

# Pre-Service Teacher's Attitude during Study at the Institute of Teacher Education Based on Al-Zarnuji Thought

<sup>1</sup>Wan Hasmah Laili Wan Hamat, <sup>\*2</sup>Mohd Isa Hamzah, <sup>3</sup>Hafizhah Zulkifli

**ABSTRACT---** *Student teachers will be the determinants of future education of the country and it is important for them to absorb positive attitudes while learning. Constant attitude changes to a better direction are very important. Therefore, this study aimed to elaborate on the attitude towards learning based on Al-Zarnuji's thought which should be a practice and also to identify the current attitude among the students. The study used the methods of literature review and survey using questionnaires to obtain data. The data obtained were analyzed descriptively. A total of 30 teachers from the Central Zone Teacher Education Institute were randomly selected as respondents of the study. The findings showed that items 'came early to the class' (Mean = 4.20, sd = .610) and 'focus during the lectures' (Mean = 4.20, sp = .664) were the highest while the lowest learning attitudes was 'reviewing the lesson as soon as the class was over' (Mean = 3.50, sd = .861). The overall level of attitude of the students during the learning were at the moderately high level (Mean = 3.93, sd = .584) which meant that they demonstrated a positive attitude in acquiring knowledge as suggested by Al-Zarnuji. Al-Zarnuji's method of learning as a practice among student teachers should be widely disseminated and applied so that the student teachers produced are not only knowledgeable and skilled, but also have a positive attitude and wisely adapting to any change.*

**Keywords---** *Pre-Service Teachers, Attitude During Study, Al-Zarnuji.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Attitude is a behaviour practiced in the daily routine. Attitude is a reflection of a person whether they are good or not. Attitude assessment can only be measured by the actions because the attitude is abstract. Attitudes play a role in determining success and individual motivation to move forward and those two concepts have a close relationship (Fazlina & Aniza Suriati, 2017). Positive attitudes produce positive effects that are consistent. Generally, positive attitudes are formed from high desires and motivations and are built on knowledge that generate cognition and thus produce more effective practices and attitudes in a given situation (Ajzen, 1991).

Knowledge that generates cognitive and attitudes are influenced by religious values that are the important element in influencing attitudes (Foxall & Goldsmith, 1994). Therefore, it can be seen that attitude is very important in human practice and behaviour because attitude is a manifestation of knowledge that shapes one's thinking and thus generates the inner strength of one's motivation to perform something that has a positive impact. The connection between knowledge that shapes one's attitude is based on the element of religious values that is the essence of humanity.

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<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Education, National University of Malaysia.

<sup>2\*</sup> Faculty of Education, National University of Malaysia: isa\_hamzah@ukm.edu.my.

<sup>3</sup> Faculty of Education, National University of Malaysia.

Individuals who adhere to and practice religious values in their life clearly develop a positive attitude. This makes an individual in an organization as a role model. Therefore, attitude transformation is very important in maintaining consistent practice and changing towards a better attitude. Individuals who are constantly making changes for the better are excellent individuals as pointed out by Al-Ghazali (1994). Meanwhile, attitude is also associated with religious values especially Islam because in performing worship, consistent and earnest attitude is a reflection of those who adhere to Islamic teachings.

This view supports the views of previous researchers who believed that professional attitude is a reflection of Islamic personality, which means always ready for change, passionate, hardworking, earnest, wise in managing time and committed. These elements of professional attitude are very important to the education world. The power of education is undeniable by all the nations of the world, and it greatly influences the progress of a nation.

Teachers are the most influential people in the education world as compared to the administrators or management. This tendency is evident because teachers are the implementing agents who are always looked for by the community, especially their own students. Teachers' behaviours are the focus of attention, not only during teaching and learning but beyond the confines of the school (Tamuri et al., 2012). In short, maintaining a positive attitude when doing the job is important in promoting consistency of attitude. Realizing the importance of teachers' behaviour in influencing the learners and being the example for learners, the role of training institutes is very significant in implementing efforts to produce great teachers.

In order to meet these educational goals, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) is responsible to provide human resources for the country's development. To ensure that the chosen human resources are able to meet the needs and development of the country, the MOE has set the conditions for them to enter the teaching profession. Attitude, aptitude and personality are key indicators for choosing candidate teachers as the teacher quality is a key determinant of school-level effectiveness. This statement was highlighted by Al-Aroosi (1990) who called for a more careful consideration of teacher selection. The selection of teachers should prioritize those who appreciate the Islamic values and attitudes in line with the purpose of Islamic Education itself. Teacher preparation also needs to be organized systematically as the role of teachers in achieving national educational objectives is important and in turn enhances efforts to uphold the teaching profession.

