

**MUSLIM UNDERSTANDING OF PRAGMATISM AND
ITS APPLICATION IN MALAYSIA: A CRITICAL-
COMPARATIVE STUDY**

BY

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ABSTRACT

The development of the modern period is the result of globalisation, which has also impacted Malaysia, particularly its Muslim population. Some of the Western ideologies such as secularism, liberalism, and pragmatism have posed a significant challenge for Muslims in Malaysia. Despite some people being unaware of pragmatism, it is a major problem or issue that has affected the local Muslim life. Thus, there is a need to exercise caution when making decisions about practical matters, such as whether someone can benefit from a modern secular model of education. The main goal of this study is to explore views of certain scholars and practical uses of pragmatism in Malaysia. To achieve this, this research uses the method of content analysis and conducted through in-depth interviews with four Muslims from various backgrounds: two with an Islamic background and two with a non-Islamic background. The purpose is to demonstrate how Muslims in Malaysia have applied pragmatism to the issue at hand in different perspectives. This study's findings indicate that pragmatic ideologies are uncommon in Malaysia, but several participants were aware of them and did hold positive perspectives about it. However, it is reiterated by this research that these participants must still adhere to Islamic principles. Additionally, this study offers suggestions for Muslims in Malaysia on how to become conscious of these concepts and attempt to depart from them when necessary.



ملخص البحث

التطور في العصر الحديث ناتج عن العولمة، وقد أثرت هذه العولمة تأثيراً ملحوظاً على ماليزيا، خصوصاً على سكانها المسلمين. لقد شكلت بعض الأيديولوجيات الغربية مثل العلمانية والليبرالية والبرجماتية تحديات كبيرة للمسلمين في ماليزيا. على الرغم من أن الوعي بالبرجماتية محدود، إلا أنها تمثل مشكلة كبيرة أو قضية أثرت على حياة المسلمين. ينبغي على الباحثة الاحتراز عند اتخاذ قرارات تتعلق بالبرجماتية حتى تستفيد منها في النموذج التعليمي العلماني الحديث أو العكس. استكشف البحث آراء المفكرين والتطبيقات العملية للبرجماتية في ماليزيا. لتحقيق ذلك، اعتمد البحث على المنهج التحليلي، ومقابلات متعمقة مع أربعة مسلمين من خلفيات متنوعة: اثنين ذوي خلفية متدينية واثنين ذوي خلفية غير متدينية. والغرض من ذلك هو استظهار تطبيق المسلمين في ماليزيا لمفهوم البرجماتية. واستنتج البحث أن الأيديولوجيات البرجماتية ليست شائعة في ماليزيا، ولكن هناك بعض الأفراد في ماليزيا واعون بها من منظور إيجابي. ومع ذلك، يقترح البحث أن يتبع التابعون البرجماتية المبادئ الإسلامية. إضافة إلى ذلك، استظهر البحث طرق الوعي بهذه المفاهيم ومحاولة تجنبها عند الحاجة للمسلمين في ماليزيا.

ABSTRACT IN MALAY

Pembangunan moden masa ini adalah kesan daripada globalisasi dan perkara ini turut memberikan kesan kepada Malaysia, khususnya kepada populasi umat Islam. Ideologi Barat seperti sekularisme, liberalisme, dan pragmatisme merupakan halangan utama yang perlu ditangani oleh umat Islam di Malaysia. Pragmatisme adalah merupakan masalah atau isu utama yang memberi kesan kepada kehidupan umat Islam, walaupun ada yang tidak menyedari kewujudan ideologi ini. Dalam kajian ini, pengkaji perlu lebih berhati-hati dalam membuat keputusan-keputusan berkaitan perkara-perkara praktikal seperti adakah mungkin pengkaji akan mendapat manfaat daripada Model Sekularisme Moden dalam Pendidikan. Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk merungkai pandangan sarjana dan kegunaan praktikal bagi pragmatisme di Malaysia. Untuk mencapai matlamat kajian, kajian ini menggunakan metode Analisis Konten dan telah menemuduga empat umat Islam daripada pelbagai latar belakang: dua (2) orang daripada mereka daripada latar belakang pendidikan Islam dan dua orang lagi tidak mempunyai latar belakang pendidikan Islam. Tujuannya adalah untuk menunjukkan bagaimana cara umat-umat Islam di Malaysia mempraktikkan pragmatisme berhubung isu tersebut. Hasil dapatan kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa pandangan-pandangan pragmatisme ini tidak semuanya diamalkan di Malaysia, akan tetapi beberapa pengikutnya juga tahu dan mempunyai pandangan positif berkaitan ideologi ini. Bagaimana pun, kajian ini mencadangkan bahawa pengikut-pengikutnya perlu berpegang teguh kepada prinsip Islam. Tambahan lagi, kajian ini memberi beberapa cadangan untuk umat Islam di Malaysia tentang bagaimana untuk menyedari konsep-konsep ini dan cuba untuk meninggalkannya apabila perlu.

APPROVAL PAGE

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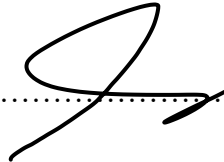
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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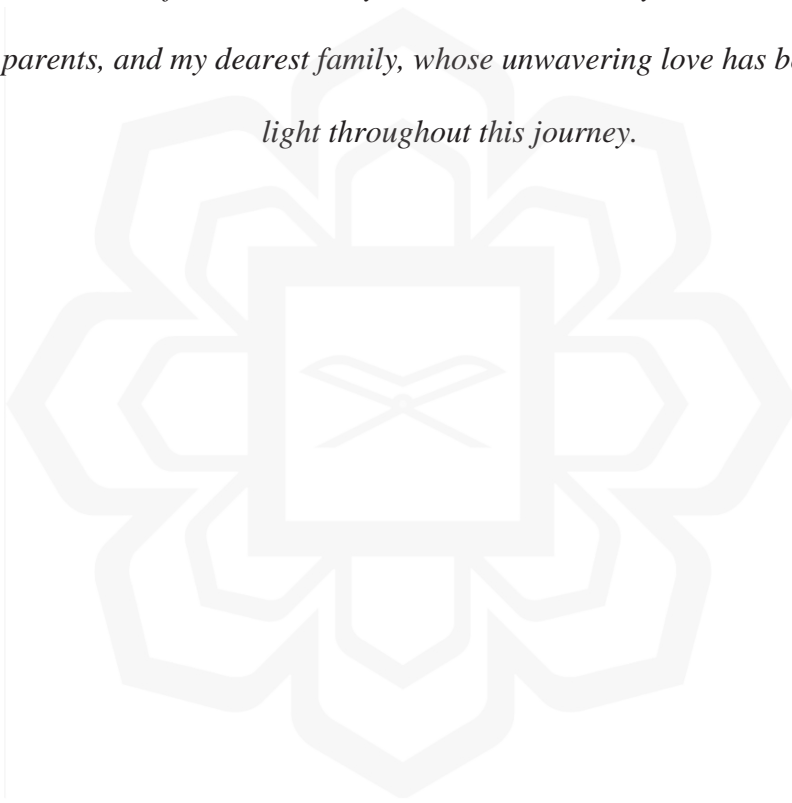
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This thesis is a heartfelt tribute to my beloved husband, my cherished son, Ferhat, my loving parents, and my dearest family, whose unwavering love has been my guiding light throughout this journey.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Arabic Abstract	iii
Abstract in Malay	iii
Approval Page	v
Declaration	vi
Dedication	vii
Acknowledgements	ix
Table of Contents	x
List of Tables	xiii
List Of Figures	xiv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Research Questions.....	4
1.4 Research Objectives.....	5
1.5 Significance of the Study.....	5
1.6 Scope of the Study	5
1.7 Research Methodology	6
1.7.1 Selected Respondents.....	6
1.7.2 In- depth Interviews	7
1.8 Literature Review	8
CHAPTER TWO: THE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES OF PRAGMATISM	17
2.1 INTRODUCTION	17
2.2 Definition of pragmatism.....	19
2.3 The Importance of Pragmatism	28
2.3.1 The Importance of Pragmatism for Education System	28
2.3.2 The Importance of Pragmatism for Communication	33
2.4 The Pioneers of Pragmatism.....	39
2.4.1 William James.....	40
2.4.1.1 Early Education and Works.....	40
2.4.1.2 Theories and Philosophies of William James.....	42
2.4.1.3 Contributions of William James	44
2.4.2 John Dewey	48
2.4.2.1 Life and Background of John Dewey	48
2.4.2.2 Early Education and Works.....	50
2.4.2.3 Philosophy of Education by Jon Dewey.....	51
2.4.2.4 Towards 21 st century of John Dewey	57
2.5 Conclusion	58
CHAPTER THREE: THE VIEWS OF muslim SCHOLARS ON PRAGMATISM	60
3.1 Introduction.....	60
3.2 Sayyid Qutb	61

3.2.1 Sayyid Qutb Milieu	61
3.2.2 Some Aspects of Sayyid Qutb's Career	62
3.2.3 Sayyid Qutb's Theories and Contribution	64
3.2.4 Sayyid Qutb on Education	67
3.2.5 Sayyid Qutb Thought on Modern Ideologies.....	68
3.3 Muhammad Iqbal Life's	70
3.3.1 Muhammad Iqbal life's	71
3.3.2 Iqbal's Career	72
3.3.3 Iqbal's Theories and Concepts of Islam.....	73
3.3.4 Iqbal and James on Pragmatism.....	75
3.3.5 Comparison between John Dewey and Iqbal on Education.....	76
3.3.6 Theory of Education:	78
3.3.7 Education's Goals	79
3.3.8 Curriculum	80
3.3.9 Teacher's Role and Methodology	81
3.3.10 Evaluation	82
3.3.11 Iqbal's Critic on Western thought.....	83
3.4 Pragmatism and Pragmatic from the Perspective of Islamic Worldview	84
3.5 Methodologies and Types of Pragmatism or Pragmatic for Muslim.....	87
3.6 Conclusions	92

CHAPTER FOUR: MODERN EDUCATION AND PRAGMATISM IN MALAYSIA.....93

4.1 Introduction.....	93
4.2 Concept of Modern Education.....	94
4.2.1 Education System in Malaysia.....	95
4.2.2 Islamic Education System in Malaysia	96
4.3 Pragmatic Issues and Challenges of Education in Malaysia	100
4.3.1 Education in Islam and The Malaysian Educational System	101
4.3.2 Methodologies in Malaysian Educational System and Its Issues	104
4.3.3 Background of the Respondents.....	107
4.3.4 Respondents' Pre- College Education.....	107
4.4 Significance and Applications of Pragmatism in Malaysia Education...	112
4.5 The Differences Between Islamic Education and Pragmatic Philosophy of Education.....	117
4.5.1 Principles of Islamic Education Vs Western Education	118
4.6 Conclusion	122

CHAPTER FIVE: CASE STUDY ON PERCEPTION OF PRAGMATISM IN MALAYSIA AND MALAYSIAN EDUCATION.....124

5.1 Introduction.....	124
5.2 Findings of the Study According to Research Questions	125
5.2.1 PART A: Characteristics of Pragmatism	125
5.2.1.1 Theme 1: Definition of Pragmatism (How would you define pragmatism?)	126
5.2.1.2 Theme 2: Connection of Pragmatism with other Western ideologies of Liberalism, Pluralism and Secularism.	126

5.2.1.3 Theme 3: (Freedom, Modernism and Non-Absolute truth) are the main elements of pragmatism and any other elements of pragmatism from Malaysian Perspective.	128
5.2.1.4 Theme 4: Opinions of some Muslim Scholars Regarding the Threats of Pragmatism.....	130
5.2.2 PART B: Pragmatism in Malaysia.....	131
5.2.2.1 Theme 1: Current issues led to the practice Pragmatism ..	131
5.2.2.2 Theme 2: Keep the Distance in Prayer during Covid-19...	132
5.2.2.3 Theme 3: Is Pragmatism the Best Way to Deal with current issues.	133
5.2.3 PART C: Application of Pragmatism in Education	135
5.2.3.1 Theme 1: Pragmatism a Good Alternative in Education...	135
5.2.3.2 Theme 2: Possible or Not Practice the ideas of pragmatism for the Malaysian Education	137
5.2.3.3 Theme 3: Suggestion for a better understanding and practice of Pragmatism in Malaysia Muslim Education.....	138
5.2.4 PART A: Characteristics of Pragmatism	139
5.2.4.1 Theme 1: Definition of Pragmatism	139
5.2.4.2 Theme 2: Connection of Pragmatism with the Western ideologies of Liberalism, Pluralism and Secularism	140
5.2.4.3 Theme 3: (Freedom, Modernism and Non-Absolute Truth) are the main elements of pragmatism and any other elements of pragmatism from Malaysia perspective	141
5.2.4.4 Theme 4: Opinions of some Muslim Scholars regarding the threats of Pragmatism.	142
5.2.5 PART B: Pragmatism in Malaysia.....	144
5.2.5.1 Theme 1: Current Issues led to Practice of Pragmatism....	144
5.2.5.2 Theme 2: Keep the Distance in Prayer during Covid-19...	145
5.2.5.3 Theme 3: Is Pragmatism the best way to deal with current issues.	145
5.2.6 PART C: Application of Pragmatism in Education	146
5.2.6.1 Theme 1: Pragmatism a good alternative in Education.....	146
5.2.6.2 drTheme 2: Possible or not practice the ideas of pragmatism for the Malaysian Education	149
5.2.6.3 Theme 3: Suggestion for a better understanding and practice of pragmatism in Malaysia Muslim Education.....	149
5.3 Conclusion	151
CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....	153
6.1 Introduction.....	153
6.2 Overall Findings of the Study.....	153
6.3 Suggestions and Recommendations	155
BIBLIOGRAPHY	159
APPENDIX I: NON- ISLAMIC BACKGROUND RESPONDENTS	174

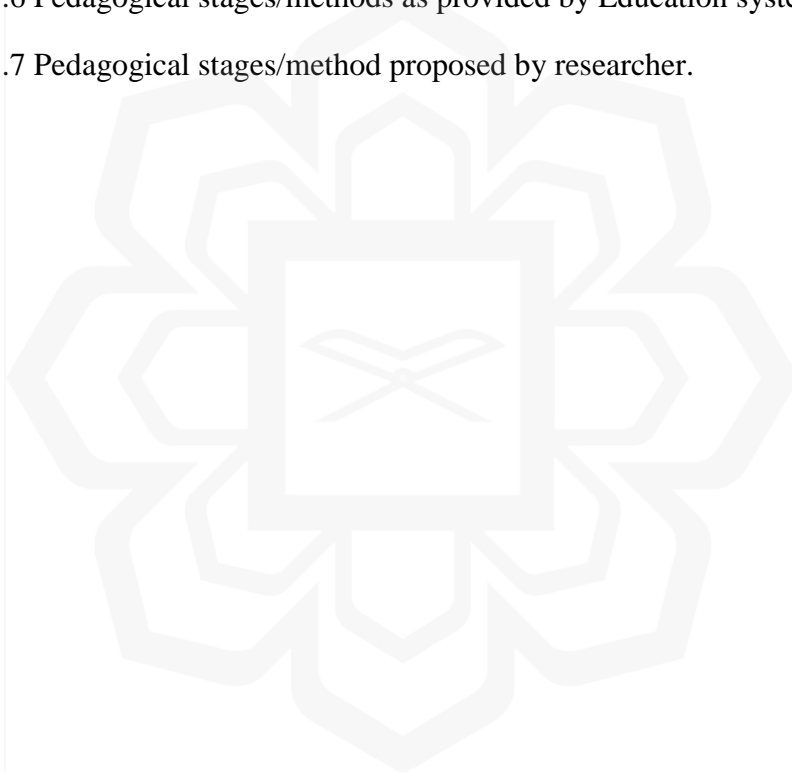
LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1 Number of respondents by gender	107
Table 4.2 Respondent's Pre- College Education	107
Table 4.3 Respondents' Answers to Selected 10 Questions	108



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 5.1 The Overall Decision from 4 of respondents regarding the pragmatism	143
Figure 5.2 The Curriculum of Western Universities	147
Figure 5.3 Al-Attas Curriculum of an Islamic University	147
Figure 5.4 The proposed curriculum of an Islamic University by Prof Rosnani.	148
Figure 5.5 The overall suggestion for the use of pragmatism in Malaysian Education system from respondents.	151
Figure 5.6 Pedagogical stages/methods as provided by Education system.	157
Figure 5.7 Pedagogical stages/method proposed by researcher.	158



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Globalisation has played an exceptionally important role in every area of human life, especially in cultural and religious dimensions. Apart from that, globalisation is increasingly affecting the lives of Muslims. Alongside this, pragmatism, one of the modern ideologies, is also influencing Muslims' lives.

Nowadays, most people have more freedom in every aspect of their lives. They are more focused on undertaking pragmatic measures from their perspective to achieve the objectives and results they aim for. Pragmatism, being a famous ideology in the modern world, has become very significant. People think it is important to be pragmatic in each aspect of life, such as politics, the state, and especially in terms of education. Today, pragmatism is regarded as a technique and a means to find answers to the questions of the ever-changing world and needs, especially in the Muslim community.

Pragmatism encourages people to think in a free, liberal, and non-sceptical way about everything. Apart from that, this concept makes people to believe in it that it produces good practices and results, as well as creating new beneficial values for individuals. Unfortunately, this ideology has influenced Muslim people and liberated them from the real Islamic worldview and values. It also creates confusion in a Muslim's life.¹

Moreover, the modern lifestyle has brought a new reform to a Muslim's life. Some scholars, such as Muhammad Iqbal, think it is relevant for Muslims to practice pragmatism. They can deal pragmatically with contemporary issues. According to them, most people depend on the concepts of rationalism, empiricism, and pragmatism, which are contradictory to the teachings of Islam.

¹ Kamal Azmi Abd. Rahman, Indriaty Ismail, Mohd Nasir Omar, Islam dan Pragmatisme William James (1842-1910) *e-jurnal penyelidikan dan Inovasi*, Vol. III, No. I. p.23-42 (2016) .

On the contrary, some other people, like ordinary individuals, think that pragmatism is like the concept of practice or pragmatics in Islam. For them, this ideology can be accepted depending on the interest and action of people. For example, in certain issues nowadays, like the decision not to pray at the mosque to avoid crowds because of some virus, individuals will act based on their opinion. Therefore, they take it for granted and later adopt it in their practices of daily life.

Research by some scholars, such as Rosnani Hashim, revealed that certain people supporting this ideology claimed that it brings a positive impact on people, especially in the aspect of education in Malaysia, where it is said to be able to improve the education system.² They argued that this ideology emphasises that experience teaches people how to live, and it has been proven.

In Malaysia, the ideology of pragmatism is said to be adopted into movies such as 'Muallaf,' written by Yasmin Ahmad, wherein one of the actors is described as holding to this ideology. The writer or producer focuses more on experience because it influences an individual's life. This film is a manifestation that such ideology of pragmatism, as related to experience, has been known to and adopted by people in Malaysia.

Apart from that, there is an article by Salma Ismail³ agreeing with pragmatism, whereby she opines that this ideology is beneficial for the education system in Malaysia, and it should be taught, especially to children, so that the children can be encouraged to learn, think, and make their own decisions without being enslaved by dogmatic thinking.

Moreover, according to Jeffrey Guhin⁴, to be a pragmatist simply means to be practical, not focusing on the ways of doing things but focusing on the goal itself. He argued that this ideology originated from Louis Menand's point of view, describing the

² Siti Arinah Tukiran, Ahmad Sunawari Long and Badrul Redzuan Abu Hassan, John Dewey's Pragmatism and Lifelong Learning as in the movie entitled "Muallaf", *International Journal of Islamic Thought*, Vol. 15 (2019).

³ Ibid

⁴ Jeffrey Guhin, *The Boundaries of Pragmatism in Muslim education: Comparing the Islamic Pedagogies of Sayyid Qutb and Fethullah Gulen*, (Critical Research on Religion 2020, p3)

trauma of the American Civil War, and later, it was adapted and used by people in the modern world.

To solve this problem, Islam has provided guidance for Muslims regarding this ideology and introduced a new methodology for better understanding among Muslims. Education, according to Islam, means that everything is directed towards the well-being of human life. As mentioned by renowned Muslim scholars such as Mawdudi, Qutb, and Asad, to develop and strengthen Muslims' understanding, the roots must be well-defined.

There is an urgent need to understand the impact of the pragmatism ideology, especially on Muslims' lives today. Secondly, it is important to analyse the issues and challenges from the perspective of the pragmatism ideology, including educational issues and other matters that can be considered as pragmatic for Muslim life.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Pragmatism has become one of the important ideologies nowadays. Some people practice it in their daily lives without considering its suitability from an Islamic perspective. The rapid progress of media and technology has changed the lifestyle of people to become more modern worldwide, including in Malaysia. The change in lifestyle has led Muslim people to be influenced by the pragmatism ideology. This is because people believe that this ideology is more practical and effective in solving problems, especially the contemporary issues faced by Muslims nowadays. The issues or problems that Muslims must face nowadays which are more complicated to those in the past and have become more complicated today. Due to this, it is argued that there is a need for Muslims to be more pragmatic, in line with the modern world, where sometimes the ideas are contradictory to Islamic worldview.

Furthermore, it is asserted that this ideology focuses on rationality and reason rather than revelation. Currently, in the Malaysian context, people are trying to integrate this ideology into education, politics, administration, and Islamic law. Through this integration, people try to align the concept of pragmatism with Islam in a practical way.

Consequently, the practice of pragmatism has led to the creation of another ideology known as pluralism, which claims that every religion contains an element of truth, and none has the absolute truth. The concept of God in this world is seen as plural, not singular. Other than that, relative truth will offer a subjective and personal interpretation of values, whereas the truth in Islam is not solely individualistic but includes the social life guided by the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Therefore, this phenomenon of pragmatism should be seen as a potential threat to the lifestyle of Muslim people in Malaysia. Islam has outlined certain boundaries for a good lifestyle, and transgression of these limits will affect one's faith. Despite this, some Muslims believe they can still be pragmatic about certain issues. In other words, people agree that the pragmatic view is valid, especially among those who lack comprehensive knowledge of Islam and Islamic law. This research, therefore, plans to investigate the implications of pragmatism on the life of Muslims and its impact on the practices of daily life as Muslims, especially in education.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics and features of pragmatism from the Western worldview?
2. How does Islam view pragmatism?
3. What are the views of selected Muslim scholars on pragmatism from the ideological and educational perspective?
4. How can pragmatism be applicable from the ideological and educational within the Malaysian context?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are:

1. To study the characteristics and features of pragmatism from the perspective of the Western worldview.
2. To analyse this ideology from an Islamic perspective.
3. To explore the views of selected Muslim scholars on pragmatism from ideological and educational perspective.
4. To apply pragmatism from ideological and educational within the Malaysian context.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is very significant. Firstly it identifies the effects of pragmatism on the lifestyle of Muslim in Malaysia. Secondly, it adds new insights into the existing literature on pragmatism, especially its application and impacts on the daily life of Malaysian Muslims. Thirdly, it provides awareness and better understanding of pragmatism as a concept for the Malaysian Muslims by looking into it from the perspective of Islam. Lastly, it explores the reader to views of Muslim scholars and the selected interviewees on Pragmatism on how to deal with it by avoiding its negative impact.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research will discuss the status, various issues, and views on pragmatism, as well as describe pragmatism from an Islamic perspective. The study will observe how pragmatism is applicable according to Islamic principles in the aspects of education and social life. It will also examine the implementation of pragmatism in some aspects of Muslims' lives. The discussion on the application of pragmatism among Muslims in tackling contemporary issues will be limited to analysing the views of Muslims who have Islamic and scientific or technical education backgrounds. They can elaborate

more on this topic, especially regarding education and pragmatism, providing a comprehensive view as a Muslim and educator.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study consists of two aspects: library research and interviews. This study is an analytical examination of the impact of pragmatism on the lifestyle of Muslims in Malaysia. Data will be collected from available primary and secondary sources, such as published books, theses, articles, encyclopaedias, journals, conference papers, and internet materials, on the subject of this research where the descriptive, analytical, critical, and comparative methods are employed. The second part, involves interviews with selected groups of people Islamic education, non-Islamic education, and technical or science backgrounds, who will provide information about the subject of this research in the light of the set of questions presented to them. It is an unstructured, open-ended interview divided into three sections: characteristics of pragmatism, pragmatism in Malaysia, and how pragmatism is applicable in the aspects of education. This is a descriptive and analytical study aiming to provide reliable and insightful conclusions regarding the issue of pragmatism and constructive suggestions to counter its impacts.

