reliability were assured – to the study sample ((# 380) male and female students at the scientific and humanistic faculties/colleges.

- All questionnaires were turned back.

- Data were fed into the SPSS statistical programme to be analyzed. The results found were presented and discussed.

The descriptive statistics used

- As for the first question, Means, St Ds and ranking of the participant's responses to the questionnaire items were used.

- For the second question, in addition to the Means and St Ds to calculate the tendency of the Means differences, the three-way ANOVA was used to determine significance of those differences, in answer to the second research question.

Findings of the study and discussion

Firstly, findings in relation to the first research question:

To answer the first question, reading: what are the methods/techniques that enhance students' motivation for studying Islamic Education most, in the Tafilah Technical University students' opinions? Means and St Ds for the questionnaire items were calculated. Table (3) shows the result of these.

Table 3. Means and St Ds for the questionnaire items

No.	Questionnaire Items	Means	St Ds	Rank
	Section One: The Teacher			
1	Teacher's use of variety of teaching methods for the course content	4.30	.77	4
2	Teacher's use of variety of activities for evaluating the course content	3.60	1.05	24
3	Teacher's continual reinforcement for his students	4.33	.94	3
4	Teacher's use of variety of evaluation strategies	3.95	.96	14
5	Teacher's development of a variety of innocent competitive environments among the students	3.89	.91	17
6	Teacher's availing of a comfortable atmosphere that assures tranquility for the students	3.89	1.23	16
7	Teacher's use of a variety of teaching aids that cope with the content to be taught	3.68	1.14	23
8	Teacher's use of the modern technological means and applications for teaching the Islamic Education domain	3.82	.98	19
9	Teacher's management of his class so democratically with a comfortable atmosphere where students' opinions are taken for granted	3.76	2.05	22
10	Teacher's adoption of interactional approach where students participate in the Islamic Education domain plan	3.45	1.28	25
11	Teacher's consideration of individual differences among the students	4.04	.88	13
12	Teacher's generating an atmosphere of fun while presenting the course content	4.19	.90	10
13	Teacher's use of a variety of teaching/learning environments (the classroom, courtyard, library, …)	4.36	.98	2
	Section Two: References adopted for the Islamic Education Domain			
1	Teacher's adoption of technically well-produced well-organised and well-shaped references for the Islamic Education course	3.91	.76	15
2	Teacher's selection of references for the Islamic Education course with subject matters and issues of interest to the students for the Islamic Education course	3.87	.90	18
3	Teacher's selection of references for the Islamic Education course with subject matters and issues	4.15	.95	12

	up-to-date; attractive to the students			
4	Teacher's selection of references for the Islamic Education course with issues attractively presented to the students	*3.79*	*1.43*	*21*
5	Teacher's selection of references for the Islamic Education course that depend on evidence and logical argumentation	*3.80*	*1.11*	*20*
6	Teacher's adoption of references for the Islamic Education course on basis of its distinguished quality, not on quantity	*4.41*	*2.71*	*1*
7	Teacher's selection of references for the Islamic Education course with subject matters that are smoothly and easily presented	*4.28*	*.89*	*5*
Section Three: Technical Aspects at the University				
1	Changing the Islamic Education domain to be a mandatory course for the university students	*4.26*	*1.09*	*7*
2	The Islamic Education lectures be given on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays	*4.27*	*.98*	*6*
3	The Islamic Education domain be given in the morning periods as a more appropriate time	*4.26*	*2.76*	*8*
4	Raising the Islamic Education domain's weigh as to be valued (in terms of marks) more than the other domains	*4.18*	*1.76*	*11*
5	Rewarding outstanding students (in the Islamic Education domain) at the University level	*4.23*	*.90*	*9*

The table above shows that the top four items in the ranking of the best methods and techniques for enhancing the students' motivation for studying the Islamic Education domain were (in the students' point of view) as follows:

First: the item reading 'Teacher's adoption of references for the Islamic Education subject on basis of its distinguished quality, not on quantity'. This can be reasoned by the fact that focusing on and taking care of the quality of what is being provided to the students is of great importance: extra stuffing is useless. So over-stuffed references are considered a source of demotivation; students dislike that as this constitutes an overloading, especially at examination times.

Second: the item reading 'Teacher's use of a variety of teaching/learning environments (the classroom, courtyard, library, …). It is well known that changing the learning environment from time to time affects the student's general mode positively: it remedies boredom and a lot of negative feelings. This, in turn, gives him power to concentrate better and focus on learning.