The process of producing potential teachers begins as early as candidate selection until the end of the college training program. Students who attend the teacher training also undergo a learning process that emphasizes the components of attitude as well as the knowledge and skills they need. Teaching practice is a professional practice aimed at creating a positive attitude among student teachers. These positive attitudes are instilled within so that the resulting student teachers are resilience, competitive and creative as well as practicing professional values (Ali et al., 2015). The process of producing candidate teachers who are positive and practicing the professional teaching values is in line with the goals of the New Teacher Development Program (2015). Students who meet the educational objectives will be educated mentally and spiritually and the integration between those two elements is called integrated education.

This is also in line with the main goal of education that aims to change attitudes and behaviour. Therefore, effective learning is one that is capable of generating changes in attitude and behaviour. Changes of attitude according to Al-Ghazali (1994) is a form of lifelong learning, concentrating on learning, purifying the soul while

learning and most importantly to seek the pleasure of Allah Almighty. Therefore, ideal student teachers are those who are not only knowledgeable but also positive and constantly improving as well as always ready to learn new things in the education world. Students who are becoming teachers should have the characteristics of a good quality teacher upon completion of their training.

Previous studies clearly showed that the positive attitudes influence their career aspirations to be a teacher and make them highly motivated, perform well during the teaching practice, and committed to improving academic achievement. Great attitudes and personalities have been found to influence the quality of student teachers and create prestigious teachers towards the professionalism development and make a school effective (Ghani & Adnan, 2015) and further impact on the organization.

In addition, attitude is the key determinant of the future excellence in education even when it is updated from time to time (Karaman, 2017). Teachers who are able to adapt to the changes in education are effective teachers and will have an impact on the quality of education (Huda et al., 2016). Previous studies have given the impression that the goals, qualities and excellent impact of education begin with a positive attitude. This positive attitude stems from the knowledge while knowledge is based on religious values.

## **II. PURPOSES OF STUDY**

This study aims to;

1. Describe Al-Zarnuji's thoughts on the attitude that the student teacher should practice during their studies.
2. Identify the level of attitude of the students during their studies based on Al-Zarnuji's thought.

## **III. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study uses a literature review methodology that utilized articles and books related to Al-Zarnuji's thoughts and analysis of his thought that refer to attitudes and characters that student should practice. The study also used a survey to obtain the respondents' quantitative data as such approach is more structured and focused on the results in line with the objective of this study which aimed to look at the level of attitude during the study. Therefore, this study focuses only on the aspects of attitude during the studies and does not involve attitudes in other phenomena.

Through the survey, the researchers are able to collect data on phenomena that are not directly observable, specifically related to attitudes, beliefs, values, behaviours, habits, opinions, desires and ideas (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). This study involved 30 respondents consisting of students who are in the final semester of study. Respondents were randomly selected from the Central Zone Teacher Education Institute. Therefore, this study used questionnaires to obtain information and answers to the research questions. Data were analyzed descriptively using mean and standard deviation.

## **IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***1) Attitude While Learning Based on Al-Zarnuji's Thought***

Learning is a process of seeking knowledge. Without being manifested into practice, the knowledge learned becomes futile. Al-Ghazali emphasizes that knowledge gained should be practiced to develop '*al-insan al-Kamiil*'

or the perfect human. During the process of seeking knowledge, Imam Al-Zarnuji always emphasized that diligence is paramount in mastering knowledge. The powerful impact of education can only be achieved through the attitude of adopting the right learning method. Methods of learning as suggested by Al-Zarnuji are categorized as ethical and strategic. The ethical method encompasses spiritual elements and monotheistic approaches, while the strategic method involves steps in learning besides the opportunity to choose lessons, teachers and friends.