1.7.1 Selected Respondents

Four respondents will be selected, comprising individuals with backgrounds in Islamic studies, science, or technical education. The respondents are four lecturers from higher learning institutions in Malaysia. They are primarily chosen for their academic background and their understanding of this topic. Two of the respondents were selected based on their academic expertise in Islamic thought, while the other two were chosen from science, arts, and technical backgrounds.

1.7.2 In- depth Interviews

The researcher will conduct the interview herself, and conclusions will be drawn after listening to and analysing the recorded interview. The same set of questions will be asked of all respondents, regardless of the institution they are affiliated with.

Section 1: Characteristics of Pragmatism

1. How do you define pragmatism?
2. Do you agree that pragmatism is a Western theory with a strong connection to Western ideologies such as Liberalism, Pluralism, and Secularism?
3. Freedom, modernism, and non-absolute truth are the main elements of pragmatism. What are the other main elements of pragmatism from a Malaysian perspective?
4. Some scholars argue that Muslims should be aware of the threats of pragmatism. What is your opinion on that?

Section 2: Pragmatism in Malaysia

1. Current issues nowadays have led to practicing pragmatism in tackling certain issues in Malaysia. What is your comment on that?
2. During the height of the pandemic, Muslim people are not allowed to go to mosques and need to keep their distance if we are allowed to pray. Can this situation be described as pragmatic? What is your opinion?
3. There are Muslims in Malaysia who argue that pragmatism is the best way to deal with current issues in Malaysia now. What is your suggestion?

Section 3: Application of Pragmatism in Education

1. Can pragmatism become a good alternative for students in terms of education?

2. Is it possible for the Malaysian education system to adopt the ideas of pragmatism?
3. What would you suggest for better implementation and practice of pragmatism for Muslim education in Malaysia?

1.8 LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous studies have been conducted by Islamic scholars on the issue of pragmatism, but there is no clear explanation of the details regarding which areas and fields pragmatism has influenced within Muslim society, and whether it can be applied by Muslims. However, the author has managed to review several previous studies about this ideology, which will be explained in the next paragraph. Many of the articles concentrate on the education system. Some of these will be briefly reviewed to foster a better understanding of the issue at hand.

Aminuddin Hassan, Asmawati Suhid, Norhasni Zainal Abidin, Habsah Ismail, and Haziyah Husin, in their book "The Role of Islamic Philosophy of Education in Aspiring Holistic Learning,"⁵ mention that the concept of the philosophy of Islamic education can be explained from the perspective of philosophy, which includes pragmatism, metaphysics, and axiology, with logic as the tool. Pragmatism is a type of philosophy, like realism and essentialism. The book also discusses whether pragmatism can be applied by Muslims. Additionally, the authors explain the importance of education for the spiritual and physical aspects of Muslims. In line with this, the researcher believes that this kind of ideology should be applied throughout human life. This article can also be used as a reference for the implementation of pragmatism from an Islamic perspective in addressing education and social issues faced by people, as it offers a comprehensive and critical analysis of philosophical issues and their implementation in education from the Islamic viewpoint.

⁵ Aminuddin Hassan, Asmawati Suhid, Norhasni Zainal Abidin, Habsah Ismail and Haziyah Husin, The role of Islamic philosophy of education in aspiring holistic learning, (Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences 5, 2010, 2113).

Jeffrey Guhin⁶, in his article entitled "The Boundaries of Pragmatism in Muslim Education: Comparing the Islamic Pedagogies of Sayyid Qutb and Fethullah Gulen," explains the ideas and approaches of the two most important Muslim intellectuals in terms of Islamic pedagogy, namely Sayyid Qutb and Fethullah Gulen. This article can be used as guidance in understanding the basis of Islamic education and the philosophy of education. It also can serve as a foundation for a comparative study on the concept of pragmatism in teaching and how it relates to Islamic education.

Yusrat Hussain, Niaz Muhammad Aajiz, and Muhammad Idrees⁷ conducted a comparative study of John Dewey and Muhammad Iqbal as educationists, attempting to develop a sound social institution from education and analysing the methodologies introduced by John Dewey and Iqbal, who have different backgrounds and approaches. Based on the detailed analysis of their perspectives and approaches regarding the different aspects of the final aims of education, it was found that both scholars have their own value and cannot be justified to judge the value and soundness of other individuals' views, as Iqbal's ideas are similarly significant compared to the pragmatic approach of Dewey, who is a modern educational thinker of the highest rank.

Muhammad Iqbal Chawla and Aman Ullah⁸ presented a paper entitled "The Politics of Pragmatism in Pakistan: A Case Study of the Pakistan People's Party," which analysed the aspect of political pragmatism in Pakistan and the analysis of political parties in Pakistan. The paper provided some alternatives regarding pragmatism that can help political parties in Pakistan develop the country.

Ulrika Martensson⁹, in his writing "Islamic Order: Semiotics and Pragmatism in the Ikhwanul Muslimin?" explained the framework of Hassan al-Banna's political pragmatism by exploring the key concepts of the constitution of the Ikhwanul Muslimin. Additionally, the paper examined the hermeneutical dimensions from Hassan al-

⁶ Jeffrey Guhin, The boundaries of pragmatism in Muslim education: Comparing the Islamic pedagogies of Sayyid Qutb and Fethullah Gulen, (Critical Research on Religion 2020, p3).

⁷ Yusrat Hussain, Niaz Muhammad Aajiz and Muhammad Idrees, A comparative study of John Dewey and Muhammad Iqbal as Educationists, (Pakistan Journal of Distance & Online Learning, Volume:V, Issue I, 2019, 31-44).

⁸ Muhammad Iqbal Chawla and Aman Ullah, The politics of pragmatism in Pakistan: A case study of the Pakistan people's party (Pakistan Journal of History and Culture, Vol.XXXIX, No. 1, 2018).

⁹ Ulrika Martensson, "Islamic Order": Semiotics and pragmatism in the Muslim Brotherhood?, (Journal of Islamic Research, Vol. 9, Issue 1, 2015, pp. 35-37).

Banna's perspective and the concept of the Islamic order in uniting the Muslim community. However, more research, interviews, and comparative hermeneutics are required to test the present hypothesis of Ikhwanul Muslimin as the embodiment of pragmatism.

Zaid Ibrahim¹⁰, the author of the article "Pragmatism as a Guidance for Policy Makers," describing the political importance and benefits of pragmatism, asserted that it is actually a good idea for the political environment to be pragmatic rather than being tied to any doctrine or fixed principle related to political beliefs.

Ron Shaham¹¹, in his book "Rethinking Islamic Legal Modernism: The Teaching of Yusuf al-Qaradawi," elaborated on the legal thoughts of Yusuf al-Qaradawi, specifically his opinions on political and social issues. This book can be used as guidance for contemporary issues and their solutions. The book is very detailed and also outlines the 'Ijtihad' opinions of Yusuf al-Qaradawi regarding current issues in the world today.

Fauziah Nurdin¹², in a paper entitled "*Kebenaran Menurut Pragmatisme dan Tanggapannya terhadap Islam*," presented the view of pragmatism according to the Islamic perspective. The paper highlighted the concept of truth within the framework of the West and Islam. The author emphasised the truth based on the theories of subjective or deductive logic, and objective and inductive logic.

Mohd Ayob Abd Razip¹³, who wrote the article "*Kebebasan Versi Barat Belakangi Fitrah Insaniah*," explained the impacts of pragmatism, especially in Malaysia. According to one of the former Prime Ministers, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad,

¹⁰ Zaid Ibrahim, Pragmatism as a guidance for policy maker, <https://www.thestar.com.my/opinion/columnists/all-kinds-of-everything/2016/05/27/pragmatism-as-a-guiding-principle-for-policy-makers-in-a-highly-combative-political-environment-cons>. Retrieved Friday, 27 May 2020.

¹¹ Ron Shaham, *Rethinking Islamic Legal Modernism: The Teaching of Yusuf al-Qaradawi*, (2018, Google Books).

¹² Fauziah Nurdin, *Kebenaran menurut pragmatisme dan tanggapannya terhadap Islam*, (Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura, Vol. 13. No. 2, Februari 2014, 184-200).

¹³ Mohd Ayob Abd Razip, "Kebebasan versi barat belakangi fitrah" insaniah <https://www.bharian.com.my/rencana/komentar/2018/12/509627/kebebasan-versi-barat-belakangi-fitrah-insaniah>. Retrieved from December 16, 2018.

most people react based on their free will, therefore leading to misconduct, especially among Muslims.

Salma binti Ismail¹⁴, in her article "Matthew Lipman's Pragmatism and the Relevance of Philosophy for Children's (P4C) to Education in Malaysia," asserted that philosophy can work through education, especially by giving early exposure to children. Therefore, the author encouraged the involved parties in the Malaysian education system to introduce the pragmatism ideology to children and students so that they can learn to think and make their own decisions.

Pratima Chamling Rai and Rupen Lama¹⁵, in their paper "Pragmatism and Its Contribution to Education," explained that pragmatism needs to be applied in education and the real world. This paper described this ideology as an educational philosophy, emphasising that education should teach students practical life skills and encourage them to be comprehensively excellent.

Rosnani Hashim¹⁶, in her writing "Reviving Islam's Pragmatism in Muslim Education," opined that it is appropriate to integrate the element of pragmatism in education as one of the ways for developing the Muslim community intellectually. The author stressed that pragmatic approaches are urgently needed in Muslim education today.

NorAini Ismail¹⁷, in her study "*Pengaruh Falsafah Pragmatisme ke atas Pemikiran Pelajar Melayu Islam: Suatu Kajian di Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Victoria, Kuala Lumpur*," surveyed the views of some Muslim students regarding the ideology of pragmatism. This study revealed that this ideology has no direct influence on the students' lives, even though sometimes their actions correspond to the ideology

¹⁴ Salma binti Ismail, Matthew Lipman's Pragmatism and the Relevance of Philosophy for Children (P4C) To Children's Education in Malaysia, (Living Islam: Journal of Islamic Discourses, Vol. 3, June 2020, page 167-188).

¹⁵ Pratima Chamling Rai and Rupen Lama, "Pragmatism and its contribution to education", (International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts, Vol 8, 3 March 2020).

¹⁶ Rosnani Hashim, Reviving Islam's Pragmatism in Muslim Education, (Proceedings of the Xxii World Congress of Philosophy 37: 87-97).

¹⁷ NorAini binti Ismail, "Pengaruh Falsafah Pragmatisme ke atas pemikiran pelajar Melayu Islam: Suatu kajian di Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Victoria, Kuala Lumpur", (Jabatan Akidah dan Pemikiran Islam, Bahagian Pengajian Usuluddin, Akademi Pengajian Islam, Universiti Malaya, Sesi 2000/2001, Perpustakaan Universiti Malaya).

of pragmatism. This paper did not explain the details of whether this ideology is acceptable or not for Muslims. She stressed that Islam does not totally reject the ideas of pragmatism, as Islam allows its followers to practice “Ijtihad,” especially in solving various problems in the ever-challenging world nowadays. This provides a different view of the pragmatism ideology.

M. Shahid Alam¹⁸, in his writing "Pragmatic Arguments for Belief in the Qur'an," explained how people use pragmatic ideas to present arguments for belief in the Qur'an, which can be concluded as one of the examples of pragmatic ideas acceptable by Muslims.

Riza Zahriyal Falah¹⁹, who authored a paper entitled "*Landasan Filosofis Pendidikan Perspektif Filsafat Pragmatisme dan Implikasinya dalam Metode Pembelajaran*," asserted that pragmatism needs to be emphasised in education. It is explained that through pragmatism, schools can become a place for learners to gain meaningful experience in life, in addition to the life experience gained outside school.

Nicholas Danforth²⁰, through his paper entitled "Ideology and Pragmatism in Turkish Foreign Policy: From Atartuk to the AKP," described the use of the pragmatism ideology in terms of politics. The author explained that this ideology can reshape Turkey's foreign policy towards Europe and Middle East countries. Although it did not give a clear explanation on whether pragmatism is acceptable or not in Islam, the author concluded that this ideology works when it comes to foreign policy.

Mohzhdeh Noormohammadiyan, Shamsadin Hashemi Moghadam, Faezah Nateghi²¹ conducted a study entitled "The Components of Richard Rorty's New-Pragmatic Educational Philosophy and Islamic Educational Philosophy," which focused on the education system and the pragmatism ideology. The authors explained that the

¹⁸ M. Shahid Alam, Pragmatic Arguments for belief in the Qur'an, (Northeastern University Boston, July 26, 2011).

¹⁹ Riza Zahriyal Falah, "Landasan filosofis pendidikan perspektif Filsafat Pragmatisme dan Implikasinya dalam metode pembelajaran", (Elementary, Vol. 5, NO. 2, July- December 2017).

²⁰ Nicholas Danforth, Ideology and pragmatism in Turkish foreign policy: from Atartuk to the AKP, (Turkey page at the project on Middle East Democracy, Turkish policy quarterly, Washington, DC.)

²¹ Mohzhdeh Noormohammadiyan, Shamsadin Hashemi Moghadam, Faezah Nateghi, The components of Richard Rorty's new-pragmatic educational philosophy and Islamic educational philosophy, (Iranian journal of educational Sociology, Volume No 1, July 2016).

new pragmatism proposed for education did not work well for Iran. Additionally, it was mentioned that the new pragmatism cannot be a basis for educational philosophy. In this paper, the authors mentioned that there is no new philosophical approach for education and did not explain the details of whether it is suitable or not for Muslims.

Muhammad Abid Ali²², in his paper "Islamic and Western Education Systems - Perceptions of Selected Educationists in Malaysia," provided views on the impacts of pragmatism on Western education systems from Muslims' point of view. There were interview sessions conducted to gather opinions from the perspective of Muslims in Malaysia on the matter. However, this research did not cover the important question of how educationists in Malaysia recognise the transformation from Western to Islamic education systems in the Muslim life.

Omar M. Khasawneh, Ruba M. Miqdadi, Abdulhakeem Y. Hijazi²³ wrote an article entitled "Implementing Pragmatism and John Dewey's Educational Philosophy in Jordanian Public Schools," which focused on the partial implementation of pragmatism in Jordanian schools. Based on the opinions from the Jordanian teachers interviewed, it was concluded that pragmatism was moderately implemented in the Jordan education system.

Another literature on pragmatism reviewed was a paper by Amira Athira Azman, Sameer Kumar²⁴ entitled "Asean's Principled Pragmatism and the Evolving Normative Security Strategy on the South China Sea." This paper described the application of the concept of principled pragmatism in solving issues regarding their security system.

Sami Pihlstrom²⁵, in his book entitled "A Pragmatist Approach to Religious Realism, Objectivity, and Recognition," explained how pragmatism contributes to

²² Muhammad Abid Ali, Islamic and Western Education Systems- Perceptions of selected Educationists in Malaysia, (Journal of education and educational development, Vol. 3 No.2, December 2016).

²³ Omar M. Khasawneh, Ruba M. Miqdadi, Abdulhakeem Y. Hijazi, Implementing Pragmatism and John Dewey's educational philosophy in Jordanian public schools, (Journal of Internasional Education Reserach, First Quater 2014, Vol 10, NO. 1).

²⁴ Amira Athira Azman, Sameer Kumar, Asean's principled Pragmatism and the evolving normative security strategy on the South China sea, (AEI Insights, Vol 4, Issue 1, 2018).

²⁵ Sami Pihlstrom, Pragmatic realism, religious and Antitheodicy, (Helsinki University Press, JStor, Chapter 1).

Downloaded 17 May 2021, <https://about.jstor.org/terms>

realism, especially in the philosophy of religion and theology. The author also mentioned that some pragmatists' ideas indirectly related to realism are not relevant to it. It was concluded that pragmatism should be taken seriously in the aspects of religion, ethics, and politics to make a difference in the ways of how humans live in this world.

Monzer Kahf, Amiirah Nabee Mohomed²⁶ wrote an article entitled "The Principle of Realism in Islamic Finance." This journal focuses on the concept of realism. The authors explain how to apply the principle of realism in accordance with *Shariah* and discuss its implications for Islamic finance. The paper clearly states that some principles should be observed in profit or return transactions, as some transactions are not *Shariah*-compliant. Therefore, the authors assert that there are transactions that cannot be applied by Muslim people when dealing with this matter.

Ayman Nazzal²⁷ presented a paper, "The Pragmatic Functions of the Recitation of Qur'anic Verses by Muslims in their Oral Genre: The Case of Insha'Allah, 'God's Willing.'" The author explains how pragmatism works in the case of Insha'Allah based on the Qur'anic verses. This study is significant in showing how Muslims can apply this Quranic phrase in dealing with certain issues in life.

Adeeb M. Jarrah, Omar M. Khasawneh, Yousef Wardat²⁸, in their paper "Implementing Pragmatism and John Dewey's Educational Philosophy in Emirati Elementary Schools: Case of Mathematics and Science Teachers," explain the importance of the relationship between philosophy and education. The authors mention that pragmatism is used to measure the effectiveness of Mathematics and Science subjects throughout the learning process for both private and public schools. The authors also suggest that research on other issues related to pragmatic philosophical educational thoughts should be conducted.

²⁶ Monzer Kahf, Amiirah Nabee Mohomed, The principle of Realism in Islamic Finance, (Journal of Islamic Economics, Banking and Finance, Vol 12, No 3, July- September, 2016).

²⁷ Ayman Nazzal, The Pragmatic functions of the recitation of Qur'anic verses by Muslims in their oral genre: The case of Insha'Allah, 'God's Willing', (International Pragmatics Association, 2005).

²⁸ Adeeb M. Jarrah, Omar M. Khasawneh, Yousef Wardat, Implementing pragmatism and John Dewey's educational philosophy in Emirati elementary schools: Case of mathematics and science teachers, (Int. J. Education Economics and Development, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2020).

Fazleensafina²⁹, in her article entitled “Institusi Fatwa Perlu Pragmatik, Diberi Pengiktirafan Berdepan Isu Umat Islam,” emphasises the need for a pragmatic approach to solve contemporary issues in Muslims’ lives. The author stresses that religious authorities, especially the fatwa institution, need to be more practical in addressing current issues.

Raudlotul Firdaus bt Fattah Yasin and Mohd Shah Jani³⁰ conducted a study entitled “Islamic Education: The Philosophy, Aim, and Main Features,” focusing on the Islamic education system and its objectives in comparison with the current secular philosophy of education. The authors suggest that any modern education system needs to be revised according to Islamic principles.

Yusef Waghid³¹ wrote a book entitled “Ta’aruf as a Philosophy of Muslim Education: Extending Abu Bakr Effendi’s Pragmatism,” which describes the views of the prominent educational philosopher regarding pragmatism in education. The author explains how the views from this scholar contribute to Muslim education through his scholarly methodology.

Muin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan³² presented a paper entitled “Philosophy of Education in View of the Pressing: Muslim Requirement in the Islamic and World Perspective,” in which he mentions that any matters regarding Muslim education must be in accordance with the values and principles outlined by the religion throughout the education process. Therefore, Muslims need to be critical and conscious in finding the appropriate education system that educates them comprehensively and correctly.

²⁹ Fazleensafina, Institusi fatwa perlu pragmatik, diberi pengiktirafan berdepan isu umat islam, <https://ismaweb.net/2021/04/16/institusi-fatwa-perlu-pragmatik-diberi-pengiktirafan-berdepan-isu-umat-islam/>

Retrieved April 16, 2021.

³⁰ Raudlotul Firdaus bt Fattah Yasin, Mohd. Shah Jani, Islamic Education: The Philosophy, Aim and main Features, (International Journal of Education and Research, Vol. 1 No. 10 October 2013).

³¹ Yusef Waghid, Ta’aruf as a philosophy Muslim Education: Extending Abu Bakar Effendi’s Pragmatism, (African Sun Media under the SUN Press imprint, first edition, 2020)

³² Muin-Ud-Din Ahmad Khan, Philosophy of Education in view of the pressing: Muslim requirement in the Islamic and World Perspective, (IIIUC STUDIES), Vol 9, December 2012).

Zahid Shahab Ahmed³³ wrote a paper entitled “Idealism Versus Pragmatism in Teaching Peace in Pakistan,” analysing the approaches of Western philosophy in the education system of Pakistan. The author explained that the element of peace education needs to be emphasised in education to curb the spread of extremist ideologies among learners in Pakistan.

Abdullah Sahin³⁴, in his paper entitled “Critical Issues in Islamic Education Studies: Rethinking and Western Liberal Secular Values of Education,” asserts the need for the education system to be revised by harmonising the relevant Islamic and Western higher educational values, concepts, and academic framework.

All these reviewed articles stress the importance and significance of pragmatism in Muslims’ life, especially in the field of education. After a thorough review of the relevant articles, it appears that so far, there is no single study focusing on how pragmatism can be implemented by Muslims in accordance with Islamic principles, as mentioned above, from the side of social life especially. This study attempts to fill that gap in the literature.

³³ Zahid Shahab Ahmed, *Idealism Versus Pragmatism in Teaching Peace in Pakistan*, (Peace Review, A Journal of social Justice, 27 December 2018).

³⁴ Abdullah Sahin, *Critical Issues in Islamic Education Studies: Rethinking and Western Liberal Secular values of Education*, (Religions 2018, MDPI, 30 October 2018).

CHAPTER TWO

THE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES OF PRAGMATISM

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The term pragmatism, in general, means practicality in every action based on people's interests. The concept of pragmatism primarily focuses on human and social practice. The concept of pragmatism became globally known in the mid-nineteenth century alongside new developments in science. Pragmatism has significantly impacted other fields, including philosophy, science, arts, and literature, for many decades since its establishment.

Historically, the idea of pragmatism came into existence during the time of the post-Civil War in the United States of America. Such a concept had led to extreme ways of thinking about the future in all aspects, such as how citizens would live, how they should be educated, how they can express their opinions, and how they can possibly react in terms of the political process. Nowadays, pragmatism is globally advocated irrespective of geographic, cultural, or historical context. It is being used to address human practice in any situation.¹

According to Ormerod², the word 'pragmatism' is derived from the Latin and Greek word *pragmaticus* or *pragmatikos*, which carries the meaning of deed. He listed the dictionary definitions of the word pragmatism as follows: (1) a pragmatic attitude or procedure; (2) a philosophy expounded notably by CS Peirce and William James that evaluates assertions solely by their practical consequences and bearing on human interests. Also, he listed the difference between the meaning of pragmatic and practical. According to him, pragmatic is: (1) dealing with matters regarding their practical requirements and consequences; (2) treating the facts of history with reference to their practical questions; (3) history of or relating to the affairs of the state; (4a) concerning

¹ Barbara Simpson, Pragmatism: A Philosophy of practice, In Cassell, Cunliffe & Grandy (eds), (SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Business and Management Research Methods), History and Traditions, Vol 1, 2018.

² Richard Ormerod, The History and Ideas of Pragmatism, (Journal of the Operational Research Society), August, 2006.

pragmatism (b) meddlesome (c) dogmatic. On the other hand, practical is: (1) concerned with practice or use rather than theory, (2) suited to use or action; designed mainly to fulfil a function (3) (of a person) (a) inclined to action rather than speculation: able to make things function well; (b) skilled at manual tasks.(4a) that is such an effect, though not nominally (to all practical purposes) (b) virtual (in practical control).(5) feasible, realistic: concerned with what is actually possible (practical politics; practical solutions).³

Moreover, the word practical, according to Ormerod, comes from the French word *pratique* or Latin *practicus*, which has Greek origin carrying the meaning of action. In terms of philosophical discourse, the word pragmatic refers to the branch of linguistics. Apart from that, the word pragmatism has also been used as pragmaticism to refer to communication theory.⁴

The term pragmatism was first introduced by Peirce through the phrase "Pragmatic Maxim of Meaning," which was later popularised by James as pragmatism. As explained by James and Peirce, pragmatism is not a new philosophical concept but a renewed one. In certain cases, there are differences between James's and Peirce's ideas of pragmatism. For example, James gave a broader interpretation of the concept of pragmatism compared to Peirce. Apart from these two people, there was another philosopher known as John Dewey who introduced philosophy on a wider scale. In general, Peirce only focused on logic, semiotics, and so on, while James' concern was more towards the philosophy of religion, science, and metaphysics. However, Dewey combined both of their views and introduced the ideas of pragmatism in education, social, and political philosophy.⁵

There are several scholars associated with the ideology of pragmatism. The most famous and important classical pragmatists are Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, and John Dewey, while the two significant neo-pragmatists are Richard Rorty and Susan Haack. Historically, pragmatism became mostly inactive, particularly in the United

³ Richard Ormerod, "The History and Ideas of Pragmatism", *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, August, (2006).