Third: the item reading 'Teacher's continual reinforcement for his students'. This could be attributed to the fact evidenced by experimentation that reinforcement plays a positive role in enhancing human beings' motivation for taking action; and repeatedly respond to reinforcement/encouragement he receives from time to time.

Third: the item reading 'Teacher's use of variety of teaching methods for the course content'. This can be explained by the fact that the teacher's use of a variety of teaching methods constitutes a source of attraction for the students towards the subject he teaches; as human beings' instinctive nature likes variety and change and dislikes mono-types.

Secondly, findings in relation to the second research question:

To answer the second question, reading: are there any differences in the methods of enhancing students' motivation for studying the Islamic Education domain at the university that can be attributed to the variables of 'gender', 'college type (humanisty or scientific)', and GPAs (good or less and very good or more)'? Means and St Ds to calculate the tendency for the Means differences were used. The three-way ANOVA was used to determine whether there was significant differences that could be attributed to the variables of: 'gender', 'college type, and GPAs. Results of this are shown in tables (4), (5) and (6).

Table 4. Means and St Ds for methods of enhancing motivation in the light of 'gender' and 'college type' variables

Gender	College	Means	St Ds
Male	Humanity	4.29	.53
	Scientific	3.97	.57
Female	Humanity	4.11	.55
	Scientific	4.11	.35

Table (4) indicates that colleges of humanity had the highest Mean: (4.29) with a St D (.53).

Means and St Ds for the methods of enhancing motivation were also calculated with the college type and GPAs variables. Table (5) shows the results of these.

Table 5. Means and St Ds for methods of enhancing motivation in the light of 'college type' and 'GPAs' variables

College	GPAs	Means	St Ds
Humanity	Good or less	4.35	.56
Scientific	Very good or more	4.10	.53
Humanity	Good or less	3.97	.47
Scientific	Very good or more	4.17	.62

Table (5) indicated that humanity college students set with an average of 'good or less' had the highest Mean: (4.35) with a St D of (.56).

In order to explore significance of the differences between the Means, the three-way ANOVA analysis was used. Table (6) shows the result of this analysis.

Table 6. The three-way ANOVA analysis results

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	6.891[a]	7	.984	3.598	.001
Intercept	3564.408	1	3564.408	1.3034	.000
Gender	.070	1	.070	.255	.614
College	.683	1	.683	2.496	.115
GPA	.003	1	.003	.012	.914
Gender * College	1.641	1	1.641	5.999	.015
Gender * GPA	.875	1	.875	3.198	.075
College * GPA	2.955	1	2.955	10.803	.001
Gender* College * GPA	.012	1	.012	.043	.836
Error	101.772	372	.274		
Total	6423.229	380			
Corrected Total	108.663	379			

Table (6) reveals that there are no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) level that can be attributed to the variables of 'gender': sig. (.614), 'college type': sig. (.115) or 'GPA': sig. (.914).

Interpretation of this can be, simply put, that the majority of the participants (sample of the study) are in agreement with the importance of taking such issues highlighted in the questionnaire and emphasized in this study's findings into consideration for enhancing students' motivation for studying the Islamic Education domain. Their points of view about the issue are consistently close.

The table reveals that there is no statistically significant difference that can be attributed to the variables of 'gender' or 'college type'. ' F' value was (5.999): a statistically significant value at ($\alpha=0.05$) level.

Table (4) shows that the difference is in favour of the male students and the humanity colleges: with a Means of (4.29) and St D of (.53).   This can be explained by the fact that the Islamic Education domain is originally within the humanity collages plan; and males are, generally speaking, more concerned with the Islamic Education domain than females.

Table (6) reveals that there is no statistically significant difference that can be attributed to the interaction between the two variables: 'college type' and 'students' GPAs'. ' F' value was (10.803): a statistically significant value at ($\alpha=0.05$) level.

Table (6) also shows that the difference is in favour of the humanity college student set with an GPA 'good or less': with a Means of (4.35) and St D of (.56).   An interpretation of this can be that students holding a GPA 'good or less' are more interested   (than other sets of

students) in enhancing their motivation for the Islamic Education domain hoping to consequently improve their GPAs.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings, the study recommends:

1. Teachers use a variety of teaching methods for the Islamic Education course, in order to enhance students' motivation for this domain.

2. Teachers continually reinforce their students in different ways to enhance their motivation for this domain.

3. Conducting further experimental and descriptive studies on students' motivation enhancement for this and other domains/modules taught at the university.

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