Al-Zarnuji emphasized that knowledge seekers should work hard and be fully diligent to embrace the knowledge. The passion for the endeavour is reflected in the students' willingness to be consistent, not showing that they are bored or tired, recording their own lessons in an effort to understand the content, reminding each other, discussing and solving problems in their lessons, and always be ready to record new knowledge. In addition to the characters, Al-Zarnuji emphasized the intention of learning or 'niyyah'. Intention is an important mechanism in driving the learning motivation of students (Abdullah, 2002) in addition to determining the quality of work and results (Daud, 2005). The intentions of learning have been listed by Al-Zarnuji in his work *Ta'lim Al-Muta'allim Tariq al-Ta'allum* which is manifested through behaviour, character and practice.

The strength of intentions, according to him is reflected in the behaviour of willingness, timely, persistent effort and doing useful things and perseverance in dealing with problems. In addition to these features, knowledge learners are also unaffected by the challenges and barriers when studying (Abdullah, 2002) and emotionally stable (Huda et al., 2016). This is the key factor in achieving success and objectives in life and suggested that knowledge seekers are better do discussion and exchange ideas compared to memorization without understanding the knowledge being learned. This advice is strongly encouraged because through discussion and exchange of ideas, there are elements of knowledge repetition and understanding.

Nevertheless, Al-Zarnuji always reminds us that the main objective in the pursuit of knowledge is to serve Allah SWT. That is why Al-Zarnuji's spiritual character value become the spiritual foundation of one's learning (Huda & Kartanegara, 2015). All behaviours and practices during the study should be done willingly, not expecting a reward, being calm and doing something to gain the pleasure of Allah Almighty (Al-Ghazali, 1994). Students with a genuine interest in learning will always strive to improve themselves by being holistically intelligent, having high motivation for learning, having great commitment during the learning and is good in managing the time (Huda et al., 2016). The characters analysis based on Al-Zarnuji's works are the characters suggested by the Islam thought. All of the features discussed are also in line with the educational goals that aimed for behaviour changes among students after the learning process.

The educational principles based on Al-Zarnuji's thought are still relevant in the modern education world. The consistency of Al-Zarnuji's ideas was so acceptable that it has attracted the attention of academic scholar such as Langgulung (1991) who suggested that Al-Zarnuji's book *Ta'lim Al-Muta'allim Tariq al-Ta'allum* was used as a reference and guidance by candidate teachers in understanding and practicing noble characters. Al-Zarnuji's thought about education is not only about transferring knowledge but also about developing character, values and skills. Therefore, Al-Zarnuji's character learning method is suitable to be implemented in the curriculum and is grounded in spiritual values as suggested by Nuriz and Awang (2017). The proposal, however, was becoming the goal of educationists of the 1980s so that Islamic identity becomes a school culture as a result of the Islamic Education curriculum development during that time.

The spiritual values in Islam are divine (*rabbani*), balanced between the world and the afterlife, universal and realistic. Therefore, values based on Islam remain and do not change under any circumstances despite the changing of time. Therefore, it can be concluded that the spiritual values in Al-Zarnuji's thought are very suitable to be integrated into today's educational activities as these values are based on the Quran and Al-Sunnah. That is why his thought are more consistent than the ideas of western philosophy that are constantly changing because they are based solely on thought without the guidance of revelation.

## **2) The Level of Attitude of Student Teacher during Learning**

Descriptive analysis found that the learning attitude that recorded the highest levels of practice among teachers were coming early to class because they adhered to the schedule (mean = 4.20, sd = .610) and always focused on teaching during lectures (mean = 4.20, sd = .664). This meant that students always gave priority to the aspects of time management and focused during the teaching and learning process. This behaviour not only fulfilled the religious demands of time management but also honouring the educators for making the teaching process effective.

Student teachers also practiced knowledge sharing with peers by reviewing and discussing the study content (Mean = 4.16, sd = .874). This practice was strongly encouraged to enhance understanding because knowledge requires understanding for it not to be misinterpreted. Attitudes to complete great quality assignments are also emphasized in the teacher education process so that the tasks could give new ideas to writing. This attitude was high (Mean = 4.16, sd = .791). Items 5 and 7 are the second highest in the study.

Furthermore, the attitude of student teachers who were always ready with the notebook was also high (Mean = 4.13, sd = .819) and this practice is highly encouraged to facilitate a student to quickly record new knowledge they gained. This is necessary because the memory of each individual was only temporary if the knowledge was not further revisited, discussed and understood in greater detail. In addition to coming to class early, student teachers were also found to be able to complete their assignments on time (Mean = 4.10, sd = .994), which was at a high level. In addition to demonstrating efficient time management, this attitude also reflects a high degree of discipline as the training process in the college is highly correlated with soft skills activities as well as other content based tasks.