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Susan Haack, The meaning of Pragmatism: The Ethics of Terminology and the Language of Philosophy, (Teorema), Vol. XXVIII/3, 2009, pp. 9-29.

States, where the political atmosphere made it dangerous to engage with themes that could be viewed as subversive in terms of social-political leanings. However, Rorty restored its great influence by introducing his philosophy of pragmatism in 1979 through his book, "Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature."⁶ As for another scholar, Susan Haack, she was greatly influenced by Peirce and focused on the application of the philosophy of pragmatism in law and the scientific method.

This chapter attempts to evaluate the development of pragmatism from the Western worldview, which is closely connected to the Muslim application, especially in Malaysia. The aim is to identify how Western scholars apply the term pragmatism and its essential characteristics in this modern world. This will provide a clearer perspective on the methods applied by the scholars of pragmatism from different backgrounds and ideas, including William James and John Dewey.

2.2 DEFINITION OF PRAGMATISM

As explained earlier, this ideology is a contribution of American thought to the field of philosophy. There are several philosophers who are regarded as the pioneers or founders of this philosophy. As known by many, Peirce (1839-1914) was the first one who introduced this ideology, which was later popularised by James (1842-1952) and other major early philosophers such as John Dewey (1859-1952) and George Herbert Mead (1863-1931).⁷ Above all, James is the most familiar one, and some people regard him as the founder of pragmatism. Even though his ideas of pragmatism were criticised by many, including Peirce, he was held responsible for globalising the ideology of pragmatism.

Peirce asserted that James misunderstood his definition in terms of the actual concept rather than the conceivable conduct. Apart from Peirce, James's idea of

⁶ R. Burke Johnson, Cornelis de Waal, Tres Stefurak and David Hildebrand, *Understanding the Philosophical Positions of Classical and Neo Pragmatists for Mixed Methods Research*, (KZfSS Kölner Zeitschrift Für Soziologie Und Sozialpsychologie), 69 (2), 63-86. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11577-017-0452-3>

⁷ Eugene Halton, *Pragmatism*, (Encyclopedia of Social Theory. George Ritzer, ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications), 2004.

pragmatism was also condemned by European scholars such as Georg Simmel, Emile Durkheim, and Max Horkheimer, who argued that James's ideas would lead to confusion between the “pragmatic” and the “practical” by emphasising the “cash value of an act.”⁸

Moreover, according to Halton, the four earlier pragmatists—Peirce, James, Dewey, and Mead—introduced pragmatism by focusing on the aspect of biology in human conduct, except for Rorty. Peirce, Dewey, and Mead explored the theories of pragmatism beyond conventional signification, while Rorty described that people are absolutely affected by socialisation.

The difference of opinion between Peirce and James regarding the account of truth or concept is important. For Peirce, the account of truth refers to the end or ‘limit’ of inquiry, while James used a different instrument to measure the concept of truth. In addition, there are some opinions supporting Peirce’s ideas regarding pragmatism and its verifiability theory of meaning. Both scholars discussed the reconciliation between the tough and the tender-minded or idealistic, which, in the first place, was introduced by Peirce. Compared to James, Peirce argued that any claim for the principle of pragmatism needs to be defined by any verbal expression different from the observations or experiences towards certain actions and consequences.⁹

Therefore, it is a normal and proper way to formulate this idea into the form of a verifiability theory. This is to stress that a certain action leads to a specific result based on observations or experiences. Then, the meaning of any statement regarding the same issues can be verified by its own consequences. Also, it can be summarised that pragmatism refers to the consideration of an action’s relevance and practical consequences.¹⁰

⁸ Ibid, p.2.

⁹ Richard Ormerod, *The History and Ideas of Pragmatism*, (Journal of the Operational Research Society), August, 2006

¹⁰ Ibid

Besides that, there is another definition of pragmatism, whereby it is illustrated as a bridge between materialism and idealism. This understanding of pragmatism is attributed to a critical situation that occurred during 1870 in the United States, where many people from Europe migrated to America, leading to the emergence of the idea of pragmatism. This idea of pragmatism had a significant impact on society and education during that time.¹¹ For example, in terms of education, pragmatism led to a focus on practical and useful skills development among children.

This philosophy of pragmatism has also led to the introduction of the service-learning philosophy, which was introduced by one of the founders of pragmatism, John Dewey. Generally, John Dewey's ideas and contributions are considered more significant in the field of education compared to the field of pragmatism itself. There are four concepts in the practice of pragmatism. Firstly, any idea or learning starts with uncertainty and can be arguable. Secondly, decisions can be derived from any assumption. Thirdly, actions related to uncertain things or doubts direct subsequent thought. Lastly, knowledge itself is related to people's lives and consequences, as well as the social life of others.¹²

John Dewey advocated the idea of the value of experience compared to other pragmatism scholars in understanding the concept of reality. Dewey described that humans do things by reflecting on the events experienced in life. According to him, an action can be measured based on the consequences, but it can be changed depending on the worldview and socially shared sets of beliefs.¹³

William James incorporated the idea of pragmatism into the field of psychology by introducing the concept of "stream consciousness" to explain his theory of truth.¹⁴ Beyond psychology, pragmatism holds significance for doctoral projects, implying that

¹¹ Dipankar Das, Kangkana Nath, Violeena Barman, Barsha Hazarika, (Pragmatism: The Interpretation of C.S. Peirce, William James And John Dewey), Journal of Critical Reviews, Vol 7, Issue 03, 2020.

¹² Harry Clark maddux, Deborah Donnett, (John Dewey's Pragmatism: Implications for Reflection in Service-Learning), Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, Appalachian State university, Spring 2015, pp. 64-73.

¹³ Vibha Kaushik and Christine A. Walsh, (Pragmatism as a Research Paradigm and Its Implications for Social Work Research), Social Sciences, MDPI, 8, 225, 2019.

¹⁴ Lapoujade David, Thomas Lamarre, (William James: Empiricism and Pragmatism), Research Gate, Januari 2020.

some research projects on organisational processes can be evaluated using this epistemological framework in terms of the inquiry process and research practicality. To support this perspective, the Western scholar Morgan concluded that, based on Dewey's contributions, classical pragmatism can be valuable in various areas of thought, philosophy, education, psychology, and politics.¹⁵

Apart from its significance in discussing the theory of truth and reality, pragmatism can also be explored in terms of attitude. This was thoroughly examined by Martela¹⁶, who delved into the idea of pragmatism as an attitude by scrutinising the perspectives of classical pragmatists such as James, Dewey, and Peirce. The discussion of a pragmatist attitude can be illustrated through James's definition of pragmatism, Dewey's concept of the temper of mind, and the insights provided by Louis Menand in his book, "The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America."¹⁷ Additionally, Erkki Kilpinen, in his discussion of pragmatism and attitude, argued that some non-pragmatist scholars incorrectly interpret habit and action as elements of pragmatism. According to him, in the context of pragmatism, action does not denote routine character; rather, it is the process character of human action. This is because, within pragmatism, action is seen as an ongoing process rather than a series of discrete, instantaneous activities.

In the discussion of the concept of attitude, Martela highlighted that pragmatism has also been applied to ethics and morality, as noted by Kilpinen. However, non-pragmatists argue that this application is inappropriate, contending that it cannot be practiced within the principles of pragmatism as it might result in immediate behaviours, leading to confusion for them.

Furthermore, pragmatism has been labelled as a mediating philosophy, as described by James. The purpose of this philosophy is to reconcile conflicts, particularly in the realm of religion. This concept of pragmatism aids individuals in discerning the

¹⁵ Leanne M Kelly, Maya Cordeiro, (Three Principles of Pragmatism for Research on Organizational Processes), *Methodological Innovations*, SAGE, May-August 2020, p 1-10.

¹⁶ Frank Martela, *Pragmatism as an attitude Action*, Action, Belief and Inquiry, Pragmatist Perspective on Science, Society and Religion, Edited by Ulf Zackariasson, (Nordic Pragmatism Network), page 187-208, Part IV, Helsinki 2015.

¹⁷ Frank Martela, *Pragmatism as an attitude Action*, Action, Belief and Inquiry, Pragmatist Perspective on Science, Society and Religion, Edited by Ulf Zackariasson, (Nordic Pragmatism Network), page 187-208, Part IV, Helsinki 2015.

good and bad in life when faced with challenges and scepticism in religion. This concept has been well-received, predominantly by Anglo-Americans over the last decades, in addressing issues related to the belief system in God or sceptical theism. For instance, pragmatism prompts discussions on whether the existence of God can be rationally measured or not.¹⁸

Similarly, Sami Pihlstrom¹⁹ applied the concept of pragmatism in examining religious matters, such as the objectivity and rationality of religious belief. Pihlstrom finds pragmatism useful for the study of religions, contending that it is not a general philosophy but can be specifically implemented in understanding the philosophy of religion. He discusses his idea by exploring Jamesian pragmatic pluralism in the philosophy of religion and the crucial Kantian background of pragmatism. Pihlstrom identifies two key "promises" of pragmatism in religion: "epistemic interest" and "existential interest." In the realm of religious affairs, the presence of pragmatism has paved the way for new sub-disciplines, such as the history of religions and philosophy of religions.

Furthermore, pragmatism is also examined in terms of business ethics. Some scholars argue that pragmatism has fostered the positivist and managerialist line in business ethics, while others assert that pragmatism is not only significant for business ethics but also encompasses the stakeholder theory. In the field of business, the work of Dewey has become the primary reference for pragmatism, as described by Commager, Stever, and Thayer:

“More fully than any other philosopher of modern times, Dewey put philosophy to the service of society... The ends he sought were public, not private. Truth was, to him, not merely what worked for the individual but what worked for the group, and it was to be achieved by cooperative action.”²⁰

¹⁸ Ulf Zackariasson, *A Skeptical Pragmatic Engagement with Skeptical Theism*, Action, Belief and Inquiry, Pragmatist Perspective on Science, Society and Religion, Edited by Ulf Zackariasson, (Nordic Pragmatism Network), Part IV, page 109-130, Helsinki 2015.

¹⁹ Sami Pihlstrom, *A Skeptical Pragmatic Engagement with Skeptical Theism*, Belief and Inquiry, Pragmatist Perspective on Science, Society and Religion, Edited by Ulf Zackariasson, (Nordic Pragmatism Network), Part IV, page 131-156, Helsinki 2015.

²⁰ Max Visser, (Pragmatism, Critical Theory and Business Ethics: Converging Lines), *J Bus Ethics* 156, Springer, 2019, p. 45-57.

This approach to studying pragmatism for business ethics, however, has limitations for some individuals, as it only considers a specific circumstance in business ethics. Meanwhile, others go beyond this boundary. Dewey developed this viewpoint because, he claimed, he cared about people.

Peirce²¹ introduced a thinking method known as the "Method of Right Thinking," in which his idea is used as a guideline for making correct decisions or judgments using three logical forms: abduction, deduction, and induction. This process is assumed to be helpful for people in making good decisions to steer their lives better. Through pragmatism, people's minds are more focused on logical and practical ideas, as opposed to utilitarianism, which propagates the idea of maximising pleasure. This can be seen in the discussion of public theology, where a pragmatic approach can be applied to address the issues of moral challenges and religious pluralism.²²

Although the idea of pragmatism has presented numerous advantages, there are also criticisms from scholars in various fields of study. Some modern Western scholars disagree with pragmatism's beliefs in specific areas of study. According to Wicks and Freeman²³, pragmatism has been introduced in the field of business, but unfortunately, it is not well-received by some critical scholars in the same field. They argue about the compatibility of pragmatism and the critical conception of business ethics, which might witness a clash between philosophical and practical approaches in dealing with issues in business. The critical theory was comprehensively explained by Axel Honneth from the Frankfurt School.

In general, Honneth advocated the idea of capitalism, which contradicts Dewey's anti-capitalism ideology. It was mentioned that Dewey was too sceptical and extreme when opposing the concept of capitalism, whereas Honneth was more concerned with the importance of self-realisation and the recognition of achievement. Nevertheless, there are certain benefits in terms of business when pragmatic ideas are implemented,

²¹ Philip L. Campbell, (Peirce, Pragmatism, and The Right way of Thinking), Sandia Report, August 2011.

²² Michael S. Hogue, (After the secular: Toward a Pragmatic Public Theology), Journal of The American Academy of Religion, Jun 2010, Vol 78, No 2, pp. 346-374.

²³ Max Visser, (Pragmatism, Critical Theory and Business Ethic: Converging Lines), J Bus Ethics 156, Springer, 2019, p. 45-57.

particularly when dealing with profit, efficiency, and productivity, by including environmental concerns and the interests of employees, clients, and the community. However, the core of stakeholder theory remains stakeholder capitalism; in reality, it is a libertarian type of capitalism that promotes human freedom, individual property rights, and a limited state.²⁴

There have been criticisms of pragmatism in various aspects, notably due to the pragmatist writing of history transforming pragmatism into Narrativism²⁵ and a new philosophy of history. Examples reflecting the framework of John Dewey regarding the use of logic in scientific inquiry and rational evaluation can sometimes lead to contributions to literary theory and controversies about the past. For Dewey and other pragmatists, questions about understanding the past are not simple but require a solution.

Famous pragmatists such as Lewis and Dewey faced criticism from Danto²⁶. In his writing entitled "Analytical Philosophy of History," Danto claimed that historical claims according to pragmatists are ultimately undercover predictions, and what they predict is a relevant answer. Consequently, Danto argued that the arguments of Lewis and Dewey are sceptical in nature.

Criticism towards pragmatism also comes from G.E. Moore²⁷ concerning James's pragmatic theory of truth. According to Moore, utility varies over time, influencing truth, in contrast to James's concept of truth. Simultaneously, Bertrand Russell objected to the idea that beliefs can be useful but are clearly false. As a result, some Italian scholars described that many philosophers see pragmatism's concern for practical efficacy as the expression of characteristically pragmatist values.

²⁴ In regard to the idea of Capitalism as mentioned by Honneth, see further the discussion as <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0896920520918505?journalCode=crsb>

²⁵ Veronica Tozzi, (Dewey, Mead, John Ford, and the Writing of History. Pragmatist Contributions to Narrativism), *European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy*, page 6, VIII-2, 2016.

²⁶ Veronica Tozzi, (Dewey, Mead, John Ford, and the Writing of History. Pragmatist Contributions to Narrativism), *European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy*, page 9, VIII-2, 2016.

²⁷ Richard Ormerod, *The History and Ideas of Pragmatism*, (Journal of the Operational Research Society), August, p. 902, 2006.

Other than that, this ideology became cloudy for people, especially in the USA, after the Second World War, where the ideas by Dewey were also not well-received in terms of politics and democracy. This is because it was said that pragmatism, in some matters, cannot be practically accepted by common sense. Although nowadays there are huge followers of pragmatism in the United States of America, some philosophers have become much more specifically focused in areas such as logical positivism, symbolic logic, and rigorous language analysis, as philosophy has evolved and become more professional and specialised in diverse areas of application. It is obvious that this idea was rejected by some Western scholars due to the explanation by G.E. Moore and Bertrand Russell on the concept of truth. Yet, when it comes to the increasing numbers of individual philosophers along with their specialisation, it is accepted.²⁸

According to Kant, pragmatism was largely a philosophy of meaning, with the meaning of every notion that had real-world application residing in the relationships that link the experienced circumstances of application with observable effects. Kant searched vigorously for the concept of truth, and his ideas contradicted the ideas by Peirce because for Peirce, every action is determined by experiential consequences in a strict sense of observation as a condition. Peirce also developed his theories to oppose an idealism known as “The path to objective and impersonal norms was paved by pragmatism.”²⁹

At the same time, there are some critics of Dewey’s ideas regarding the aspects of aesthetics³⁰. The definition from Dewey, according to these aspects, shows that he failed to define the real meaning of arts. This is because Dewey described arts as experience, leading to some confusion and taking this definition as both too wide and too narrow. However, for a certain part directed and used in the motivational sense, defining art as experience is a good idea, but it falls short in other definitional undertakings. There are other reliable and more accurate definitions of arts presented by pragmatists and neo-pragmatists who identify them more explicitly than Dewey did.

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Richard Ormerod, The History, and Ideas of Pragmatism, (Journal of the Operational Research Society), August, p. 892, 2006.

³⁰ Richard Shusterman, Pragmatism and Criticism: A Response to Three Critics of Pragmatist Aesthetic, (The Journal of Speculative Philosophy, Vol. 16, No. 1, 2002).

During the pre-modern era in the United States of America, several ideologies emerged and threatened pragmatism. It was also said to be like Idealism. This is because there were ideas of pragmatism that were not well accepted by people, especially in the field of politics and history, such as the idea of preserving the title of American exceptionalism. Other than Idealism, the idea of Libertarianism also came into clash with Pragmatism during that time.

In other words, the pragmatic sentiment that distinguishes America may be jeopardised by the majority's misguided agreement. It is true that nowadays people of the USA have progressed from the information age to the age of individual content creation and broadcast, which provides everyone with the opportunity to voice their opinions and the ability to reach a global audience. With the increase in the number of voices comes the ability for a majority to emerge from the crowd and claim truth.³¹

However, to describe the differences between pragmatism and libertarianism, it is a must to clear, firstly, that the American political system of government is a product of society. Unlike the oppressive regimes of Western Europe, the structure of the government of the United States of America (local, state, and federal) is democratic and thus created and regulated by society. As there is no institutionalised aristocracy, it was said, the people truly drive society and, by extension, the government.

Therefore, pragmatism agrees with democratic sentiment because if knowledge is what people agree on, then the resulting body of knowledge is democratically created. Everyone relies on one another to help define the terms of our world. But libertarianism rejects the notion of a democratic agreement on truth because if truth is determined by what a society agrees on, then the individual requires society to function on a fundamental level. It is clearly stated that due to the emergence of new ideologies and the clash with pragmatism, it has also been noted that the emergence of idealism and libertarianism has given rise to the varieties of universalism or 'the perennial philosophy'.³²

³¹ Philip L. Wells, *Pragmatism as American Exceptionalism*, (An Honors Thesis), University of New Orleans, May 2012.

³² Philip L. Wells, *Pragmatism as American Exceptionalism*, (An Honors Thesis), University of New Orleans, page. 37, May 2012. The term of 'perennial philosophy' here means to opposed scepticism.

2.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAGMATISM

The practical values of pragmatism have tremendously influenced many aspects of life. The discussion in this part will focus on the importance of pragmatism in terms of education and communication, which is seen as very significant in this globalisation era. As previously mentioned, pragmatism is not without criticism. However, there are additional beneficial impacts of pragmatism on other fields of study, particularly in terms of education and communication. Beside, pragmatism can be seen from two perspectives: the positive and the negative. In the context of today's world, the use of pragmatism in education is quite extensive. The following discussion will explain in detail the influence of pragmatism on the field of education.

2.3.1 The Importance of Pragmatism for Education System

During this globalisation era, pragmatists believe that life is dynamic and constantly changing, so educational goals must be dynamic as well. They believe that as education deals with human life, it must assist children in meeting their biological and social needs. Unfortunately, this is stated without recognising other needs such as spiritual and moral needs. In other words, children must be presented with the opportunity to explore the world themselves in the name of education. It is also important for education to become a platform for instilling good values (values constructed and developed by human beings) in children, and this must become the main task of a teacher.³³ Therefore, it is assumed that with the implementation of pragmatism in education, children can be comprehensively educated, and all their requirements as well as needs as children can be met through a more practical system. However, existing empirical realities, such as financial corruption in government offices worldwide, paint a different picture.

As for pragmatists, they view pragmatism as a significant means to contribute to the development of socially efficient individuals. They believe that children should not be required to work toward predetermined goals but should instead set their goals based

³³ Pratima Chamling Rai, Rupen Lama, Pragmatism and Its Contribution to Education, Volume 8, Issue 3, March 2020.

on their needs and interests. However, in practice, all children in all societies are influenced by the intellectual and social ethos. In the name of pragmatism, pragmatists prefer education based on an individual's aptitudes and abilities.

Every individual must be respected, and education should be designed to meet the children's best interests and improve their abilities.³⁴ Therefore, it is said that in being pragmatic, there is a need to contextually reform the education system to ensure that it is continuously progressive, relevant, and suitable for children. In this way, pragmatic solutions lead to the path of relativism.

Therefore, in the effort to make the education system successful and practical, pragmatism identifies two main principles, namely:

1. education should have a social function,
2. and education should provide real-life experience to the child.

Mentioned below are the views of pragmatism regarding education:

1. Every continuous experience or activity is educative, and education is based on having such an experience. However, continuous experience growth is not the entirety of education. Education is more than that; it is the continuous reorganisation or reconstruction of experience.
2. Pragmatism defines the goals of education. The student is prepared to live in a society and learn skills and attitudes through hands-on learning methods.
3. The project method is pragmatism's contribution to modern education.
4. Pragmatism promotes democratic learning through purposeful and collaborative projects and activities.
5. The first criterion is utility in the educational process. The school is expected to provide beneficial learning experiences.
6. Education is not constrained by tradition. Pragmatic philosophers advise people to put everything to the test with our own experiences.

³⁴ Ibid

7. Under pragmatism, the teacher plays a very challenging role in the educational process, and he/she must be very alert and watchful.

In general, it is said that pragmatism appreciates more practical methods for teaching and learning compared to theoretical concepts. According to the principles of pragmatism mentioned above, all activities should educate students on how to prepare for real-life situations in the future, particularly when confronted with present challenges and how to deal with them. To put it simply, all youngsters must experience the challenges themselves. As compared to the existing educational system, which sometimes only educates children in conventional ways, such as through storytelling, containing hands-on and practical educational activities. Therefore, it has become a great obligation for teachers to make education more practical and contextual.

As for the curriculum, the impact of pragmatism can be seen in aspects of the principle of utility, interest, experience, and integration as shown below:³⁵

1. Principle of Utility: According to this principle, only subjects, activities, and experiences that are useful to the child's current needs and meet the adult's future expectations should be included in the curriculum. For girls, the subjects include Language, Physical Fitness, Physical Education, Geography, History, Science, Agriculture, and Home Science.
2. Principle of Interest: This refers to exploratory as well as attractive activities and experiences. According to this principle, interest can be divided into four types:
 - a) interest in conversation,
 - b) interest in investigation,
 - c) interest in construction,
 - d) and interest in creative expression.

Apart from featuring these different types of interests, the primary curriculum should include writing, counting, art, craftwork, natural science, and other simple practical work.

³⁵ Ibid

3. **Principle of Experience:** The third principle of the pragmatics-based curriculum is the child's activity, vocation, and experience. All these three elements should be closely intertwined. The curriculum should include a variety of learning experiences that encourage creative thinking and the freedom to develop social and purposeful attitudes.
4. **Integration Principle:** Pragmatic-based curriculum is concerned with the integration of subjects and activities. Pragmatists want to develop a flexible, dynamic, and integrated curriculum that helps the developing child and the changing society based on his or her needs, demands, and situation.

Pragmatism is also claimed to have transformed the educational process to be more purposeful through the implementation of activity-based teaching and learning methods. According to proponents, it undoubtedly instils a sense of reality in education. It is suggested that values in children can be instilled because of this experimental character of education, as evident in pragmatic ideas. Proponents argue that children become more optimistic, energetic, creative, and active due to pragmatism. Therefore, pragmatists assert that this proves the importance of the education system in providing and securing a bright future for children. However, questions arise about the appropriateness of this educational system for all fields and its connection with the requirements of children in all aspects, particularly for Muslim children. Several considerations must be made, especially for Muslim education, as it must align with *The Shariah*.

Pragmatism views education not as a dynamic side of philosophy, as advocated by the idealists, but as a philosophy that develops because of educational practice. Every person has a social self that they can best develop in and through society. Consequently, pragmatism has brought democracy to education. Students learn how to manage their own responsibilities, preparing them to face the various challenges of real life. It makes individuals socially efficient, enabling them to set goals based on their needs and interests. While pragmatism provides a foundation for children to become self-sufficient via education, it may lack some characteristics of style and ethics. For example, when problems emerge, individuals may answer them on their own, sometimes relying on their own reasoning, as in pragmatism. There is no continual

educational purpose, which may disregard some concepts of morals and ethics, essential for Muslims.

Nivis³⁶ stated that pragmatics also influences the field of English language teaching. As English is an international language that connects people around the world, it is crucial to understand the correct context and level of language use to avoid misunderstanding. Therefore, a pragmatic approach is applied in this situation. Dewey emphasised that "we don't learn from experience; we learn from reflecting on experience." Dewey highlighted the role of pragmatic competence in the process of teaching and learning a second language.

Moreover, in communicative texts or activities, the five skills of language learning—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—do not occur separately³⁷. There are some factors that should be considered when developing good pragmatic competence for a language learner, such as:

1. The teacher and the learner play a vital role in developing any communicative activities that can help meet communicative competence.
2. The course material should be designed by the language teacher to engage students in pragmatic, coherent, and functional uses of language for communicative purposes. Therefore, the learner's pragmatic competence must be well-developed; as a result, he or she will be able to conduct communication with accuracy. A high level of functional competence is demonstrated by the development of coherence and the ability to react in a variety of situations. Target language grammar should not be taught separately from language skills, i.e., reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The learner should be able to put his or her language knowledge into practice.
3. A variety of activities can help you develop your pragmatic competence. Furthermore, they should make learners aware of the significance of such competence in the process of learning the target language.

³⁶ Nivis Deda MA, The role of Pragmatics in English language Teaching. Pragmatic Competence, (Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies), Vol 2 No 4, May 2013.

³⁷ Ibid

The objective of the application of various teaching and learning activities is to assist students in becoming more effective, fluent, and successful communicators in the target language. As pragmatic competence is a combination of these factors, it should be recognised as a primary teaching goal. Students will be able to demonstrate a variety of communicative patterns and, at the same time, also become actively involved in concrete acts in the classroom. They will be well-versed in grammatical and functional skills, as well as pragmatics, and will respond in a fluent, coherent, and precise manner. Additionally, pragmatic competence will promote critical thinking.³⁸

Based on all these perspectives on the pragmatics of education or language, it can be noted that the practical aspect should be in every circumstance that arises, especially there is a need to respond to people from varied lifestyles and linguistic backgrounds. It is also mentioned that pragmatism is significantly important in education as it concerns practicality, which will be considerably useful for teaching and learning. It is also worth mentioning that pragmatism does not presuppose any educational objectives. It contends that there can be no specific educational objectives. This is just said, but in reality, it does not occur. No doubt life is dynamic and subject to constant change, but the main goals of education remain, and according to contextual needs, some minor changes in educational goals can be made. Pragmatism does not give any importance to permanent goals of education. Education concerns the well-being of humans in a comprehensive manner. It must aid children in satisfying their biological, spiritual, moral, legal, and social needs.

2.3.2 The Importance of Pragmatism for Communication

Pragmatism plays a significant role in human communication, as highlighted in many articles and journals. Choraih, Loutfi, and Mansoor³⁹ emphasised the importance of pragmatism in the field of language teaching, especially for non-native speakers (foreign language), and curriculum development. Their study explored the implications

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Mohamed Amine Choraih, Ayoub Loutfi, Abdullah Mansoor, The Importance of Pragmatic in the EFL Curriculum: Application and Implications, (Arab World English Journal), p. 183-195, December 2016.

of pragmatism on English teaching and the applicability of the proposed approach to the current ELT reform in the Arab world, particularly in Morocco.

Furthermore, according to Crystal and Leech⁴⁰, the type of pragmatic knowledge is crucial in understanding the socio-pragmatic constraints in the choice of linguistic tools. A widely held belief in the field of pragmatics is that pragmatic ability means being able to see beyond the literal meaning of what is said or written to obtain the intended meaning. Much research still needs to be done to further solidify our understanding of the field of pragmatics and its impacts on other areas, such as education and assessment.

When compared to the teaching of grammatical and lexical knowledge, pragmatics is still lagging. Efficiency and proficiency in language use can only be achieved when interlocutors speak in a socio-culturally informed context or setting, considering a variety of social factors. This includes the overall situation and the speaker-hearer relationship. However, these requirements are generally not easily implemented in the classroom. Establishing these variables in the classroom, as well as modes of assessment, poses challenges.⁴¹

Therefore, the primary concern is whether pragmatic competence can or should be taught to the extent that these requirements are established in the classroom. Additionally, should pragmatic ability be considered on par with grammatical knowledge, requiring pedagogical intervention, or is it simply subordinate to grammatical knowledge? By the latter, we mean that the function of pragmatic competence is purely decorative. As demonstrated earlier, there are times when grammatical knowledge is rendered useless, resulting in awkwardness, embarrassment, rudeness, and the failure of the speaker's message to be received, all of which can lead to a breakdown in communication.⁴²

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Mohamed Amine Choraih, Ayoub Loutfi, Abdullah Mansoor, The Importance of Pragmatic in the EFL Curriculum: Application and Implications, (Arab World English Journal), p. 201, December 2016

⁴² Ibid

Aside from pragmatism in education, we can say that there are numerous points of views that support the benefits of pragmatism in communication as well as linguistics. It is demonstrated that, while pragmatics may be utilised in the field of communication, it requires extensive research to be implemented when it comes to grammatical studies.

Jia⁴³ highlighted the functions of pragmatism in the context of communication based on Dewey's concept of pragmatism. As mentioned, pragmatism is defined by Dewey as a practical philosophy of communication, specifically a practical philosophy of intercultural communication. It is, however, frequently misconstrued as anti-tradition, utilitarian, atheist, and so on. People who misunderstand it as such frequently pass judgment on it without having read some of the major original works.

According to Dewey⁴⁴, the meaning in terms of the functioning of language and communication in the creation of the social world is socially acquired and acquired by individuals who participate in the social, and thus language is socially developed. Dewey appeared to strongly believe in communication as a major force in social construction. He defined communication as "the sharing of an experience" and "participation." Through communication, not only is communal membership enhanced, but also a sense of community is realised.

Clearly, pragmatism has much to offer for intercultural communication studies according to Dewey. Given the nature of human affairs and the relationship between communication and experience and education, one could argue that Dewey's pragmatic philosophy is not only a philosophy of education but also a philosophy of communication. A communication function serves as a link and a bridge between the old and the new, and it is the foundation of society and culture.

According to this article, he also outlined the processes of communication as follows:⁴⁵

⁴³ Wenshan Jia, *The Deweyan Pragmatism: Its Implications for the study of Intercultural Communication*, (Intercultural Communication Studies XIV: 1), 2005.

⁴⁴ Wenshan Jia, *The Deweyan Pragmatism: Its Implications for the study of Intercultural Communication*, (Intercultural Communication Studies XIV: 1), p. 103. 2005.

⁴⁵ Ibid

1. Communication shapes society and influences consciousness. Communication, defined as 'association with fellow beings,' plays a crucial role in shaping mental and moral dispositions. It has a profound impact on society, challenging the traditional view that it is merely derived from and dependent on culture. Dewey argues that society not only continues to exist through transmission and communication but can be said to exist solely through them. This perspective is critical as it underscores the essential role of communication in creating, recreating, and sustaining democracy—an ideal society and culture.
2. Communication can be both beneficial and destructive. It possesses the power to deconstruct established customs, prompting the need for reconstruction. Dewey eloquently states, 'When communication occurs, all natural events are reconsidered and revised; they are re-adapted to meet the requirements of conversation, whether public discourse or that preliminary discourse known as thinking.' Communication not only can eradicate dualities but also holds the potential to dissolve societal boundaries, including those based on class, politics, and professions, particularly when communication is unrestricted.
3. Communication is a creative process, inherently educational in nature. Dewey asserts that 'not only is social life identical with communication, but all communication (and thus all genuine life) is educative.' This is because it actively modifies and broadens the participants' experience, leading to a transformation in behaviour and an expansion in the number and variety of habits.
4. Communication serves as a potent tool for establishing common ground and consensus. Dewey emphasised that 'consensus demands communication,' asserting that it is through communication that individual experiences are transformed into shared assets.

Communication pragmatism, as highlighted by Dewey, focuses on language and communication. However, misconceptions arise as individuals may interpret it as anti-traditional, utilitarian, or atheistic. To address these misunderstandings, Dewey devised pragmatic communication processes. It has been demonstrated that pragmatism is

effective in communication, evident in our daily interactions where we apply appropriate phrases and styles to engage respectfully with others.⁴⁶

Thorgersen highlighted the perspectives of both Dewey and Mead on communication from a pragmatic standpoint. According to Dewey, experience is something that impacts and changes us. He also asserted that much of human interaction is habitual, and these everyday transfers of meaning 'are so external and partial that we undergo their consequences without integrating them into experience.'⁴⁷The transfer of meaning through a work of art is therefore considered communication, as it is not an announcement or a monologue but rather creates participation.

There is not much difference between the ways Dewey explained pragmatism for communication compared to Mead. Communication, according to Mead, is about sharing experience. It is a social process that requires at least two people willing to put themselves in each other's shoes. To achieve this, language, defined as a set of symbols on which a social group can agree on the meaning, becomes the medium. In essence, communication is a real-time interaction involving symbols agreed upon by participants directed towards each other. This enables them to share their experiences and engage in meaningful communication.⁴⁸

According to Bridge⁴⁹, Mead asserted that communication plays an essential role in the formation of self and community. Communication evolves socially over time, leading to the development of shared symbols, with language being the most sophisticated and resourceful. Language possesses an attribute known as the mind, and rationality, as a form of communication, binds the mind together as a social attribute.

In contrast to Mead's focus on the theme of community, Herbert Blumer emphasised symbolic forms of communication over non-symbolic forms. This emphasis gave rise to a whole field of study known as symbolic interactionism, which

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Ketil Thorgersen, *Communication from a Pragmatic Perspective*, (Paper for Nera/NFPF Oslo), 2005.

⁴⁸ Ibid

⁴⁹ Gary bridge, *Reason in the City of Difference, Pragmatism, Communicative action and Contemporary Urbanism*, Reason in the city of difference, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London and New York, p. 4, 2005.

explores the shared symbols in social interaction that form the basis for meaningful social worlds.⁵⁰

According to Habermas⁵¹, communication, before postmodernism, was distorted by capitalist ideology and detached from a communicative context by the steering media of power and money. This holds true when Habermas' view of communicative action is limited to language, specifically a representative view of language. Following postmodernism, he developed a procedural concept of rationality based on 'universal pragmatics,' where implicit validity claims underpin all language use.

On the other hand, Judith Butler proposed a much broader concept of communicative action, offering an alternative solution to the postmodernist situation. Butler considered the effects of bodily excess or communicative slips as a kind of universal quality of communicative action; however, the pragmatist approach suggests that these effects are qualities of the specific situation and communicative transaction rather than universal qualities. The pragmatist viewpoint also proposes that communicative action creates situations rather than merely representing or being contained by them.⁵²

Moreover, the broadening and deepening of the realms of communicative action represent a contemporary renewal of John Dewey's work, incorporating many developments in contemporary philosophy since postmodernism and the linguistic turn.⁵³ This 'communicative turn' extends Dewey's dissolution of Cartesian distinctions between mind and body, suggesting the mutual implication of instrumental and communicative rationality, argument and aesthetics, and system and lifeworld.

There are numerous advantages of pragmatism for communication. Given that people come from diverse backgrounds and lifestyles, everyone will inevitably

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Gary bridge, *Reason in the City of Difference, Pragmatism, Communicative action and Contemporary Urbanism*, Reason in the city of difference, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London and New York, p. 5, 2005.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Gary bridge, *Reason in the City of Difference, Pragmatism, Communicative action and Contemporary Urbanism*, Reason in the city of difference, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London and New York, p. 6, 2005.

contribute their own thoughts to the discussion on the use of pragmatism in communication. Although Craig⁵⁴ mentioned some weaknesses of this idea, his proposition is also criticised for neglecting relevant intra-tradition distinctions and debates, straightforwardly associating pragmatism with a strongly constitutive approach to communication and tending to disconnect pragmatism from other communication-theoretical positions in ways that are counterproductive to his goals. This discussion highlights the contrast between Craig's constructionist instrumentalism and the habit-realism of Peirce and Dewey's classical pragmatisms.

However, it should be noted that Craig's primary focus is not on the identification and development of a pragmatist tradition in communication theory itself. Instead, he aims to create a constitutive meta-model capable of bringing focus and genuine cross-paradigm interaction to the fledgling field of communication theory. In the initial version of the model, pragmatism plays no explicit role. It was only after Russill's attempt to vindicate pragmatism that Craig expanded the original seven-tradition matrix⁵⁵ of first-order communication theories to include the pragmatist perspective in "Pragmatism in the Field of Communication Theory." It is evident from these remarks that Craig did not employ a valid theory in discussing these issues.

2.4 THE PIONEERS OF PRAGMATISM

This section of the chapter will discuss the life and contributions of the famous pragmatist, William James. William James is a renowned philosopher from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the United States. Pragmatism, the theory he advanced, was the dominant philosophical trend at the time, and its impact continues to resonate in American philosophy today. For instance, during a pandemic situation caused by a coronavirus, one source suggests that a pragmatic approach might be one of the alternatives in a crisis of political management. This realistic method can address

⁵⁴ Mats Bergman, Pragmatism as a Communication- Theoretical Tradition: An Assessment of Craig's Proposal, Research Gate (European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy), July 2012.

⁵⁵ The original seven tradition that mentioned from Craigs's such as, traditional beliefs (rhetoric), structured codes (semiotics), dialogical focus on the other (phenomenology), persistent cultural patterns and social structures (sociocultural theory), and universal validity claims (Habermasian critical theory).

pandemic situations, such as how to deal with people infected with coronavirus and whether there are any options other than restricting people's movement.⁵⁶

2.4.1 William James

James was born in 1842 and lived until 1910. He was the son of the eccentric theologian and writer Henry James, Sr., and the elder brother of the well-known American novelist Henry James, Jr. He received his early education at home, in a dynamic and intellectually open environment. His family preferred to send their children to Europe, where they would attend school irregularly in England, France, Germany, and Switzerland.⁵⁷

However, James himself was born in New York City. His father, an independently wealthy acquaintance of Emerson and Thoreau, led a nomadic and unconventional life as a free-floating intellectual, self-publishing theologian, and adherent of Swedenborg. Over the following 19 years, the expanding James family (Henry Sr., his wife Alice, and their children William, Henry Jr. [the author], Wilky, Bob, and Alice) relocated yearly between New York, London, Paris, Geneva, and Newport.

2.4.1.1 Early Education and Works

In terms of his education, James enrolled in the Lawrence Scientific School at Harvard in 1861. Although he was not initially interested in medical studies for three years, he became genuinely drawn to them. Despite significant interruptions in his studies due to other pursuits, he obtained his medical degree from Harvard in 1869.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Arjen Boin & Martin Lodge, Responding to the COVID-19 crisis: a principled or pragmatist approach?, (Journal of European Public Policy), 2021.

⁵⁷ Doris Olin, *Introduction, William James, Pragmatism in Focus*, published in USA and Canada, Routledge, 1992.

⁵⁸ Ibid

When James arrived at Harvard, the most pressing intellectual issue of the day was Darwin's theory of the Origin of Species, which had been published only five years before. While James' stance was clearly on the Darwinian side, he took time away from his medical studies (for which he had a pronounced lack of enthusiasm) to join Professor Louis Agassiz's biological expedition up the Amazon. This expedition was originally intended to find evidence of a 'separate creation' that would counter Darwin's theory.

In terms of his working life, James initially had difficulty deciding on a job⁵⁹. Eventually, he received his MD, although he never practiced. In 1873, he began teaching physiology at Harvard, continuing until his retirement in 1907. In 1875, James established the first psychological laboratory in America and conducted his first psychology seminar. He got married in 1878 and published his first philosophical writings in the same year. James taught both psychology and philosophy before becoming a full professor. In 1890⁶⁰, he wrote the enormous and justly acclaimed two-volume "Principles of Psychology," which became a widely used classic in shortened forms such as "The James" and "The Jimmy."⁶¹

During his lifetime, he made numerous contributions to others. In 1907, he resigned from Harvard and gave a series of public lectures that were published later that year as "Pragmatism: A New Label for Certain Old Methods of Thinking." His next three years were largely spent on reacting to the debate sparked by this book, and a collection of these comments was published in 1909 as "The Meaning of Truth." That same year, he released "A Pluralistic Universe," a collection of his 1908 Hibbert Lectures from Oxford, which was his final significant work during his lifetime. James died in 1910, abandoning his attempt to produce a more methodical and less 'popular' presentation of his philosophical beliefs, which was eventually published in 1911, known as "Some Problems of Philosophy."⁶²

⁵⁹ Ruth Anna Putnam, William James (1842-1910), (from the Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy). (n.d).

⁶⁰ Frank Pajares, *William James: Our father Who Begat US*, Chapter 2 (Educational Psychology: A Century of Contributions), edited by Barry J. Zimmerman, Dale H. Schunk, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, publishers London, 2003.

⁶¹ Frank Pajares, *William James: Our father Who Begat US*, Chapter 2 (Educational Psychology: A Century of Contributions), edited by Barry J. Zimmerman, Dale H. Schunk, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, publishers London, page 44, 2003.

⁶² Misak (forthcoming edition), William James, (The Oxford Handbook of American Philosophy).

2.4.1.2 Theories and Philosophies of William James

The nicest thing to say about William James is his contribution to psychology in the form of the famous phrase "stream of consciousness." Regarding pragmatism, he contributed to the introduction of the instrumentalist theory of truth. As we can see here, James was concerned with the viewpoint of religion and his audience. This is because the advancement of science was seen to pose a threat to the religious perspective of the cosmos. This had driven James' philosophical endeavours on meaning and truth.⁶³

Aside from that, James attempted to develop a suitable system that can mediate between these two forms of philosophy, which are a blend of scientific understanding of facts with religion, optimism, and the significance of human beings. James asserted that pragmatist philosophy would meet both types of needs and function as a "mediating style of thinking." It is not appropriate for somebody to be considered as the founder of pragmatism if they are not tied to pragmatic items in any element of their life, such as James. The influence of pragmatism will cause him to attempt to bring the mediating way of thinking in terms of science and belief that suits his views, the "theory of truth."⁶⁴In demonstrating how pragmatism's fundamental beliefs might perform this mediating function, James discussed topics like substance, materialism against spiritualism, free will and determinism, monism versus pluralism, and others. The underpinnings of this entire system are the essence of pragmatism. This comprises two theories that are closely connected, namely the theory of meaning and the theory of truth.

In terms of his work in psychology, James first introduced his work, "The Principles of Psychology," to the public in 1840, before shifting his focus to philosophy. Meanwhile, during the final fifteen years of his life, he was immersed in philosophy. His writing entitled "The Will to Believe" was published in 1896. Not to mention, in 1907, James became well-known when he released his major work, "Pragmatism," which was followed by another two works in 1909, which were "A Pluralistic Universe" (a reprint of lectures) and "The Meaning of Truth" (a collection of essays).⁶⁵

⁶³ Doris Olin, *Introduction, William James, Pragmatism in Focus*, published in USA and Canada, Routledge, 1992, P2.

⁶⁴ Doris Olin, *Introduction, William James, Pragmatism in Focus*, published in USA and Canada, Routledge, 1992, P2.

⁶⁵ Ibid

Furthermore, pragmatism, according to James, is an interesting field of study because it is so ambitious. James emphasised the pragmatic process from which his theory of meaning was derived. "To achieve absolute clarity in our conceptions of an object, then, we need simply analyse what potential practical repercussions the thing may include," he said. As a result, pragmatism provides us with not just a means for obtaining clarity in our thoughts, but also an explanation of what is meaning, which is wholly based on the practical implications of the object.⁶⁶ This is advantageous for us to know based on the practicalities for any case; however, not all solutions can be applied from that result. Therefore, we need to know what kind of practicalities we can consider and use as a decision because we need to look at any aspects around us.

However, the notion is only relevant if and only if it has practical implications. Thus, James was involved in several philosophical debates to resolve or clarify them. Even while the broad framework of the pragmatic theory of meaning is obvious, there are various issues with interpretation, and there is occasionally ambiguity regarding what constitutes 'practical consequences.' In relation to this subject, James suggested analyzing it with both the tough-minded and the tender minded.⁶⁷

Despite all of James' philosophical theories, the first application of the pragmatic theory of meaning in Pragmatism is to the concept of truth. Because of these philosophical accomplishments, James is regarded as having made the most original and significant contribution to philosophy, and he gave the most attention to pragmatism. Regarding James' vision of truth and his technique in defining truth; the only way to get a deeper knowledge of truth than that provided by this equivalency is to apply the pragmatic approach to the concept of truth. James' concept of truth is, once again, acceptable for the western people. In trying to seek the truth, they will create whatever assumptions depending on their own perspective. However, as Muslims, we are all aware that we may be pragmatic, or more accurately, realistic. But we have our rules and cannot deviate from them since the goal of Islamic law is to help Muslims. We may need to be pragmatic in some situations, but we must remain consistent with

⁶⁶ Doris Olin, *Introduction, William James, Pragmatism in Focus*, (published in USA and Canada, Routledge), p.2-3, 1992.

⁶⁷ Doris Olin, *Introduction, William James, Pragmatism in Focus*, (published in USA and Canada, Routledge), p.3-5, 1992.

our primary and secondary sources. Furthermore, we cannot assume everything when it comes to religious matters based on our knowledge, but we may strive to be pragmatic in any way that is required.

2.4.1.3 Contributions of William James

As previously said, James has a significant influence on psychology. There were no limits to James' curiosity in psychological processes, and no places his mind would not go. He was widely chastised for his interest in psychical studies, and he was known to have attended seances.⁶⁸ He dedicated chapters to habit, attention, perception, association, memory, reasoning, instinct, emotion, imagination, psychological procedures, and even hypnosis in his *Principles*. However, one psychological process was plainly important to a Jamesian psychology is the *self*.⁶⁹

Furthermore, concerning the self, James introduced a novel idea that distinguishes between the self as knower, or the I, and the self as known, or me. The I is nothing more than pure ego, awareness itself. The me is one of many things that the I may be aware of, and it is comprised of three parts: one physical or material, one social, and one spiritual. James was careful to emphasise that the two selves are differentiated parts of the self, not "distinct objects." The self is also active, dynamic, and purposeful.⁷⁰ James was also among the first writers to introduce the phrase "self-esteem," which he defined as a self-feeling determined by what one chooses to be and achieve. Other than that, it is worth mentioning that "The Consciousness of Self" is the longest chapter in *Principles*' two volumes. Therefore, James identified an individual's idea of self as "duplex," made up of objective and subjective selves in it.⁷¹ Besides his contributions to psychology, James made many positive changes in education, particularly in educational psychology, during his tenure as a teacher at Harvard

⁶⁸ Seances in this paragraph it explain that, some kind of afterlife existed and that communication with the souls therein was possible. <https://skepticalinquirer.org/exclusive/william-james-and-the-psychics/>

⁶⁹ Frank Pajares, *William James: Our father Who Begat US*, Chapter 2 (*Educational Psychology: A Century of Contributions*), edited by Barry J. Zimmerman, Dale H. Schunk, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, publishers London, 2003.

⁷⁰ Frank Pajares, *William James: Our father Who Begat US*, Chapter 2 (*Educational Psychology: A Century of Contributions*), edited by Barry J. Zimmerman, Dale H. Schunk, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, page 49, publishers London, 2003.

⁷¹ *Ibid*

University. It was during this time that he released his writing entitled *Principles and* saw an increase in his teaching salary. He gave his first talk to a group of Cambridge teachers in July 1892, entitled "Talks on Psychology of Interest to Teachers."⁷²

During his tenure as a Harvard educator, he considered the obligation or task of being a teacher to be more than just a profession. Consequently, James worked hard to simplify the process for teachers. According to James, the teacher's job is to figure out what intrigues the youngsters naturally and tie it to the new assignment or activity. And what are youngsters naturally drawn to? Everything is tied to their own unique personalities. Connect the lesson with their personal significance, and the instructor is almost there.⁷³

Moreover, for him, the blueprint for effective teaching is straightforward: firstly, be aware of the child's native interests, bring forth the child's existing knowledge regarding the material to be presented, and present the material in a straightforward and clear manner. Secondly, carefully connect the new knowledge to the existing knowledge. And lastly, attend to the native interests in a natural, logical, systematic, and compelling way.⁷⁴

Even though the plan is apparent, James admitted that "the achievement is challenging in the extreme," and he took his obligation to provide as much practical advice as possible on how to make these connections, as well as how instructors should practice their profession, seriously. He urged them to become acquainted with their students' natural tendencies if they wanted to broaden their students' horizons. It was also critical for teachers not to force their students to perform something that the teacher could not accomplish, as he mentioned that "the deepest source of activity in us is the sight of action in another."⁷⁵

⁷² Frank Pajares, *William James: Our father Who Begat US*, Chapter 2 (Educational Psychology: A Century of Contributions), edited by Barry J. Zimmerman, Dale H. Schunk, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, publishers London, p. 51, 2003.