Attitudes of constantly asking questions when they did not understand the content were also high (Mean = 4.06, sd = .739) and this indicated that students were always focused during the teaching and learning process. The attitude of always asking if you did not understand something or want to know something in depth should be a habit so that the knowledge gained was interpreted and understood correctly. On the whole, it can be seen that items 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 were at a high level and this reflects positive practices among student teachers who will inherit the world of teaching and education. Educators who have a positive impact on education would be able to ensure that the good quality of this country's education system remains for years to come.

However, there were also students' attitudes during learning which were at a moderately high level. The practice of taking notes after understanding the content of the lesson recorded (Mean = 3.93, sd = .784), seeking additional information on the content (Mean = 3.80, sd = .761), providing specific time for reviewing the lesson (Mean = 3.76, sd = .817), reading the content first before class starts (Mean = 3.60, sd = 1.03), and keeping updated notes (Mean = 3.53, sd = .899). The lowest recorded mean of learning attitude was the practice of reviewing the lesson immediately after the end of classes (Mean = 3.50, sd = .861) and this practice was also at a moderately

high level. Overall, the behaviors and practices of the student teachers throughout the training were at a moderately high level (Mean = 3.93, sd = .584), which meant that the student teachers were adopting the positive, holistic attitudes in acquiring knowledge as well as establishing a culture of ethical learning as suggested by Al-Zarnuji. The results of the descriptive analysis of students' attitudes towards learning can be referred to in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Descriptive analysis of students' attitude during learning

No.	Attitude of Learning	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
1	Come to class early according to the class time schedule.	4.20	.610	High
2	Be prepared with a notebook before class begins.	4.13	.819	High
3	Take notes after fully understanding the content.	3.93	.784	Moderately high
4	Review the lesson as soon as the class is over.	3.50	.861	Moderately high
5	Talk with friends about the content to enhance understanding.	4.16	.874	High
6	Complete assigned tasks on time.	4.10	.994	High
7	Complete the assignment perfectly / in high quality	4.16	.791	High
8	Reading the content first before class begins	3.60	1.03	Moderately high
9	Focus during the lectures	4.20	.664	High
10	Raise questions if they do not understand the content.	4.06	.739	High
11	Updating the note	3.53	.899	Moderately high
12	Find additional information on the subject content	3.80	.761	Moderately high
13	Devote time to review the lessons.	3.76	.817	Moderately high
	Overall mean	3.93	.584	Moderately high

Although the overall descriptive analysis showed that the students' attitude towards learning was at a moderately high level, the study found that the number of student teachers recorded the highest level were 13 (43.3%), 14 (46.7%) were at the moderately high level while 3 (10.0%) students were found to be at a moderately low level. This result can be seen in Table 2. Although the number of students at the moderately low level were minorities, it could also have an impact on education because according to the scholars' views and the findings of the previous studies showed that positive attitudes gave positive impacts while negative attitudes gave negative impacts. Therefore, it is very important that the positive attitudes towards learning and knowledge seekers best practices were deeply integrated into the teacher training program.

**Table 2:** Frequency distribution of students' attitude

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Moderately low	3	10.0
Moderately high	14	46.7
High	13	43.3

## V. CONCLUSION

Al-Zarnuji's educational thought emphasized on *akhlak* (moral) education that focused on learning methods that debated on the purpose of learning, the principles of learning, the strategies of learning that are based entirely on religious morality in the pursuit of religious values. He prioritized on characters while learning as an attempt to equip individuals with Islamic characteristics. He is focused on the aspects of personality, attitude and morals, which are the most important things in Islamic teaching.

Knowledge seekers should also have a high level of curiosity that drives one's inner motivation in order to discover new knowledge. These motivations will make the student more resilient and persistent when facing learning difficulties. Such high curiosity will also create a desire, a willingness to learn. This desire is accompanied by persistence to realize the purpose of learning, which leads to the change of attitude.

Al-Zarnuji's views of attitude should be practiced by scholars because the characters he discussed are of a contemporary nature even though he lived in the medieval era. Al-Zarnuji's paradigm of learning goes beyond time because his recommendations are relevant throughout the ages. The ideas proposed by Al-Zarnuji have been adopted even today although western scholars have introduced modern learning methods but have not been able to dispel the thoughts that are based on the Quran and Sunnah.

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