⁷³ Frank Pajares, *William James: Our father Who Begat US*, Chapter 2 (Educational Psychology: A Century of Contributions), edited by Barry J. Zimmerman, Dale H. Schunk, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, publishers London, p. 53, 2003

⁷⁴ Ibid

⁷⁵ Frank Pajares, *William James: Our father Who Begat US*, Chapter 2 (Educational Psychology: A Century of Contributions), edited by Barry J. Zimmerman, Dale H. Schunk, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, publishers London, p. 53, 2003.

It is not difficult to attribute James' educational theory to the child-centred movement that progressive education offers, or to the self-oriented, child-centred approach suggested by humanistic educators. However, it is crucial to realise that he is a traditionalist at heart. In fact, James was more progressive in terms of how children should be educated than he was in terms of the goals of their education. Apart from this, the major goal of education or the primary interest of the instructor should be to “instil in the student a collection of habits that will be most valuable to him throughout his life. Education is for instilling conduct, and habits are the substance of which behaviour is made.”⁷⁶ However, the goal of instilling habits is to produce intellectual, autonomous, giving, and energetic individuals capable of guiding the democracy that will soon be in their charge.⁷⁷

There are some arguments and criticisms towards James' idea of educational psychology. According to Barzun, James' educational psychology is “a classic, almost old-fashioned, simple perspective of teaching and learning in which freedom and compulsion both play their rightful role.”⁷⁸ Furthermore, according to Robinson, others claimed that the new cognitive psychology has no Jamesian quality at all. Despite the criticism, there are also a lot of positive reactions supporting his concepts. For instance, Hunt concluded that “James' effect on psychology, although significant, was fractured; while present, it was never dominating. James avoided establishing a system by not creating a school, training just a few graduate students, and having no band of followers.”⁷⁹ Moreover, Taylor concluded that James blazed a trail that few psychologists have followed.

However, as Robinson pointed out, the Jamesian style of pragmatism has long vanished from mainstream psychology. If this notion is correct, James shares some of the blame for his lack of a concentrated effect on the discipline. There is little doubt that he frequently expressed concepts in ways that were illogical or even “contradictory,”

⁷⁶ Ibid

⁷⁷ Frank Pajares, *William James: Our father Who Begat US*, Chapter 2 (Educational Psychology: A Century of Contributions), edited by Barry J. Zimmerman, Dale H. Schunk, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, publishers London, p. 55, 2003.

⁷⁸ Ibid

⁷⁹ Frank Pajares, *William James: Our father Who Begat US*, Chapter 2 (Educational Psychology: A Century of Contributions), edited by Barry J. Zimmerman, Dale H. Schunk, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, publishers London, p. 57, 2003.

and much ink was wasted on what Allport referred to as William James' "productive paradoxes." In the *Principles*, for example, he argued against unconscious mental states, yet in the *Varieties*, he advocated for "subliminal consciousness." His account of the function of habit appears to frequently contradict his beliefs on the self and personal volition. As he was criticised for providing explanations for both determinism and free will, he emphasised that psychology could safely embrace a deterministic stance, despite the fact that free will was genuine.⁸⁰ Finally, regardless of the reasons presented here, psychological theories have always had an impact on education, and there is evidence that James' educational views were accepted by the educational community of his day in modern communities.

Besides that, James' functional and pluralistic psychology influenced Dewey's educational innovations, and James' "democratic temperament," as well as his notion that education should serve the goals of democracy, also made their way into Dewey's movement. James' views were also the foundation for the scientific pedagogy that G. Stanley Hall and Edward L. Thorndike would later advocate.

Moreover, even after James's death, there was no question that the educational system had an impact on most educators, according to Baldwin. Baldwin also remarked that throughout the latter two decades of James' life, most educators were influenced by James' educational theory, particularly James's emphasis on attention to self-processes and the needs and dispositions of the child. Baldwin also claimed that James was principally, if not solely, an educational psychologist.⁸¹

Another aspect of James's contribution to educational psychology is the idea of emotion.⁸² In order to broaden the definition of emotion, James attempted to explain it in terms of the link between emotion and belief. As a result, he developed new concepts

⁸⁰ Ibid

⁸¹ Frank Pajares, *William James: Our father Who Begat US*, Chapter 2 (*Educational Psychology: A Century of Contributions*), edited by Barry J. Zimmerman, Dale H. Schunk, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, publishers London, p. 59, 2003.

⁸² James Southworth, *William James's Theory of Emotion*, (Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository), 2014.

in philosophy, such as "The Will to Believe" and "The Varieties of Religious Experience."⁸³

Despite the positive and negative remarks, James is still regarded as a philosopher and the founder of pragmatism. When it comes to his concepts, pragmatism may sometimes generate various assumptions because it is subject to individual interpretations and is always evolving. However, from my perspective, in other circumstances such as the educational system, psychology, and so on, we must consider it to maintain balance in our lives.

2.4.2 John Dewey

This section of the chapter discusses another prominent scholar in the field of pragmatism, John Dewey. These two scholars are selected for discussion in this chapter because both discovered certain parallels and differences in their fields of study. James is known for his theory of truth, while John Dewey rose to prominence by pioneering the use of pragmatism in education. As a result, many scholars see him as the forefather of pragmatism in education. Although James touched on it briefly, Dewey was more forward-thinking in terms of educational issues. More importantly, James and Dewey shared the same concepts and extended Peirce's discoveries by making explicit the fact that technique itself develops during research, as we all know from history itself.⁸⁴

2.4.2.1 Life and Background of John Dewey

John Dewey was born on October 20, 1859, in Burlington, Vermont.⁸⁵ He was married twice in his life. In 1886, he married Miss Alice Chipman for the first time. Dewey's marriage was a significant success, and his wife was credited with sparking his interest

⁸³ James Southworth, William James's Theory of Emotion, (Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository), P.3, 2014.

⁸⁴ Hilary Putnam (with Ruth Anna Putnam), William James's Ideas, *Pragmatism, Critical Concepts in Philosophy*, edited by Russell B. Goodman, Volume III, Routledge.P. 172.

⁸⁵ Kandan Telebi, John Dewey- Philosopher and Educational Reformer, (European Journal of Education Studies), Volume I, Issue I, September, 2015.

in social and economic issues. However, their marriage did not last long, as his wife died in 1927 due to a protracted illness caused by arteriosclerosis and heart disease. He married Mrs. Roberta Grant of New York City in 1946, and they adopted two children. Dewey died in New York on June 1, 1952.⁸⁶

The main thing to remember about Dewey is that he was the most prominent proponent of modern American Pragmatism. In the first part of the twentieth century, he was the most well-known public philosopher in America, and social change was a primary concern of his public philosophy.⁸⁷ As previously stated, the three earliest pragmatists were Charles Peirce, William James, and John Dewey. However, for some, Dewey was not identified as a Pragmatist. This is because he placed a lot of emphasis on education, and Peirce termed his ideology as 'Instrumentalism.' He is regarded as one of the three most important figures in American Pragmatism. Charles Peirce coined the phrase, which was popularised by William James and adopted by Dewey.⁸⁸

Dewey was not only a pragmatist but also a philosopher, psychologist, and educator. His progressive approach to teaching through experimentation is well-known. He played a significant role in shaping public schools based on his educational ideology. Dewey recognised the child as an active, exploratory, and curious being, and he believed that the purpose of education is to integrate experience with skills and knowledge. While James introduced pragmatism in education, Dewey has been more prominent in this field, emphasising education psychology.

Moreover, Dewey was an active participant in political, social, and cultural debates and conflicts. Dewey's interest in education grew from political, social, cultural, and theoretical influences. He recognised the critical role of education in the survival of democracy and the promotion of democratic thinking and action for societal progress. In other words, while Peirce and James were involved in experimental psychology,

⁸⁶ W. B. Pillsbury, John Dewey 1859-1952, (National Academy of Sciences), Biographical memoir, Washington D.C. , 1957.

⁸⁷ Eugene Halton, Pragmatism, (Encyclopaedia of Social theory), George Ritzer edition, Thousand oaks: Sage Publications, 2004.

⁸⁸ Dipankar Das, Kangkana Nath, Violeena Barman, Barsha Hazarika, (Pragmatism: The Interpretation of C.S. Peirce, William James And John Dewey), Journal of Critical Reviews, Vol 7, Issue 03, 2020.

Dewey was engaged in developmental psychology, particularly the "genetic epistemology" movement in America in the 1890s.⁸⁹

2.4.2.2 Early Education and Works

In 1879, John Dewey graduated from the University of Vermont with a bachelor's degree. After graduating, John Dewey worked as a schoolteacher in Oil City, Pennsylvania, and later as an elementary school teacher in the small town of Charlotte, Vermont. However, he discovered that this position was not suitable for him, so he decided to further his studies. He earned his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University's School of Arts and Sciences. During his studies, he was primarily influenced by George Sylvester Morris, Charles Sanders Pierce, Herbert Baxter Adams, and G. Stanley Hall.⁹⁰

In 1884, he began teaching philosophy and psychology at the University of Michigan, which marked the highlight of his career. Like the pragmatist James, as mentioned earlier, they both started teaching the same subject when they began their university-level teaching careers.

As is widely known, Dewey was initially influenced by James's psychology, but he later transitioned to a new experimental approach to psychology. Inspired by further research into child psychology, Dewey developed a philosophy of education. Initially, he considered continuing this research based on his job experience to be appropriate. However, his studies ultimately credited him as a philosopher and pragmatist in education.⁹¹

Dewey concluded his teaching service at the University of Chicago in 1894, promoting his progressive pedagogy. In 1904, he moved to another university in New York City, Columbia University, and spent his career writing his most famous

⁸⁹ Eugene Halton, *Pragmatism*, (Encyclopaedia of Social theory), George Ritzer edition, Thousand oaks: Sage Publications, 2004.

⁹⁰ Kandan Telebi, John Dewey- Philosopher and Educational Reformer, (*European Journal of Education Studies*), Volume I, Issue I, September, 2015.

⁹¹ Ibid

philosophical work, "Experience and Nature." Some of his well-known works cover themes in education, aesthetics, and politics. Throughout his career, Dewey wrote about 700 papers in 140 publications and nearly 40 books, with "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" in 1896 being one of his most significant writings. Additionally, his critique of standard psychological concepts laid the foundation for all his subsequent work, exemplified by "Democracy and Education" in 1916.⁹²

2.4.2.3 Philosophy of Education by Jon Dewey

Based on the observations of James and Dewey's opinions on this issue, it can be said that Dewey provided more insights into the concept of pragmatism and education. James, in contrast, only discussed how education might become pragmatic in a specific context or period. Dewey, on the other hand, emphasised his theory of education in its ideal form.

According to Dewey's framework, he incorporated everything he altruistically supported in the realm of social practice through pragmatism: critical thinking, abstract knowledge, utilitarianism, empiricism, and experimentation. The philosopher's viewpoint leads us to believe that Kant, Hegel, Darwin, Pierce, and James' philosophical ideas inspired pragmatic philosophy in the same way. Dewey progressively constructed a new instrumental, tool-based, naturalistic Pragmatism because of the impact of these five thinkers.⁹³ Furthermore, for Dewey, to understand the significance, meaning, and reality of the notion of democracy, we must relate it to individual social action and participation in social processes, one of which is progressive education.

In other words, compared to James, Dewey⁹⁴ was more forward-thinking for the benefit of society and developed a philosophy of education in a more systematic way. According to Berding, Dewey was influenced by Karl Marx due to the social strife and

⁹² Kandan Telebi, John Dewey- Philosopher and Educational Reformer, (European Journal of Education Studies), Volume I, Issue I, page 2, September, 2015.

⁹³ Dimitris Pavlis, John Gkiosos, John Dewey, From Philosophy of pragmatism to Progressive Education, (Journal of Arts & Humanities), Volume 6, issue 9, p. 23-30, 2017.

⁹⁴ Aliya Sikandar, John Dewey and His Philosophy of Education, (Journal of education and educational Development), Volume. 2, No. 2 191-201, December 2015.

class conflict during Marx's period. Consequently, Dewey viewed education as a tool for aiding the democratic process, addressing economic injustices, and achieving political goals that would contribute to society's growth. Therefore, education is the culmination of Dewey's political beliefs, aiming to create a community where common goods, such as knowledge and social intelligence, are equitably shared among all members of society. Additionally, Dewey's methodology integrates Democracy and Education. Progressive education, according to him, upholds notions such as the right to free speech or free action, in contrast to traditional educational ideals that appear to impose ideas on a child. Dewey was greatly influenced by the concept of a liberal free society, emphasising the pressing need for freedom, equality, and liberation from societal constraints to free individuals and societies from power systems. One can say that Dewey essentially developed his philosophical ideas based on the liberal framework suitable for American society. This implies that education is founded on both the liberal framework and the premise that individuals learn best when engaged in real-life activities with others. Further details regarding these concepts or approaches will be presented in the next paragraph.⁹⁵

There is a strong relationship between a child's existence and his experiences as a continuous process in Dewey's theory of education, which he considered the goal of education. Consequently, education should be concerned with the child's experiences both in school and in natural situations outside of school. Specific experiences should be evaluated in terms of how much they help children grow or gain additional experience.⁹⁶ Concerning Dewey's philosophy of education, he proposed his own outstanding technique in "My Pedagogic Creed," which consists of five creeds: "What education is," "What the school is," "The subject-matter of education," "The nature of method," and finally, "The school and social development."⁹⁷

In the context of Malaysia, new educators without teaching experience will have to undergo certain pedagogical courses as part of their obligatory preparation to become good educators. One might say that these courses are genuinely tied to the pedagogy

⁹⁵ Ibid

⁹⁶ Ibid

⁹⁷ Russell B. Goodman, *My pedagogic creed, Pragmatism, Critical Concepts in Philosophy*, Volume III, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2005.

that Dewey established. In a nutshell, it is still applicable in Malaysia and can be implemented in the education sector. Furthermore, perhaps the education system in Malaysia can try to apply Dewey's pedagogic credo if it is acceptable for people here. It is also necessary to examine whether Dewey's pedagogic creed can be implemented in whole or in part. The Malaysian education system will be covered in the next chapter.

Aside from that, this philosophy of education influenced one of the German educators, even though we all know that pragmatism was popular in America from the time this theory was established until the early twentieth century.⁹⁸ Dewey introduced the concept to Jürgen Oelkers as an alternative to German educational discourse. The contrast between conventional and pragmatic educational philosophy is briefly summarised as follows:

<i>Traditional European, especially German educational theory,</i>	<i>Educational theory of American Pragmatism</i>
<i>Related to “philosophy” or “metaphysics</i>	<i>Related to empirical science, especially biology, physiology, psychology</i>
<i>“rigid European educational philosophy”</i>	<i>“dynamic theory of intelligent adaptation”</i>
<i>“unscientific”, “static”, and “dogmatic” method of education and instruction</i>	<i>“scientific” method of education and instruction</i>
<i>Based upon “abstract values and norms”</i>	<i>Based on the “social relationships” between students, as well as between students and teachers</i>
<i>“European ideal of personal cultivation”</i>	<i>American ideal of “civic education”, or of “intelligent citizenship”</i>
<i>Based on Protestant/religious frame of reference; “abstract relationship between human beings and world”.</i>	<i>Based on democracy as a frame of reference for educational theory; grounding in democracy and public opinion”.</i>

In a nutshell, we may infer that Dewey's educational philosophy is heavily influenced by liberalism and the Western concept of science, and its empiricism. It

⁹⁸ Johannes Bellmann, *The Reception of John Dewey in the Context of Contemporary Educational Reform- A German – American Comparison*, (Studies in Educational Policy and Educational Philosophy), Routledge, Taylor and Francis group, 2017.

implies that it contradicts the conventional one, which is drastically different. Some embrace these notions, but there are others who believe there are untrustworthy aspects in Dewey's educational philosophy due to specific situations.⁹⁹

Even if it cannot be accepted by the rest of some people, according to Oelkers, he contended that pragmatism's critique of conventional educational philosophy was not only right and justified in its own time but also has continued to be significant today. According to his first argument in his paper on "Pragmatism and Education," "a theory of democratic education necessitates a break with pedagogical tradition, a break that has never been carried out in German educational thought."¹⁰⁰ It can be said that he asserted that, in Germany, there is a need to change traditional education to a new one known as democratic education (focusing on who the audience is), extracted from Dewey's pedagogical methodologies.

Then, he repeatedly mentioned that it is a fact that "a theory of democratic education is absent in German educational philosophy up to the present day." This is also spoken of in England and France in general. As a result, he stated that "the beginning point for democratic education can scarcely be sought anywhere other than in American educational thought, and it is to be discovered only in a conversation with pragmatism."¹⁰¹

Furthermore, Dewey's philosophy of education is an extrapolation of important elements of learning settings in the old rural life in which he was raised, to schooling in the industrial society which emerged throughout his lifetime.¹⁰² Talking about his experience and coming up with new pragmatism education approaches, the early experience or the fact that he was a pragmatist who applied Peirce and James' teachings directly to education. However, as previously stated, Dewey was the one who was more interested in this educational theory than the other two pragmatists.

⁹⁹ Ibid

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

¹⁰¹ Johannes Bellmann, *The Reception of John Dewey in the Context of Contemporary Educational Reform- A German – American Comparison*, (Studies in Educational Policy and Educational Philosophy), Routledge, Taylor and Francis group, page 5, 2017.

¹⁰² R. S. Peters, *John Dewey's Philosophy of Education, (Pragmatism, Critical Concepts in philosophy)*, edited by Russell B. Goodman, Volume III, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2005.

So far, Dewey's philosophy can be summarised as emphasising activity-based learning, the development of activity and experience-based learning, the needs and interests of children, supporting social adjustments, and, finally, the creation of new and good values.¹⁰³ His methodologies are always linked to the requirements for a democratic society and equitable education. His pragmatism enhances the reciprocal link between democracy and education, with the meaning of the word "experience" serving as its central axis. He emphasised that philosophy exists not only in education as a theory that can be put into practice but also in addressing the crises in civilisation and the ideals that focus primarily on people's peaceful collaboration and free communication. Additionally, as mentioned by McDermott, Dewey applied both philosophical and psychological perspectives to develop his theory of education.¹⁰⁴

Despite the positive insights offered by Dewey's philosophy, some scholars are sceptical about it, and one of them is Thorndike, a major figure in psychology. Although both Dewey and Thorndike significantly contributed to education and psychology, there are aspects in which their views contrast with each other, such as foundational abilities, literacy, achievement standards, measuring, and more.¹⁰⁵ According to Lagemann, Dewey's views on these topics were moulded in large part by his hostility to Thorndike's behaviourist psychology and its accurate measuring methods, which soon began to dominate the realm of education as well.

Moreover, in contrast to Thorndike, Dewey focused on the pragmatic approach of experimental problem-solving as a medium through which education may take place, rather than as a technique applied to education. Only through the overarching process of an instructional experience, in his opinion, can problem-solving abilities gain relevance and worth. However, problem-solving abilities are not sufficient for resolving civilisational crises. It needs more than this—the right conception of life and a realistic and relevant system of life and society. Pragmatists failed to realise the need for these dimensions.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Dipankar Das, Kangkana Nath, Violeena Barman, Barsha Hazarika, (Pragmatism: The Interpretation of C.S. Peirce, William James And John Dewey), *Journal of Critical Reviews*, Vol 7, Issue 03, 2020.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid

¹⁰⁵ Johannes Bellmann, *The Reception of John Dewey in the Context of Contemporary Educational Reform- A German – American Comparison*, (Studies in Educational Policy and Educational Philosophy), Routledge, Taylor and Francis group.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid

Consequently, Dewey named only two criteria in a technical sense for this inconclusive process in "Experience and Education," namely continuity and interaction. Continuity refers to the linking of an experience with previous and subsequent experiences in the continuity of the educational biography, as well as the diversification of interactions with the world and with others in concrete situations. Therefore, problem-solving talents are assessed against the backdrop of the educational experience's overall notion, which is why his thoughts differed from Thorndike's¹⁰⁷.

Besides that, some scholars say that, while Dewey's educational philosophy focuses more on experiences, it occasionally leads to some misunderstanding and does not satisfy some of the education requirements as described below:

There appears to be a flaw in the operational design of experiential learning. For starters, there is an absence of objective or criterion-based experiences in Dewey's work. We do not learn how to analyse the experiences that assist a kid's growth, so that the child's progress can be oriented in quantitative terms. Also, how can we know if the child is becoming more informed, mature, or intelligent because of the school's experiences? What are the learning objectives, and where are the learners anticipated to be at the conclusion of experiential learning? As a result, teachers would be at a loss for what to do. If learning mainly relies on experiences, how many experiences should be arranged in a term? How would teachers manage different replies, emotions, and criticism from a comparable experience?

As a result of the preceding remark, we may characterise the style of experiential learning here as it generates new inquiries from others and a gap in the operational plan via experiences.

In my opinion, even if Dewey has his own methodology, such as pedagogical techniques in which no recommended guidelines are given on the procedures of application in an organised manner;¹⁰⁸ who are the agents of change: school administration, teachers, parents, curriculum designers, or school associations? So,

¹⁰⁷ Ibid

¹⁰⁸ Aliya Sikandar, John Dewey and His Philosophy of Education, (Journal of education and educational Development), Volume. 2, No. 2 p.196, December 2015.

what is the role of the community or society in this entire process of democratisation of education? What would be the parents' role? What is the place of a true worldview? As a result, despite his excellent concept of education, Dewey has not provided any clear rules for these areas.

2.4.2.4 Towards 21st century of John Dewey

This part of the chapter will explore some significant elements highlighted by Dewey in the twenty-first century, which have positioned him as the most prominent philosopher to influence education to date. Even though he was a pragmatist, progressivist, educator, philosopher, and social reformer, his status as a famous educator for the twenty-first century distinguishes him from James. As a result, when his name is mentioned, people will be aware of his ideas of educational philosophy or education reform.

According to Dewey, there is a deficit in some teaching styles, teacher abilities, and the educational environment, which is why he came up with a new and reformed education system. In addition to his thoughts about its influence on society, Dewey had ideas about how education should take place in the classroom.¹⁰⁹ Dewey provided various principles for this reformation, including the importance of having a responsive classroom, philosophy for children, Montessori, and place-based education. Furthermore, he said that, even though the classroom system had been used previously, he considered typical classroom settings not developmentally appropriate for young learners. In Malaysia, we have been using the classroom environment and organising it according to the degree of thinking of kids, and until now, it has worked occasionally. This will be further discussed in the following chapter where the condition of the classroom and the application of Dewey's technique in the classroom will be examined. However, in contrast to typical classrooms, Dewey emphasised the necessity for a responsive classroom as well as other aspects mentioned above in the context of the 21st century.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Morgan K. Williams, John Dewey in the 21st century, (Journal of Inquiry & Action in Education), 9(1), 2017.

¹¹⁰ Ibid

Dewey's theory of education incorporates both elements of education and democracy.¹¹¹ The responsive classroom is aligned with his theory as it promotes Dewey's ideas of social-emotional learning and the development of a community of learners. Additionally, there are other suggestions that serve as evidence of Dewey's philosophy in 21st-century classrooms.

In summary, the effective implementation of Common Core standards throughout the United States has altered the dynamics in today's classrooms for both students and instructors. Finding evidence of Dewey's ideas and ideals in action in 21st-century classrooms is becoming increasingly rare, but it is achievable, as demonstrated by numerous teaching approaches. Dewey's beliefs are still prominent in several schools and classrooms throughout the United States and other nations worldwide. When designing their teaching methods, these schools and classrooms continue to emphasise the value and relevance of establishing a community, fostering strong connections, developing higher-level thinking skills for real-life application, and catering to student interests.

In the context of Malaysia, I believe it is essential to analyse our education system and curriculum to determine the suitability of Dewey's method for us. This is because it prepares pupils to be critical thinkers and significant contributors to their local communities and society as they grow.

2.5 CONCLUSION

The methods of James and Dewey have demonstrated the effectiveness of pragmatism in our lives, evident in the education system emphasised by John Dewey in his philosophy of education and its relevance in the twenty-first century. The next chapter will continue the discussion, focusing on the key aspects and characteristics of Muslim scholars' perspectives on pragmatism, particularly Syed Qutb and Muhammad Iqbal. The debate will centre on the Islamic viewpoint on pragmatism and its distinguishing features.

¹¹¹ Ibid

This chapter aims to outline and assess the Western worldview of pragmatism, focusing on the principles of pragmatism as articulated by its founders, particularly William James and John Dewey, and examining its global impact. Initially prioritising American interests, pragmatism later spread worldwide, introducing new ideas and benefits. While many scholars, especially those from the United States, endorsed pragmatism, some opposed it in specific areas. Critics argued that the concepts could lead to confusion as they are subject to change, relying on people's perceptions without absolute truth. Despite criticism, pragmatism has evolved and is considered necessary, especially in today's globalised environment.



CHAPTER THREE

THE VIEWS OF MUSLIM SCHOLARS ON PRAGMATISM

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Ahmad Fekry Ibrahim¹ has disclosed his research on the applications and evolutions of a strategy that involves applying the legal pragmatism inherent in Sunni Islam in an eclectic approach to achieve pragmatic ends. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding through studies on the matter of pragmatism is crucial, as it represents one of the significant components in Muslims' daily practices.

In essence, the term 'pragmatism' is not commonly associated with Islamic matters, but Islamic scholars are more familiar with the term and discussions on 'pragmatics.' It is interesting to explore whether 'pragmatics' is regarded as one of the features of pragmatism and the extent to which these terms are applied. As discussed in the previous chapter, modernity and globalisation have posed challenges for Muslims. According to Fazlur Rahman², the current realities and challenges faced by Muslims nowadays cannot be logically compared to the situation in the past, requiring transformation and correction in the ways Muslims approach these issues. This chapter will examine in detail the kinds and classification of changes practiced by Muslims, specifically in Malaysia, focusing on their practicality and pragmatism.

This section investigates various possible definitions based on theological, philosophical, and cultural foundations, as suggested by various scholars. In this part, we shall examine the Islamic worldview through the perspectives of two famous scholars, Sayyid Qutb and Muhammad Iqbal. I chose Sayyid Qutb and Iqbal because each of them has an opinion on the subject, particularly Iqbal. Moreover, due to the

¹ Baudouin Dupret, *Pragmatism in Islamic Law: A Social and Intellectual History*, (HAL Id: hal-01881775, <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01881775>, 26 September 2018).

² Andrew Rippin, *Muslims: Their religious beliefs and practices Volume 2: the contemporary period*, *The Contemporary world and the phenomenon of modernity*, part 1, p. 11, 1993, Routledge, London and New York.

differences in their life experiences and backgrounds, we can observe diverse points of view and how they approach the associated issues related to this topic.

Therefore, this research aims to analyse and evaluate the definition of the term from various perspectives, particularly those of Sayyid Qutb and Iqbal. Additionally, it seeks to explore how the tendency of pragmatism has evolved in Muslim life. Further considerations include the concept of pragmatism from Islamic viewpoints, its relevance, and a discussion of which pragmatic approaches may be applied by Muslims.

3.2 SAYYID QUTB

The term 'Islamic scholar' refers to a scholar who explains concepts and perspectives within the framework of the Islamic worldview. Before we delve into the various interpretations of pragmatism provided by Islamic scholars, it is essential to understand the meaning of pragmatism from an Islamic perspective from Syed Qutb and Muhammad Iqbal. Exploring the definition of the term 'pragmatism' and the historical grounds that have sparked scholarly discussions on pragmatism is worthwhile. In this chapter, the researcher will also examine how the study of pragmatism in Islam has undergone transitions and changes, influencing modern thinking and behaviours among Muslims.

3.2.1 Sayyid Qutb Milieu

When scholars or individuals read or discuss Sayyid Qutb, they often label him as 'one of the most influential ideologists of radical Islamism.' However, before delving into this characterization, it's important to understand who Sayyid Qutb was throughout his life, including details about his family and history. Born in the Upper Egyptian town of Moshah near Assut, Sayyid Qutb Ibrahim Husyan al-Shadili had ancestral ties to India, with one of his forebears making a pilgrimage from India to Makkah and settling in Moshah in Upper Egypt. Qutb asserted that his true ancestry was rooted in Islam, and

he identified ideologically as Muslim.³ His dedication to learning began early, and while it's uncertain whether he started his education at a religious school (kuttab) or a contemporary elementary school (madrassa), he graduated from a government high school in 1918. By the age of 10, Qutb had memorised the entire Quran. Subsequently, he traveled to Cairo for further studies and completed his Tajhiziiya at a preparatory and secondary school. In 1933, he earned a B.A. in Education. Concurrently, after completing his studies at Dar al-Ulum, he began working as an instructor at the same institution.⁴

In addition to the information provided earlier, it's important to note some additional key facts about Sayyid Qutb, including his birth date. Sayyid Qutb was born in 1906. In 1966⁵, he was accused of plotting an uprising against the administration of Egyptian President Abdul Nasser. As a steadfast believer, particularly in religious matters, Sayyid Qutb became a prominent spokesperson for the Islamist Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, known as al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn. The Brotherhood aimed to purify Islam from the influence of Western values and general contamination.

3.2.2 Some Aspects of Sayyid Qutb's Career

As mentioned earlier, after completing his studies at Dar al-Ulum and serving there, Sayyid Qutb was assigned to the Department of Inspection for Education and Culture for eight years, spanning from 1940 to 1948. In 1948, the Ministry sent him to the United States to study American culture, with a particular focus on education. Upon his return, Sayyid Qutb was appointed as a special counsellor to the Ministry, but he eventually resigned due to dissatisfaction. His discontent stemmed from the observation that the Ministry of Education's goal of implementing a system akin to international education systems was not suitable for the Muslim community of Egypt. In general,

³ Thameem Ushama, *Sayyid qutb: Between Reform and Revolution*, IIUM Press, First Edition, p. 27, 2009.

⁴ Mhd. Syahman, A Study of Sayyid Qutb Quran Exegesis in Earlier and Later Editions of His Fi Zilal Al-Quran with specific reference to selected themes. (A Thesis submitted to the faculty of Graduate Studies and research), Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1997.

⁵ Andrew Rippin, *Muslims: Their religious beliefs and practices Volume 2: the contemporary period*, The Contemporary world and the phenomenon of modernity, part 1, p. 11, 1993, page 91, Routledge, London and New York.

international education systems are not tailored for Muslims. This prompts a closer examination of Sayyid Qutb's perspective on the type of acceptable system, especially during that period, and whether pragmatic education can be applied. Furthermore, consideration should be given to its contemporary relevance for Muslims to meet the expectations of modern education.

During his time in America, he encountered various experiences. Upon returning to his village, he sought answers to existential questions about life's purpose and an individual's mission in the world. Subsequently, he delved into the primary sources of Islam, drawing from the divine light of the Qur'an, and fortified his heart with a profound understanding of faith (Iman). This marked the beginning of his journey as a devout Muslim.⁶

In addition to being a journalist and critic, Sayyid Qutb cultivated a significant relationship with al-'Aqqad while residing with his uncle, Ahmad Husayn Uthman. Al-'Aqqad's influence is discernible in Sayyid Qutb's writings and intellectual development. With an extensive library housing works in both Arabic and foreign languages,⁷ al-'Aqqad played a pivotal role in shaping Sayyid Qutb's intellectual landscape.

According to one source, Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad was a renowned and outspoken Wafdist journalist, credited as the founder of a new school of modern poetry. Al-'Aqqad attempted to impart his secular viewpoints to Sayyid Qutb. However, Sayyid Qutb, recognising his own Western orientation and high intelligence, realised that he did not have to adopt such perspectives.⁸ This indicates that Sayyid Qutb remained steadfast in his convictions, resisting attempts by others to sway him towards Western agendas.

⁶ Thameem Ushama, *Sayyid Qutb: Between Reform and Revolution*, IIUM Press, First Edition, p. 53, 2009.

⁷ Thameem Ushama, *Sayyid Qutb: Between Reform and Revolution*, IIUM Press, First Edition, p. 82, 2009.

⁸ Mhd. Syahnan, *A Study of Sayyid Qutb's Qur'an Exegesis in Earlier and Later Editions of His *Fi Zilal Al-Qur'an* with Specific Reference to Selected Themes*, (A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research), Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1997.

Upon his return to Egypt in 1950, Sayyid Qutb aligned himself with the Muslim Brotherhood in response to the perceived rejection from the West. Established by Hassan al-Banna in 1928, the Muslim Brotherhood shared Sayyid Qutb's anti-Western stance. Al-Banna founded the organisation in reaction to Western control over Egypt at the time, presenting it as a remedy in the form of a return to Islam.

Sayyid Qutb sought to introduce reforms aimed at addressing social issues and restoring Islam as the dominant worldview and way of life. He pursued this through various Islamic publications, including "The Message," "al-Ahram" (The Pyramids), "Rawz al-Yusuf," "al-Ishtirakiyyah" (The Socialism), "al-Liwa," "al-Jadid" (The New Banner), and "al-Da'wah" (The Call).⁹ A study of Sayyid Qutb's philosophy reveals him as a sincere and committed individual when dealing with Islamic affairs and addressing Western agendas.

3.2.3 Sayyid Qutb's Theories and Contribution

Sayyid Qutb identified Communism and Capitalism as the two major contemporary ideologies that stand against Islam.¹⁰ Numerous examples illustrate the reasons behind Sayyid Qutb's opposition to these ideologies. In fact, not only these two, but all Western ideologies that encountered Sayyid Qutb were rejected by him. This section of the chapter aims to describe how Sayyid Qutb approached these two ideologies from his own perspective, seeking to understand and determine the appropriateness of applying pragmatism in Muslim life, especially in terms of education.

Sayyid Qutb's influence on the Egyptian revivalist organisation, the Muslim Brotherhood, is observable, even though it has been perceived as radical by some. An article¹¹ provides various explanations for how pragmatism manifests itself in the visions, missions, and organisational strategies of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt,

⁹ Thameem Ushama, *Sayyid Qutb: Between Reform and Revolution*, IIUM Press, First Edition, p. 104, 2009.

¹⁰ Thameem Ushama, *Sayyid Qutb: Between Reform and Revolution*, IIUM Press, First Edition, p. 131, 2009.

¹¹ David Schwartz, *The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt: Ideology vs. Pragmatism*, (Open Journal for studies in History, 2021, 4(1), 1-10), 2021.

especially during President Mubarak's reign. Given Sayyid Qutb's disagreement with Western doctrines, this point will be further elaborated based on his explanations. Another article explores how pragmatism is employed by the Muslim Brotherhood in interpreting al-Banna's vision as a symbol of the "Islamic order," reflecting the brothers' state of mind.¹² As evident from the explanations in this article, further studies are needed to examine the current perception of the Muslim Brotherhood as an embodiment of pragmatism, including textual studies, interviews, and comparative hermeneutics (within and beyond Islamic disciplines). Consequently, it is not accurate to assert that these ideas are unequivocally part of the pragmatic worldview; they might be part of the concept that individuals strive to compromise for the benefit of certain organizations and politicians.

To clarify, Jamaludin, in his essay, highlights that the Muslim Brotherhood is more than just a philosophical message; it incorporates elements of "Jihad," the utmost struggle, and labor. Consequently, Hassan al-Banna frequently employs various concepts and viewpoints, including theology and worship, fatherland and citizenship, government, and action, in his speeches, writings, and conversations.¹³

To counter all these ideas, Sayyid Qutb proposes that, despite living in a contemporary world with a modern worldview that emphasizes materialism, Muslims must anchor their perspectives and arguments in the Quran.¹⁴ We understand implementing this approach poses significant challenges, especially in the present times when many Muslim nations face political and economic difficulties. This creates a significant opportunity for the West, including capitalists, who aim to hinder the growth of Muslim nations while promoting their own ideals, values, and beliefs. Despite causing occasional confusion among Muslims or certain individuals, it is crucial for Muslims to discern which ideologies can be accepted and followed to avoid deviating from the true path of Islam.

¹² Ulrika Martenson, "Islamic Order": Semeiotics and Pragmatism in the Muslim Brotherhood" (Journal of Islamic Research, Vol.9, Issue 1, p. 35-37, 2015).

¹³ Jamaludin Noordin Ibrahim, *The Political Thought of Sayyid Qutb*, (A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Mphil), University of St Andrews, 1988.

¹⁴ Ibrahim Ozdemir, *Sayyid Qutb's Understanding of the Universe as a Living and Meaningful World*, (Islamic Perspective on Sciences and Technology), chapter 7, Springer, 2016.

In the realm of Qur'anic exegesis, Sayyid Qutb's "Fi Zilal al-Qur'an" stands out as a modern and significant work, recognised as his most dynamic and noteworthy achievement in interpreting the Qur'an during the twentieth century. Beyond its acclaim, Sayyid Qutb is hailed as a mujaddid in the field of exegesis, pioneering a new school known as the "madrasat al-Tafsir al-Haraki" or the school of dynamic exegesis.¹⁵

"Fi Zilal al-Qur'an" serves as more than a mere commentary; it encapsulates the foundational principles of the Islamic worldview. Covering topics such as the divine constitution for life and society, an encyclopaedia of thoughts, knowledge, culture, and various methodologies for political, economic, social, cultural, and educational systems, the book is a comprehensive guide. Scholars, both traditional and modern, have commended Sayyid Qutb's contributions, illustrating the intricate relationship between humanity, life, and the universe.¹⁶

It becomes evident that, to overcome contemporary challenges¹⁷ and establish an ideal Islamic society, a deep understanding of the Qur'an is imperative. Sayyid Qutb's insights, particularly in the context of the prevalent Western ideals, such as the theme of pragmatism,¹⁸ can be considered a guiding light. "Fi Zilal al-Qur'an" introduces fresh perspectives, underscores the need for analysing the current circumstances, and reveals the authentic teachings of Islam.

When discussing the contemporary world and its cultures, Sayyid Qutb observed the characteristics that have emerged in modern civilisations, such as communist societies based on Marxist principles. He also identified idolatrous cultures, Jewish and Christian civilisations, and so-called Muslim societies where individuals identify as Muslims but do not fully embody Islamic principles in their lifestyles. Finally, there are Muslim communities that genuinely adhere to the teachings of Islam—a group whose behaviours, thoughts, laws, values, and standards all derive from Islamic sources.

¹⁵ Thameem Ushama, *Sayyid Qutb: Between Reform and Revolution*, IIUM Press, First Edition, p. 254, 2009.

¹⁶ Thameem Ushama, *Sayyid Qutb: Between Reform and Revolution*, IIUM Press, First Edition, p. 254, 2009.

¹⁷ The term *Jahiliyyah* from Sayyid Qutb, explained as un-Islamic or secular system.

¹⁸ Thameem Ushama, *Sayyid Qutb: Between Reform and Revolution*, IIUM Press, First Edition, p. 254, 2009.

From the above explanation, according to Sayyid Qutb, societies can be categorised into two types: Islamic societies and Jahiliyyah societies.¹⁹ The term "Jahiliyyah society" refers to a way of life that does not adhere to Islam or the rule of Allah's dominion on earth. Sayyid Qutb firmly asserted that the development of Muslims cannot be integrated with Western ideologies. While there may be a need to revisit and adapt certain aspects to keep pace with the contemporary world, integration of Western beliefs is deemed inappropriate.

3.2.4 Sayyid Qutb on Education

According to Sayyid Qutb, Western ideas and theories cannot serve as the foundation for any Islamic society or philosophy, nor can they be useful in the mission of reviving the spirit of Islam. This is not merely because they originate from the West, but due to the philosophical and theological conflicts between secularism and Islam. Additionally, he claimed that the framework of modern philosophy is incompatible with Islam and its essence.²⁰

As of today, we are still contending with an education system based on Western syllabuses in most Malaysian schools, both private and public. Therefore, this study aims to explore and elaborate more on the adoption of pragmatism in Malaysia, particularly in the field of education, and how it might be embraced by Muslims. There are numerous reasons why some individuals believe that pragmatic education should be implemented.

Furthermore, from Sayyid Qutb's perspective, Muslim youngsters should not receive education about Islam from Jews, Christians, or Orientalists. Based on this opinion, it can be concluded that Islamic education in Malaysia should be provided by Muslim teachers. However, Malaysia's overarching structure and curriculum remain tied to secular education.

¹⁹ Jamaludin Noordin Ibrahim, *The Political Thought of Sayyid Qutb*, (A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Mphil), University of St Andrews, p. 51, 1988.

²⁰ Thameem Ushama, *Sayyid Qutb: Between Reform and Revolution*, IIUM Press, First Edition, p. 330, 2009.

Apart from this, Sayyid Qutb claims that modern education, as enforced by missionaries at missionary institutions, was part of a scheme to separate Islam from the Muslim himself.²¹ Sayyid Qutb's educational ideas will undoubtedly be criticised by his contemporaries, who claim he communicated his opinions harshly or forcefully, but his efforts to modify the curriculum, emphasise foreign language training, and focus on supporting quality research are critical for the ummah's regeneration. As a result, he claims that achieving the Islamic purpose cannot be founded just on Ijtihad, on theological difficulties, but also on intellectual conceptions.

3.2.5 Sayyid Qutb Thought on Modern Ideologies

Then, there are some proposals from Sayyid Qutb here, as well as in his 1952 article "Islam and Universal Peace," in which he emphasised that peace is the basic essence of Islam. Man-made modern ideologies have contributed to a few difficulties in current society. According to Sayyid Qutb, all man-made ideologies have the same materialistic worldviews, although their techniques and arrangements differ. As a result, Sayyid Qutb emphasised that all contemporary ideologies are harmful to people and communities, especially the following²²:

1. Nationalism
2. Socialism
3. Communism
4. Capitalism

Therefore, Sayyid Qutb opined that all current philosophies on political thinking would have an impact on Muslim living. According to Sayyid Qutb, all modern ideologies will negatively affect Muslims. As a result, pragmatism, from Sayyid Qutb's view, cannot serve as a foundation for Muslims throughout their lives.

²¹ Thameem Ushama, *Sayyid Qutb: Between Reform and Revolution*, IIUM Press, First Edition, p. 338, 2009.

²² Jamaludin Noordin Ibrahim, *The Political Thought of Sayyid Qutb*, (A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of MPhil), University of St Andrews, p. 79, 1988.

The notion of nationalism, developed by Western philosophers, is not to be taken lightly, and it should be genuinely countered by Islam and Muslims. Ideologies such as racialism and tribalism were condemned more than fourteen centuries ago at the time of Prophet Muhammad [pbuh]. According to Jamaluddin, Sayyid Qutb argued in his books, *Ma'alim fi al-Tariq* and *Nahwa Mujtama' Islami*, that nationalism as a concept, philosophy, and ideology destroys the unity of humanity and demands that all people should devote their utmost allegiance to their own nation. It can be rationally concluded that feeling proud of one's country and being loyal to it is different from nationalism. It is ultimately essential, but caution is advised that the utmost allegiance is only applicable to God. This signifies that Islam liberated all mankind from the bonds of the earth and the chains of ethnic relationships.²³

According to Thameem Ushama, Sayyid Qutb argued that nationalism can be applicable for Europe in transitioning from a feudal system to a nation-state system, which may be beneficial to them because it will liberate them from church control. However, from an Islamic standpoint, Thameem Ushama stated that, according to Sayyid Qutb, all Muslim people cannot be divided into nation-states and follow their nations, as this will create degradation, leaving Muslims impotent. Aside from that, the ideology of nationalism prioritizes responsibility to the country and overlooks other duties, including devotion to God. As a result, we must understand that Islam is universal and equitable for all its followers.²⁴

If we can relate this notion to our situation, for example, in Malaysia, we are encouraged to develop patriotic feelings for our country and nation. However, we are not bound by any control. We can be loyal to our country's sovereign status as long as we do not cross any lines of thinking according to Islam, especially as Muslims. We have our own national philosophy in Malaysia to help people understand each other, given that we live in a multicultural society that includes Malays, Chinese, and Indian people. Perhaps we can refer to it as one of the pragmatic systems that we attempt to align within the present period. However, the essential thing in our Malaysian

²³Jamaludin Noordin Ibrahim, *The Political Thought of Sayyid Qutb*, (A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Mphil), University of St Andrews, p. 88, 1988.

²⁴Thameem Ushama, *Sayyid Qutb: Between Reform and Revolution*, IIUM Press, First Edition, p. 329, 2009.

Constitution,²⁵ as we all know, is that Islamic faith is the official religion in Malaysia, despite all our national concerns and commitments.

Sayyid Qutb also campaigned against socialism, asserting that it is a destructive and damaging concept for humanity. According to Sayyid Qutb, certain Arab governments adopted this method without considering the consequences. Others combined this with Islam to form a new worldview known as "Islamic Socialism." Additionally, another viewpoint holds that socialism, like communism, is a racial system with a local emphasis. From an Islamic standpoint, it is a human system; however, the Islamic system is a human system and one of universalism.²⁶ Until this moment, socialism, like any other man-made system, has proven incapable of creating ideal laws for peaceful living. Thus, according to Sayyid Qutb, we can see that all man-made systems have proven to be failures. It is truly reflected in pragmatism that not everything in the pragmatism philosophy is acceptable for everyone, particularly Muslims.

3.3 MUHAMMAD IQBAL LIFE'S

As we all know, pragmatism is a philosophical movement, as explained in chapter two. The originator of pragmatism, William James, is one of America's most prominent figures. James is equally famous for his contributions in the areas of psychology and religion. His interest in religion and its human components becomes its focal point rather than institutional religion. According to one of the articles, Muhammad Iqbal is a religious thinker who uses both poetry and prose to communicate his beliefs. And, as we all know, Muhammad Iqbal is not only a scholar but also the best Muslim scholar of his day in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. Both James and Iqbal attempted to analyse religious events using psychological instruments for explanation and comprehension in their own distinct ways.²⁷

²⁵https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Malaysia_2007.pdf?lang=en, link for Malaysian constitution.

²⁶Jamaludin Noordin Ibrahim, *The Political Thought of Sayyid Qutb*, (A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Mphil), University of St Andrews, p. 90, 1988.

²⁷Dr. Asif Iqbal Khan, James and Iqbal, *A New Approach to Psychology*, Iqbal Review, (Journal of the Iqbal Academy), Iqbal Academy Pakistan, p. 78, October 1996.

By analysing these two scholars, James and Iqbal, we can see that there are some parallels in expanding the realm of psychology to the various levels of awareness. Both James and Iqbal conclude that man does not live forever at the same level of consciousness. However, for James, consciousness is a "stream of thought," a continuous flow of changes with a perceived continuity. Although Iqbal does not agree with the view that ascribes consciousness to a transient aspect in experience, he does agree with the view that ascribes consciousness to a permanent element in experience.²⁸ For Iqbal, consciousness acts as a function to illuminate the progressive march of existence. Therefore, it is interesting that the discussion in this paper explores both the perspectives of Muslims and non-Muslims on current concerns and developments.

Despite providing some basic explanations for psychology and religion, this section will also explore various aspects of education through the lenses of Iqbal and John Dewey. By doing so, we can gain a better understanding of the relationship between education and pragmatism from the perspective of its founder, John Dewey, as well as pragmatism in education from the Islamic point of view by examining the views of Sayyid Qutb and Iqbal. These two Islamic scholars were chosen as points of reference because they come from distinct backgrounds and are most relevant to this research.

3.3.1 Muhammad Iqbal life's

Iqbal was born on November 4, 1877, in Sialkot, and he passed away in 1938 in Lahore. Some evidence suggests that Iqbal was born around 1873. However, according to many researchers, the actual date of his birth in 1877 corresponds to the commencement of his scholastic life at school, college, and university.²⁹ It is noteworthy that Iqbal was born earlier than Sayyid Qutb. Their philosophies, which originated hundreds of years ago, persist to this day and have been widely disseminated among individuals in our society, especially Muslims. Regarding his family, it is known that his father was a

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Riffat Hassan, *The Main Philosophical Idea in the Writings of Muhammad Iqbal*, (Durham theses), Durham University, 1968).

pious Muslim and worked as a farmer. He was also said to be deeply influenced by 'Tasawuf'.³⁰

He began his education at a young age, a common practice among many renowned Islamic scholars. In Sialkot, Iqbal started his schooling in a *maktab*. Due to his academic excellence, he received several scholarships throughout his learning years. Besides his family, Maulana Mir Hassan, a friend of his father, was the most influential figure in Iqbal's early academic life. Maulana Mir Hassan taught Iqbal various subjects, including the basics of Persian literature and, of course, Islamic culture and literature.

Furthermore, Iqbal continued his studies at the degree level at Government College in Lahore, as degree classes were not available in Sialkot.³¹ During this period, he was influenced by Mr. Thomas W. Arnold, one of his teachers and a philosophy professor. This lecturer introduced Iqbal to the tools of critical thinking and the scientific attitude of the West towards life problems through his research. Iqbal received two gold medals for distinction in English and Arabic when he graduated in 1897. Subsequently, in 1899, he earned a Master of Philosophy and pursued his Doctor of Philosophy in 1907 at Munich University in Germany. He graduated with honours after submitting his thesis, titled "The Development of Metaphysics in Persia."³²

3.3.2 Iqbal's Career

Throughout his life, Iqbal was not only a devout Muslim but also a remarkable human being who engaged in various professions and careers. Primarily, he excelled as an educator, holding positions as a teacher and professor. He served as a reader in Arabic at Oriental College, simultaneously authoring his first book in political economics. Additionally, he worked as a teacher of English at Government College in Lahore, eventually becoming an Assistant Professor of English and Philosophy.

³⁰ Hendri K, *Pemikiran Muhammad Iqbal dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Pembaruan Hukum Islam*, (Al-'adalah), Vol.XII, No 3, June, 2015.

³¹ Riffat Hassan, *The Main Philosophical Idea in the Writings of Muhammad Iqbal*, (Durham theses), p.46 Durham University, 1968).

³² Ibid

As an educationist, Iqbal articulated specific principles for being an effective teacher during his tenure in education. He believed that a teacher should not only impart knowledge but also set an example and inspire students through personal influence. Thus, a teacher's role extends beyond education to motivation. In terms of Iqbal's contributions as an educator, he sought to enhance and liberate individuals, particularly in India at that time. In expressing his philosophy of education, he stated, "Modern India should focus on the discovery of man as a personality, as an autonomous totality in an all-encompassing synthesis of life."³³

In addition to his role as an educator, Iqbal was actively engaged in legal matters, politics, and literature. He chose to participate in politics during his era, driven by his observation of shortcomings in Muslim political leadership and systems. His political contributions not only shaped the idea of an Islamic state but also created opportunities for individuals and communities. In the realm of literature, Iqbal penned numerous poems and books, with one of his notable works being "The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam."³⁴

3.3.3 Iqbal's Theories and Concepts of Islam

Due to cultural and lifestyle differences, Iqbal's perspectives and concepts of Islam are more moderate compared to those of Sayyid Qutb. As mentioned earlier, Iqbal was not only a poet, philosopher, and thinker but also a devout Muslim. He articulated his ideas about life by intertwining philosophy, religion, and poetry, striking a unique balance between dynamic and traditional connections with religion.³⁵

Moreover, the same article suggests that as nations and states lose their power, questions about their philosophy of life begin to surface. This phenomenon occurred in the subcontinent with the decline of Muslim authority and the advent of the British, a pattern also reflected in the history of Malaysia. Consequently, various schools of

³³ Riffat Hassan, *The Main Philosophical Idea in the Writings of Muhammad Iqbal*, (Durham theses), p.47 Durham University, 1968).

³⁴Ibid

³⁵ Zahid Munir Amir, *Muhammad Iqbal's Concept of Islam*, (Kyoto Bulletin of Islamic Area Studies), p. 22-35, March 2009.

thought emerged and underwent revolutions, each offering its interpretation of Islam. In essence, two predominant schools of thought emerged—one overly strict and the other overly broad. Iqbal, however, recognised that these two approaches converged to form a balanced, moderate idea lacking in his contemporaries. He acknowledged that in the past, religions and faiths were confined to national, racial, and individual boundaries. In Iqbal's view, Islam establishes that religion is a fundamentally human matter, transcending the confines of nation, ethnicity, or individuality.³⁶

Additionally, according to Iqbal, some Muslim scholars were influenced by Greek philosophy. He noted that certain Muslim scholars embraced the wisdom of Greek philosophy, even attempting to interpret the Qur'an in the light of Greek thought. However, this practice is not feasible due to clear fundamental differences between the Qur'an and Greek philosophy.

Furthermore, concerning the relationship between religion and science, Iqbal asserted that Islam and science are not incompatible. The notion of a conflict between religion and science is not in line with Islamic teachings, despite Islam imparting the inductive technique of logic to humanity³⁷. In summary, moderation in considering various perspectives is acceptable, but it must align with Islamic principles. Engaging within the framework of pragmatics allows for adaptation to enhance creativity in human endeavours. However, Iqbal's philosophy has faced criticism, notably from Prof. Sayyid Muhammad Naquib al-'Attas. According to Sayyid Naquib, asserting a rational foundation for religion, as proposed by Iqbal, requires further scrutiny and contemplation. He argues that expanding on the Western definition of knowledge, particularly in relation to the correspondence theory of truth, may pose challenges for Muslims. For instance, Iqbal's response to the Western dilemma of God's existence cannot be rationally demonstrated. Consequently, Iqbal advocated for a rational foundation for religion. However, Sayyid Naquib contends that a rational foundation is inherent in the foundational principles of Islam and the worldview it presents. According to Sayyid Naquib, attempting to develop Iqbal's philosophy might lead to a

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ Ibid

form of secularised empiricism.³⁸ He emphasises the importance of not attributing to Iqbal intentions or claims he did not make and cautions against moulding him into the kind of Universalist that some imply, like certain Western scholars.

3.3.4 Iqbal and James on Pragmatism

There are various examples in which Iqbal demonstrates how to engage with Western thinking. For both of Iqbal and James, particularly on pragmatism, as their works and contributions are extremely relevant to the issue at hand and can be clearly exemplified for better understanding. Here may deduce some categories from it, such as what James and Iqbal think about "the human person," freedom of will, pluralism, and so on.

One interesting issue to be explored is the "Pragmatic test of religious experience." According to one of the articles,³⁹ there are significant variances in this notion between James and Iqbal. Despite the description in the preceding chapter, pragmatism is an attitude of turning away from first things, principles, categories, presumed requirements, and looking at the last things and their effects, according to James. As a result, the pragmatic test involves determining the worth of something based on its implications.

While Iqbal indicated this, as we can see here, Iqbal also used pragmatic elements, but in this instance, he employed the pragmatic test to evaluate the prophetic experience to attain religious understanding. Again, Iqbal emphasized that he embraced the pragmatic test only for the sake of determining the truth, rather than, like James, to observe the effects of any consumption or assumption. Thus, we need to understand how to implement this concept, particularly for Muslims, in this challenging present day. And, as explained by Iqbal, this is one of the strategies to be applied in any challenging situation for Muslims and Islam. Other than that, there are differing

³⁸ Waheed Qureshi, Iqbal Review, (Journal of the Iqbal Academy), Iqbal Academy Pakistan, p.74-75, October 1996.

³⁹ Nzair Qiser, Iqbal and The Western Philosophies, (Iqbal Academy Pakistan), p.124, 2011.

opinions on the conceptualization of phenomena in the aspect of the “psychology of religion” between Iqbal and James.⁴⁰

3.3.5 Comparison between John Dewey and Iqbal on Education

Despite the issue of the "psychology of religion," there are certain aspects concerning Iqbal and Dewey's views on education as well. Some scholars point out several similar characteristics established by Iqbal and Dewey. Although Iqbal (the Islamic scholar) and Dewey (the founder of pragmatism) have opposing perspectives on the notion of education, the goal of education, as defined by both, is far more comparable. According to one of the articles⁴¹, significant consideration was given to the original works by Dewey and Iqbal for scientific research education throughout the literature review. As a result, this study is interested in exploring how Iqbal explains the notion of education in this scientific study for Muslims.

Before we delve into the specifics, it is important to note that while some aspects of Iqbal's thought were like Dewey's, Iqbal's pragmatic theory of education differs from idealists in the sense that pragmatists do not believe in the existence of eternal values such as "Beauty," "Truth," and "Goodness." In pragmatism in education, life is an experiment in and of itself, and there is no objective toward which children's education must progress. In other words, children must learn for themselves through experimentation and creative action.⁴²

Regarding Iqbal's thoughts on education within the framework of pragmatism, Sayyid Naquib stated that Iqbal's concept of education cannot be fully embraced as he integrated notions from Western philosophy. However, according to this article, even though Iqbal agreed with Dewey's pragmatism and certain components of humanism,

⁴⁰ Asif Iqbal Khan, James and Iqbal, A New Approach to Psychology, Iqbal Review, (Journal of the Iqbal Academy), Iqbal Academy Pakistan, p. 78, October 1996.

⁴¹ Yusrat Hussain, Niaz Muhaamad Aajiz, Muhammad Idress, A Comparative Study of John Dewey and Muhammad Iqbal as Educationists, (Pakistan Journal of Distance & Online Learning), Vol.5, pp.31-44, 2019.

⁴² Abdullah faruqi, Educational Ideas of Iqbal, (First Principle of Education), p.7, Iqbal Academy, Karachi.

he believed that education should not merely focus on material aspects but should also include the spiritual dimension. For instance, Dewey assessed everything, including any theory, hypothesis, faith, or religion, based on its practical outcomes. On the other hand, Iqbal evaluated concepts by their alignment with the ideals of self-development, often rooted in religious authority.⁴³

From this perspective, some argue that Iqbal aligned with certain aspects of Rousseau's pragmatism, Idealism, and naturalism, as well as specific elements of humanism⁴⁴. However, Iqbal also revolutionised religious thinking in Islam, challenging the traditional Muslim education system by integrating religion and science and bridging the gap between science and philosophy. Therefore, it is apparent that Iqbal cannot be categorised as strictly a humanist, idealist, or pragmatist because he formulated his own educational beliefs rooted in his vision of an ideal life.

Moreover, according to another article, Iqbal emphasised positive feedback towards the learning and application of science and scientific research methods. He highlighted that the message brought by the Prophet calls for a dynamic life that utilises scientific research and exploration. This perspective was congruent with the scientific revolution occurring in the early twentieth century. In defence of science, Iqbal stated that the Qur'an is anti-classical, as evidenced by his explanation:⁴⁵

"The Prophet of Islam seems to stand between the ancient and the modern world. As far as the source of his thought is concerned, he belongs to the ancient world. In terms of the spirit of his thought, he belongs to the modern world. From him, people discover different sources of knowledge suitable to its new direction. The birth of Islam is the birth of inductive intellect. In Islam, prophecy reaches its perfection in discovering the need for its abolition."⁴⁶

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Mohd Abbas Abdul Razak, Iqbal's ideas on Science and the Muslims, http://irep.iium.edu.my/7098/1/Iqbal%27s_Ideas_on_Science_and_the_Muslims.pdf

⁴⁶ According to Iqbal, 1996: 100-101, in his writing.

Mohd Abbas Abdul Razak, Iqbal's ideas on Science and the Muslims, http://irep.iium.edu.my/7098/1/Iqbal%27s_Ideas_on_Science_and_the_Muslims.pdf

According to the above article, it is claimed that by utilizing scientific studies from Iqbal's concept of Muslim education, Muslims would be able to restore the past lovely time. Furthermore, despite the contrast between Iqbal and Dewey in terms of education, there are some features of Iqbal's perspectives that can act as guidance for us to effectively navigate the various challenges in this modern world today, particularly for Muslims. In general, his philosophy on education comprises two main elements, namely the theory of education and the method of education, as shown below:⁴⁷

3.3.6 Theory of Education:

The following are important elements in Iqbal's theory of education (the application of his philosophy to the educational process):

1. The notion of good will (*khudi*), which enhances an individual's intrinsic powers, forms the core of Iqbal's theory of education, upon which the rest of his thought structure is built. From this perspective, education (*ta'lim-o-tarbiyah*) is the process of revealing an individual's latent potentials and channelling them towards virtue (*khair*).
2. Education is about fostering positive change. According to this viewpoint, if a person or a nation attempts to retreat from conflict or becomes passive, their individuality (*khudi*) will lose colour or vigour, and their potential will go unmet.
3. Education is, by definition, a human undertaking. Acquiring knowledge is a natural human desire that eventually aids in making choices between what is good (*khair*) and what is harmful (*sharr*), and between what is right (*haqq*) and what is unjust (*batil*).
4. The basis of education is to study and evaluate global research before developing one's own point of view. "Our job is to closely monitor the

⁴⁷ Fareeha Nudrat and Muhammad Saeed Akhtar, Understanding Iqbal's Educational Thought, (The Dialogue, Volume IX Number 2, https://www.qurtuba.edu.pk/thedialogue/The%20Dialogue/9_2/Dialogue_April_June2014_193-204.pdf)

growth of human thinking and to maintain an independent critical attitude toward it," writes Iqbal.

5. An education system based solely on intuitive demands without purification (based on absolute knowledge requirements) will develop a maladjusted and split personality. Only by addressing the correct and just natural demands of the spirit (*ruh*), mind (*aql*), and body (*jasad*) can a balanced and healthy personality be developed. Without axiological emphasis, education would be either ineffective or harmful. Education, in this view, is never without value. Overall, education is comprehensive, harmonic, and balanced only when it is disseminated throughout one's entire life, i.e., from here to the afterlife. Education that advocates only for life—with no connection to the afterlife—is twisted and flawed.⁴⁸ Iqbal's entire educational process comprises four aspects: educational goals, curriculum, teacher's role and approach, and evaluation. All these four aspects of the process of education involve the integration of both religious and material aspects.⁴⁹

3.3.7 Education's Goals

- 1) Produce a true personality (*mu'min*) by strengthening his/her unique individuality (*khudi*) to fulfill their destined role in the world and meet the diverse challenges of all times.
- 2) Develop an everlasting attachment and profound love (*ishq*) for the last Prophet (peace be upon him) and practically follow him (peace be upon him) as a role model of ideal character in every domain of life.

⁴⁸ Ibid

⁴⁹ Ibid

3.3.8 Curriculum

- 1) Curriculum must include core knowledge drawn from the following areas to produce a balanced personality:
 - a) Compulsory Components: Revealed knowledge, i.e., the Quran and Sunnah, as a mandatory component and the foundation of the entire curricular scheme. This component must be presented at all levels of all disciplines. Moral education in this regard is thus a required component of the curriculum.
 - b) Humanities and Social Sciences: Humanities and social sciences subjects that are essential for the social, material, and spiritual betterment of humanity must be developed in the perspective of a compulsory component. In this context, Islamic culture, and cultural languages, particularly Arabic, should be incorporated into all levels of education. Sciences such as Natural-Physical Sciences and technologies, essentially helpful in acquiring material benefit and bringing world peace, should be an essential part of the curriculum. Excellence and competence in this area should be for the total welfare of the whole world under Divine blessing (*rahmat*).
- 2) The preceding points assert the overall supremacy and direction of the mandatory component, revealed knowledge. Objectives, this type of curriculum addresses not only the 'requirements of life,' but also the 'objectives of life.' In fact, the latter is the most important.
- 3) 'History' should be a required subject at all levels of education. Rather than relying on materialistic philosophical interpretations, moralistic philosophical interpretations should be preferred in understanding the causes of a nation's rise and fall (*uruj-o- zawal*).
- 4) At every educational stage, subjects/skills that develop artistic and creative expression should be included in the curriculum. However, the prescribed curricular activities should not be used to negate eternal moral, ethical, and aesthetical norms in the name of 'Art.'
- 5) Religion, philosophy, and science must come to an agreement. Philosophy and science rooted in religion are best suited to the minds of today and future generations. Atheistic and secular ideas must be checked in all areas

of studies because they pollute the human mind. Iqbal asserted that "the only course open to us is to approach modern knowledge with a respectful but independent attitude and to appreciate the teachings of Islam in light of that knowledge..."⁵⁰

- 6) For the better and healthy development of women, the curriculum should not include content that contradicts a woman's unique personality (*nisaiyat*).
- 7) Co/extracurricular activities that align with educational goals will play a significant role in the overall development of the body, mind, and spirit. Such activities should be carefully organised and monitored by the educational institution.
- 8) Change for the better is a key component of Iqbal's curriculum model. Change for the sake of change, ignoring established perennial values, and destroying cultural heritage, on the other hand, is not acceptable. Overall, the curriculum at all levels should be developed using a balanced approach based on 'past-present-future' needs and prospects.⁵¹

3.3.9 Teacher's Role and Methodology

This view from Iqbal methodologies as details:

- 1) Iqbal regarded the teacher as a central and unique figure in shaping students' personalities toward spiritual and moral development during the teaching-learning process. Khawaja Ghulam Saiyadain beautifully interpreted this, stating that a teacher is a person of character, a role model, and an "architect of men's souls."
- 2) Respect (*ihtram*) for humanity (*aadamiyat*) is the essence of humanity. Iqbal asserted that in education, the concept of respect is manifested in the form that teachers should respect their students, and students should respect

⁵⁰ Fareeha Nudrat and Muhammad Saeed Akhtar, Understanding Iqbal's Educational Thought, (The Dialogue, Volume IX Number 2, https://www.qurtuba.edu.pk/thedialogue/The%20Dialogue/9_2/Dialogue_April_June2014_193-204.pdf)

⁵¹ Fareeha Nudrat and Muhammad Saeed Akhtar, Understanding Iqbal's Educational Thought, (The Dialogue, Volume IX Number 2, https://www.qurtuba.edu.pk/thedialogue/The%20Dialogue/9_2/Dialogue_April_June2014_193-204.pdf)

their teachers. Mutual respect is essential for an efficient teaching-learning process.

- 3) An immoral teacher and a value-free school environment undermine students' moral integrity. Iqbal condemned teachers who use instructional methods that have no bearing on character development.
- 4) The role of the teacher is to diagnose, polish, and activate students' hidden potentials to channel them toward goodness. It is undesirable to simply pour information into the minds of students without exercising reflection or foresight (*taddubar*). The teacher's subject excellence and pedagogical competence (*salahiyat*), righteousness, moral model (*salihiyat*), and the overall healthy institutional climate inspire students to adopt and practice desirable values.
- 5) Methods such as lecture, dialogue, discussion, nature study, and research projects are very effective depending on the age and grade, but not in a free-thinking and value-free environment. Students gradually acquire knowledge under the overall guidance of the teacher, eventually shifting to reflective and critical thinking. However, the teacher should be wary of thinking that leads to scepticism about eternal truths.

In general, to improve the teaching-learning process, the school and classroom should be an axiological place linked with the critical precondition of the mandatory curriculum component.⁵²

3.3.10 Evaluation

- 1) The evaluation system should address both the transmission (instruction) and transformational aspects of the process (*tarbyiah*). The emphasis of evaluation should be on reflective and creative abilities.

⁵² Fareeha Nudrat and Muhammad Saeed Akhtar, Understanding Iqbal's Educational Thought, (The Dialogue, Volume IX Number 2, https://www.qurtuba.edu.pk/thedialogue/The%20Dialogue/9_2/Dialogue_April_June2014_193-204.pdf)

- 2) Students' evaluation should also be based on practical learning/participation in social work, depending on their level of education.
- 3) When assessing students' progress, both formative and summative components must be considered. Because the teacher is involved in the formative evaluation process, particularly in instilling permanent values and maintaining subject excellence, they are the best judge for the overall evaluation of students' learning.⁵³

As a result of the foregoing, it can be inferred that Iqbal's education philosophy reflects the inspiration of Islamic theology as well as concern for the responsibility and personality of educationists. Hopefully, it will be a guideline for teaching Muslim children at any educational institution because the concepts presented by Iqbal are quite distinctive from Western education, with few similarities between Iqbal and Dewey in terms of educational ideas.

3.3.11 Iqbal's Critic on Western thought

This section of the chapter will describe Iqbal's criticisms of the West in terms of democracy, although there are a few elements showing Iqbal's agreement with Dewey's education philosophy. However, in terms of democracy, Iqbal is a political and economic critic of the West. This demonstrates Iqbal as a conscious Muslim as he constantly strives for a balanced lifestyle for himself and Muslim people, especially in these difficult times for Islam and Muslims.

According to Iqbal, there are some aspects of secularism and materialism in the Western concept of democracy that lack a spiritual element. From these points of view, we can see that Western people will strive to modify things as time goes on, and we can also say that they will try to use a pragmatic approach in this democratic system, which is not acceptable by everyone, especially Muslims due to the eternal sources of guidance

⁵³ Fareeha Nudrat and Muhammad Saeed Akhtar, Understanding Iqbal's Educational Thought, (The Dialogue, Volume IX Number 2, https://www.qurtuba.edu.pk/thedialogue/The%20Dialogue/9_2/Dialogue_April_June2014_193-204.pdf)

and principles to make life better and comfortable. Iqbal contended that the ideal democratic system was the caliphate system that underpins the concept of Tawheed and a sense of equality. But, according to Iqbal, republicanism is not only entirely in accordance with the core of Islam but is a real requirement of the day. The phrase "practical need" here can be connected to the pragmatic notion, but we must know how to apply it as Muslims.⁵⁴

3.4 PRAGMATISM AND PRAGMATIC FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ISLAMIC WORLDVIEW

For this topic, we will explore the meaning of the term's pragmatism and pragmatic from an Islamic perspective as discussed by scholars other than Sayyid Qutb and Muhammad Iqbal. Before delving into the definition, it's essential to understand the concepts of pragmatism and pragmatic. Some argue that pragmatic is a subset of pragmatism. However, the term pragmatic often specifically refers to the linguistic aspect, while pragmatism, as explained earlier, encompasses a broader philosophical approach. Therefore, in this context, we aim to examine how pragmatics has been applied by Muslims and the Islamic perspective on pragmatism.

According to an article⁵⁵, the concept of truth from the perspectives of pragmatism and Islam contradicts each other. In Islam, truth is considered absolute and real, while in pragmatism, truth is contingent on individuals and may be adjusted to suit their needs. To aid in comprehending the notion of pragmatism, the discussion is divided into two sections: ideology and methodology.

From an ideological perspective, pragmatism is seen as focusing solely on the benefit of people and adhering to their demands, rejecting the idea of truth from rationalism and idealism. From a methodological standpoint, pragmatists often rely on their own interpretations, presenting a direct conflict with Islam. In Islam, there is an

⁵⁴ Farrukh Aziz Ansari and Asifa Abbas, Allama Iqbal's Critique of Western Democracy, (Research on Humanities and Social Sciences), Vol.8, No14, 2018.

⁵⁵ Fauziah Nurdin, Kebenaran Menurut Pragmatisme Dan Tanggapannya Terhadap Islam, (Jurnal Ilmiah, Islam Futura), vol. 13. No 2, p. 184-200, February 2014.

absolute truth and permanent guidance applicable to all scenarios and conditions, suitable for all individuals.⁵⁶

Furthermore, as shown earlier, there is another viewpoint that supports the rejection of pragmatism. According to Mohd Farid Mohd Shahrar, even if pragmatism offers many benefits to people today, we cannot incorporate it into our lives if we are aware that pragmatism is generally not acceptable for Muslims. The rejection of metaphysics in pragmatism, as emphasised by Mohd Farid and Khalif Muammar, may lead people astray from God.⁵⁷ Moreover, Sayyid Naquib al-Attas stressed in his writing "Risalah Untuk Kaum Muslimin" that the development of pragmatism for people from a scientific point of view cannot be applied because, according to him, pragmatism is a tool for people and cannot be used as a life value.⁵⁸

According to Khalif Muammar, pragmatism relies solely on reason for any purpose in life and leads to ideologies such as liberalism, modernism, humanism, and atheism. Furthermore, the pragmatic characteristic supporting the relativity of truth, as emphasised by Khalif Muammar, leads to the idea of pluralism, as discussed in James's writing on his concept of the truth theory. Importantly, this pluralism contradicts Islamic principles. Meanwhile, Abdul Rahman Haji Abdullah concluded that pragmatism would result in a lack of morality because its features prioritise the practical application of material things, introducing ideologies such as utilitarianism and hedonism. Consequently, individuals become more individualistic and, ultimately, disillusioned with humanism. Additionally, as highlighted by al-Qaradawi, materialism and pragmatism are humanistic ideologies that have developed in Western countries.⁵⁹ Therefore, pragmatism cannot be essentially relied upon for the development of the Ummah due to its many disadvantages and a lack of spiritual and moral foundation. However, in certain cases in this challenging world, Muslims are allowed to incorporate Western ideas if they do not violate Islamic principles. It is important for Muslims to first consider the divine sources in Islam, which are the Quran and Sunnah, in the search for solutions to life's challenges before carefully consulting Western ideas. This is

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ Kamal Azmi Abd Rahman, Indriaty Ismail, Mohd. Nasir Omar, Islam Dan Pragmatisme William James, (e- Jurnal Penyelidikan dan Inovasi, Vol. III, No 1, p. 23-42, April 2016.

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ Ibid

because Islam is a comprehensive way of life and a code of conduct revealed for the well-being of all mankind.⁶⁰

The notion of truth in Islam is derived from the same source, which is affirmation and obedience to the one and only God. Doing well is not merely a goal for the afterlife but also for today. This is Islam's realistic and universal approach, in which Islam enjoins good and forbids evil in all realms of life, both in the present and the afterlife.⁶¹

Moreover, another example of pragmatics is exhibited in the practice of "Ijtihad," from which we can conclude that Islam is pragmatic in terms of material things. The process of "Ijtihad" is utilising intellectual ability to solve issues in everyday life with the reflection of the main sources of Islam. This can be exemplified in the field of "fiqh" in which this pragmatic approach of 'ijtihad' is used to derive 'hukum' and guidelines. Again, according to this literature, from Noraini Ismail, pragmatics is not completely rejected by Islam. It is also said that it is difficult to construct a precise word or name since it comes from the pragmatics of deed and is linked to God, not simply a simple Western name⁶². From this point of view, one can see that according to Islam, one can be pragmatic and even call oneself pragmatics, but we still have our own style and do not focus solely on things like the West does. As a result, we must first grasp what is meant by pragmatism in the West, as well as the terms pragmatism and pragmatics in Islam. To better appreciate this point of view, Islam would reject pragmatics in the form of ("ism"- pragmatism) because although it allows us to think about pragmatic issues, it denies all Islamic universal principles. According to this point of view, pragmatics are the traits or beliefs that take into consideration all of the repercussions. In daily life, Muslims use pragmatic ideals. However, when it comes to our "*Akidah*," we cannot modify it in any way.

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ http://studentsrepo.um.edu.my/176/4/BAB_1.pdf

⁶² http://studentsrepo.um.edu.my/176/6/BAB_3.pdf

3.5 METHODOLOGIES AND TYPES OF PRAGMATISM OR PRAGMATIC FOR MUSLIM

As we can see from the preceding paragraphs, there are certain important aspects of pragmatism in Islam, but we do not call it pragmatic, and there is no unique label to express it, as was said before. There are many different sorts of pragmatism, as previously discussed, and some people agree with them if they adhere to Islamic principles. Therefore, this section will explain the forms of pragmatism or pragmatics we may apply to a certain situation if necessary.

First and foremost, we can take into consideration Iqbal's education philosophy, as his views are agreed upon by many scholars in the context of education and applicable to our modern education today. When we need to evaluate the syllabus and methodology that is applicable for today, particularly in Malaysia, we can consult his ideas. The education system in Malaysia will be discussed further in the next chapter.⁶³

Also, Iqbal does not limit the value of education to the material aim but also recognises the necessity for spiritual qualities. This pragmatic idea is contradictory to the idealists who do not believe in the presence of God. This is a good exemplification of pragmatics in Islam, in which being pragmatic must be true to Islam and not exceeding the boundary of "*Akidah*."⁶⁴ As a result, including the elements of fact, value knowledge, and God in education is a pragmatic way of treating education as the medium of knowledge that has a quality of truth to be practiced in human daily life.⁶⁵ But, there is a need for Muslims to recognise the certain pragmatic principles that do not adhere to the Islamic guideline.

There is another example of how pragmatics has been used for Muslims. According to this article by Ahmad Majdi, some research has been conducted on the dialogues of the Quran. This study looks at deixis, which is one of the pragmatic elements in the Quran dialogues, and how it affects specific recipients. As previously

⁶³ Abdullah faruqi, Educational Ideas of Iqbal, (First Principle of Education), Iqbal Academy, Karachi.

⁶⁴ Ibid

⁶⁵ Aminuddin hassan, Asmawati Suhid, NorHasni Zainal Abiddin, Habsah Ismail, Haziyah Hussin, The Role of Islamic Philosophy of Education in Aspiring Holistic Learning, (Elsevier, Social and Behavioral Scinces), 2113-2118, 2010.

mentioned, the term pragmatics also refers to the linguistic context, which is one example for language study and how pragmatics was used in Islam. As we all know, the Quran narrations differ from other forms of storytelling. As a result, the researcher from this article mentions that the dialogue is a pragmatic study that deals with language and its reality. Moreover, to improve the recipients' understanding of the Quran, pragmatic thinking is required.⁶⁶ For example, from the explanation, there are some discussions or dialogues from the Quran that deal with the context of pragmatics in language. And we can see from Sayyid Qutb's explanation of Moses' stories in the Quran.⁶⁷

What we can say here is that we need to practice pragmatic thinking not only in understanding the Quran but also in our daily lives to navigate the challenges of this modern world effectively and successfully. The pragmatic elements, such as when dealing with current issues, require careful consideration, and this claim in interpretation can promote a systematic and analytical pragmatic thinking. However, the focus should be on improving the understanding of the Quran in a solid and clear way of the texts. Besides the dialogue in the Quran narrations that use the pragmatics methodology, there is also a study explaining the use of pragmatics in the translation of the Quran, particularly the *ayats* [verses] related to the five pillars of Islam.⁶⁸

There is also another study explaining the use of pragmatics in religious expressions in Najdi Arabic. The pragmatics here refer to language. In this study, the researchers observe religious words in some social interactions in Najdi Arabic society, and each word will show its interpretations as well as contribute to the understanding of religious and cultural experiences. For example, the literal meaning of "*La ilaha illa Allah*" (There is no God but Allah) is commonly known as "shahada" (the testimony); however, in some major Islamic traditions, it is also part of the remembrance for God, which is "*dhikir*." There are many terms used from religious words in our daily life. As

⁶⁶ Ahmad Majdi b Mat sallah, Deixis in Quran Narrations' Dialogues and Its Impacts on Recipients: A Pragmatic Study, (Proceeding: 1st Internasional Conference on Teaching & Learning, Langkawi, Malaysia, 14-15 Sept, 2015).

⁶⁷ Qur'an 40: 23-44

⁶⁸ Desy Nur Wahyu Ningsih, A Pragmatic Analysis of Directive Utterances in the Translation of Holy Al-Quran Particularly on the Verses of Five Pillars of Islam, (Submitted as a partial Fulfilment of the Requirement), English Department, School of Teacher Training and education, Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, Indonesia, 2014.

we all know, every religious word has slightly different expressions of meaning due to the diverse cultures of Muslim people all over the world.⁶⁹

Regardless of the language, there is another study on an ethical problem of language practice from an Islamic perspective. It is claimed that pragmatics plays an important role in this situation. The study focused on the elements of speech act theory, conversational implicature, talk in interaction, and other approaches to language behaviour in philosophy, sociology, linguistics, and anthropology. In other words, pragmatics in this context refers to the use of linguistic signs, particularly sentences, in real or imagined situations. To address the moral issue, Islam instructs us to use language morally and for useful purposes, such as advising someone to do a good thing out of kindness. So, based on the teachings of Islam, we can conclude that there are some advantages to using pragmatics in the context of language or linguistics, and we can apply it appropriately based on the teaching of Islam.⁷⁰

Another important point to note about pragmatics is that, according to a study by Kamal, Indriaty, and Mohd Nasir, Islam emphasises the aspects of pragmatics in Muslim life from the beginning. Islam integrates theory and practice, which makes it more stable than pragmatism, which focuses solely on logic and experience. Then, Islam does not state any abstract or idealistic principles but rather pragmatic principles that people can apply. As a result, according to Khalif Muammar, we as Muslims must reconsider our life goals, which he mentioned:⁷¹

Apa yang berlaku sebenarnya umat Islam mengejar matlamat yang salah. Umat Islam menjadi obses untuk mengejar sains dan teknologi barat dengan mengikuti kaedah-kaedah yang ditentukan oleh barat. Maka dengan demikian umat Islam hanya akan selamanya menjadi pengikut. Sepatutnya yang dilakukan adalah membina keupayaan dan kemampuan. Walaupun dari mata kasar sains dan teknologi lebih mudah diukur dan dicapai tetapi dalam membangunkan bangsa jalan yang mudah

⁶⁹ Yousef Ibrahim al- Rojaie, (The Pragmatic Functions of Religious Expressions in najdi Arabic), Saudi Journal of language Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 3-25, 2021.

⁷⁰ M.Hum, Ethical Problems Related to Language Practice in Islamic Perspective, (Jurnal kajian Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman), Vol. No 1, Jun 2017.

⁷¹ Kamal Azmi Abd Rahman, Indriaty Ismail, Mohd Nasir Omar, Islam Dan pragmatisme William James, (e- Jurnal Penyelidikan dan Inovasi, Vol. 3, N0. 1, P. 23-14, April 2016.

*selalunya tidak bermakna. Kerana umat Islam seperti mengejar bayang-bayang, umat Islam sentiasa di belakang. Maka selagi budaya maju dan budaya ilmu tidak wujud umat Islam tidak akan berada di hadapan*⁷²

Another example is a paper by Elkhosht,⁷³ which explained the general features of epistemological and critical concerns in contemporary philosophy, particularly in Arab countries. In addition, it also mentioned how pragmatism is used in this situation. This paper was written in response to the Islamic nation's deteriorating conditions, as well as the Arabs' exposure to any trend that came from the West. Thus, all ideologies entered the Islamic world, and pragmatism, as one of the ideologies, was one of them. According to this paper, Muhammad Abid Al-Jabari used a pragmatic methodology for the application of pragmatism at the time. However, he did not consider these concepts to be moulds but rather "working tools," as evidenced by the details in his book "Contemporary Arab Discourse." Overall, as we can see from the explanations, he did not apply pragmatism, even though many Western ideologies of the time did.

Despite the deterioration in Islamic countries, according to this article, they attempted to change the conventional system to an Islamic system in terms of the economy. As a result, the pragmatics of Islamic finance or Islamic banking is introduced into the economic system for Muslims. Meanwhile, some experts argue that this pragmatic application in Islamic finance is justified. However, some other experts issue new requirements in the areas of Islamic finance, such as all process models must be within the context of Islamic banking, and all related transactions must adhere to Islamic processes such as "*mudarabah*," "*musharakah*," "*ijarah*," and "*qard al-hasan*" in terms of any investments or business processes⁷⁴. Despite the mixed views on the issue,

⁷² Translation, what occurs is that all Muslims have the incorrect goals and end up becoming fixated on Western modern science and technology, as well as lovers of their ideologies and devoted followers. Nevertheless, in current times, Muslims must develop their own traditions using their skills. Even while we can see how contemporary science and technology might be beneficial today, if we don't prioritise knowledge, Muslims will constantly lag and be permanently left behind. According to him also, Muslims require spiritual guidance from an Islamic perspective and cannot follow trends such as Western philosophy. This is because Islam does not require any evolution in any aspect because it is revealed by God rather than created by humans.)

⁷³ Mohamed Othman Elkhosht, Contemporary Islamic Philosophy Response to Reality and Thinking Outside History, (Journal of Humanities and Applied, Social Sciences), Emerald Publishing Limited, Vol 1, No 1, pp. 2-24, 2019.

⁷⁴ Karim Ullah, Noor Suhaida kasri, The Pragmatics of Islamic Finance, (Journal of Islamic Business and Management), p. 213-217, 2018.

people, especially in Malaysia, are continuing to use Islamic products offered by all the Islamic banks in Malaysia that serve all Muslim clients or customers.

Pragmatics is also evident in the context of Islamic Jurisprudence. According to this book by Mohamed Yunis Ali, because it deals with the pragmatic thinking of Muslim legal theorists, the term "jurisprudence" should be replaced with the term "*fiqh*," which literally means "understanding." However, we must recognise that the primary goal of the principles of '*fiqh*' is to successfully grasp Allah's and His Prophet's intentions through the Quran and Sunnah. This book also discusses the linguistic and communicative aspects in '*fiqh*'. The examples of communication in this book, such as those from mainstream legal theorists, assume that any communication involves the following:⁷⁵

1. *Wad'* (meaning assignment to expressions), which is carried out by the language's creator.
2. *Dalalah* (signification), which is a result of *wad'* and contextual information,
3. *Isti'mal* (use), the production of an utterance by a speaker with the intention of conveying a specific meaning.
4. *Haml* (interpretation), the hearer's own interpretation of the speaker's intention. On the other hand, pragmatics literally means the science of use, and *isti'mal* also means.⁷⁶

As we can see, Muslim legal theories do not place a premium on formal or functional study of meaning but rather on establishing a general principle of an approach to accurately understand religious texts as well as the lives of Muslims in this world and the next.

⁷⁵ Mohamed Yunis Ali, *Medieval Islamic Pragmatics, Sunni Legal Theorist's Models of Textual Communication*, Curzon Press, Richmond Surrey, printed and bound in Great Britain by TJ International, Padstow, Cornwall, 2000.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*

3.6 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter discusses pragmatism from an Islamic point of view, focusing on the perspectives of Sayyid Qutb and Muhammad Iqbal. Both scholars provide unique interpretations of how pragmatism influences Muslim life, particularly in terms of economy, politics, and education, presenting challenges, especially in the modern world. In addition to these prominent scholars, the chapter explores the definitions of pragmatism from various Muslim scholars, noting some opposing it in specific areas and others accepting it with conditions.

The chapter also emphasises the types and methodologies of pragmatism for Muslims. Before delving into a detailed discussion of the methodologies, it addresses the meaning of the term "pragmatics." The discussion reveals various assumptions and rejections of these ideologies in different areas. Lastly, the chapter provides a clear understanding of the types of pragmatism and its application for Muslims or Islam. The subsequent chapter will further explore modern education and pragmatism, particularly in Malaysia. It will closely examine concepts of modern education in Malaysia, pragmatic issues and challenges in education, and the distinctions between Islamic Education and the philosophy of pragmatism in education.

CHAPTER FOUR

MODERN EDUCATION AND PRAGMATISM IN MALAYSIA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is globally notable for its diverse population encompassing various ethnicities and religions. This diversity necessitates the formulation of a comprehensive education policy capable of addressing the needs of all races in the nation. Currently, Malaysia is actively implementing new educational policies aligned with its national educational system. Rahimah Haji Ahmad has noted that Malaysia's education system is presently undergoing reforms to better align with the country's ongoing development.¹

Since gaining independence, Malaysia's education system has undergone numerous changes and modifications. Following the departure of the British colonial authority, which left behind the former educational system, a gradual transition from the British (English School) education system to a Malaysian school system, with a focus on a uniquely Malaysian-oriented curriculum, occurred in 1961. In 1979, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohammed, a former Prime Minister of Malaysia, introduced changes to the curriculum aimed at enhancing the country's education system. His emphasis was on a holistic approach to all levels of schooling, encompassing the intellectual, spiritual, physical, and emotional development of students in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.²

Many scholars have acknowledged Malaysia's sound and stable educational system. However, in response to the current state of globalisation and recent insights in education, the government deemed it necessary to implement pragmatic policies for better outcomes. This was done with the aim of providing students with the best possible opportunities for their futures. This study delves into Malaysia's education system in the context of the modern world, which is dynamic and challenging. The chapter explores how pragmatism is applied in the Malaysian education landscape, with a

¹ Rahimah Haji Ahmad, Educational Development, and reformation in Malaysia: past, present and future, (Journal of Educational Administration), Vol. 36, No 5, p. 462-475, December 1998

² Ibid

specific focus on its relevance for Muslims. It analyses the elements and significance of pragmatism in education, followed by an insightful discussion on pragmatism and Islamic education for Muslims.

4.2 CONCEPT OF MODERN EDUCATION

As mentioned earlier, despite the diversity in cultures, religions, and people, all Malaysians constitutionally enjoy the right to education, particularly regarding Islamic education for Muslim citizens³. Before delving into the detailed discussion on the need for Islamic education and its connection to a pragmatic education system in Malaysia, it is imperative to first understand the public school system in Malaysia. In summary, Malaysia has established six regulatory frameworks in its educational system to develop people's potential in a holistic and integrated manner. This is done to create individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically balanced, based on a strong belief and devotion to God. The following are the six regulatory frameworks:

- Education Act, 1996
- Private Higher Educational Institutions Act, 1996
- National Council on Higher Education Act, 1996
- National Accreditation Board Act, 1996
- Universities and University Colleges (Amendment) Act, 1996
- National Higher Education Fund Board Act, 1997.⁴

From the above explanation, we can see that there are certain pragmatic elements that constitute the system. We will also analyse later how pragmatism is applied in the Malaysian education system and what the Islamic educational system's viewpoint on the subject is.

³ Zaleha Kamaruddin, Ismail Sheikh Ahmad, and Syahnaz Sulaiman, Education for All and Children's Right To Education in Malaysia, (Educational Awakening: Journal of the Educational Sciences, Vol 2, No. 2, 2005).

⁴ Ibid

4.2.1 Education System in Malaysia

This section will provide details on Malaysia's education system. As known to many, Malaysia offers a comprehensive curriculum and syllabus that corresponds to each student's needs and development. For instance, it offers early childhood education for children between the ages of 4-6, known as kindergarten. The children will then attend primary school beginning at the age of 7 years old until they are 12 years old. This primary school has its own curriculum⁵. Although this approach to education can be said to be pragmatic, most education institutions, from my opinion, place more emphasis on the mastery of theoretical knowledge than the practical application of the knowledge.

Pragmatically, the Malaysian government shoulders the responsibility to ensure the relevance and practicality of the education system in accordance with the transformation as well as globalisation taking place in the modern world, and at the same time, still focuses crucially on Islamic education policy as well.⁶ This article demonstrates how the globalisation policies have evolved and affected some aspects of the educational philosophy that has been applied in Malaysia. In general, pragmatism has not been completely abandoned, and other philosophical perspectives such as idealism, realism, and existentialism have also been considered. It is said that this country is genuinely revising its policy in a way that also takes Islamic principles into account.

In line with the above argument, it is noted that on one side, the Malaysian education system strikes a well balance human being, and on the other, the curriculum and education system maintain an inclusive approach that is suited for all ethnic communities within one nation. This is due to the government's efforts to promote unity and harmony among Malaysia's various races through the platform of education. Below are the four concepts in education:

⁵ Rahimah Haji Ahmad, Educational Development, and reformation in Malaysia: past, present and future, (Journal of Educational Administration, Vol. 36, No 5, p. 462-475, December 1998).

⁶ Ikwana Lubis SE MM, Maimun Aqsha Lubis, Siti Hajar Taib, Mohd Azaharin Ismail, Wan Ali Akbar Wan Abdullah, Dasar Falsafah Dan Polisi Pendidikan Bersepadu: Pengalaman Malaysia, (ASEAN Comparative Education Research Journal on Islam and Civilization), Volume 4 (1), p. 1-19, January 2021.

1. creativity
2. reflectivity
3. reciprocity
4. Responsibility.

One of these four concepts, reflection, is a concept from John Dewey's 1933 book "How We Think," and it is one of the four⁷. As a result, as we can see once more, some components of pragmatism are used in Malaysia's education system. To occasionally improve the work, it is necessary to apply this notion to both students and teachers. Additionally, despite providing appropriate education for everyone in Malaysia, according to most scholars about the Malaysian education system, some aspects of the education system focus more on Islamic education as a positive response to globalisation. However, because Muslims make up most of the country's population, Islamic education plays a significant role in this context.

4.2.2 Islamic Education System in Malaysia

Muslims are constantly confronted with challenges in life, and the most recent challenges are of an ideological nature. Therefore, it is important to review the educational system in terms of the use of various pedagogical approaches, particularly regarding the education of Muslim youth. Among these approaches are the pedagogy of philosophical inquiry and the pedagogy of Islamic philosophical inquiry as part of the Malaysian educational system, alongside other aspects of the education system.⁸

From these perspectives, there are practical components to this discussion, and it is crucial that we employ appropriate techniques to address any societal concerns that students may be experiencing today. For instance, a dialogue between two people will take place using this method, with an instructor serving as their guide⁹. Consequently, we can assert that once the lecture or class is over, students can apply the lesson, engage

⁷ Ibid, p.8.

⁸ Rosnani Hashim, "Menghidupkan Semula Pedagogi Inkuiri Falsafah Di Kalangan Pendidik Dan pelajar Islam", (Jurnal Pendidikan Islam 13,2).

⁹ Ibid

in peer discussion, and possibly come up with a solution to any problem, all while making use of the Qur'an and Hadith. Scholars suggest that this methodology can be applied to all subjects, including Islamic Education, language, and science. I believe that we also need to implement this strategy in all lower and higher education institutions to help students understand concepts better, if it does not go against Islamic principles, especially for Muslims. This is because some academic programs offered by institutions in Malaysia still use outdated curricula from the colonial era, such as secular curricula.

In addition, there is a claim stating that reintroducing Islamic philosophy into the curriculum is one of the most crucial aspects of maintaining a solid Islamic education for Muslim pupils. This means that, when dealing with a particular issue that will also be beneficial to others, we need to be realistic. According to this study, many graduates do not think critically, creatively, or independently. For example, many experts in Islamic studies can handle matters related to the *Shari'ah* and *fiqh* but struggle to adequately address many other important modern challenges¹⁰. There are imbalances and a lack of integration between theoretical and practical knowledge in this regard. In this case, a pragmatic approach to education seems relevant because it fulfils some of the requirements of contemporary life and society.

Despite all the imbalanced concerns in education mentioned above, the previous scholar also included some suggestions to deal with the problem. From the explanation, the pragmatic technique seems to be the best way to address the problems. For instance, it is suggested that:

1. The curriculum needs to be changed to become more holistic and integrated, considering the professional services and liberal/intellectual needs of society. This means, for example, that the curriculum must contain a core representing the Islamic intellectual disciplines, such as human science, arts and literature, science and mathematics, and the humanities. The best teachers must be chosen based on the educators' expertise.

¹⁰ Rosnani Hashim, Intellectualism in Higher Islamic Traditional Studies: Implications for the Curriculum, (The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences 24:3, 2007)

2. To meet the needs of the present, the educational approach must be reconsidered.¹¹

Other than that, there is another article by Saim Kayadibi and Ahmad Hidayat Buang that supports the previous explanation. According to them, to keep up with globalisation, many educational institutions have introduced Islamic studies in English as well as in Arabic, in addition to Malay. This article also claims that globalisation has increased the attention given by nations to global issues, as well as increasing the level and prestige of Islamic education to a higher level, where such education was once only offered by the Pondok or Madrasah systems¹². In terms of pragmatism, such a phenomenon of globalisation can be maximised in spreading Islamic values when teaching in Arabic and English, as well as becoming a focal point for many Islamic and European countries¹³. Additionally, higher education is significantly affected by globalisation, particularly in the case of Islamic studies, which encompasses not only the study of the core tenets of the Muslim faith but also the study of the sciences and religion from the viewpoint of Muslims.

In relation to the previously mentioned point, Ikwan and others¹⁴ stated that it is crucial to note that the development of the Malaysian education system has resulted in a change in Islamic education in accordance with the Ministry of Education's policy, which is based on both the National philosophy and the philosophy of Islamic education. The changes in the Malaysian education system reflect the needs of the people¹⁵. Noteworthy, in today's world of globalisation, it is crucial to integrate religious and scientific knowledge. First, as we know, in Malaysia, the idea of integrating economic, cultural, and religious elements into education has been carefully rationalised, while Islamic education is based on reliable Islamic sources, namely the Quran and Hadith. Secondly, it is worth mentioning that the philosophy of the globalisation of education is conceptualised from the general philosophy of education,

¹¹ Ibid p. 113.

¹² Saim Kayadibi, Ahmad Hidayat Buang, *The Role of Islamic Studies in Muslim Civilization in the Globalized World: Malaysian Experience*, (Jurnal Hadhari 3, 2, p.83-102, 2011).

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ikwan Lubis, Maimun Aqsha Lubis, Siti Hajar, Mohd Azaharin, Wan Ali Akbar, *Dasar Falsafah Dan Polisi Pendidikan Bersepadu: Pengalaman Malaysia*, (ASEAN Comparative Education Research Journal on Islam and Civilization), Vol 4 (1), pg 1-19, January 2021.

¹⁵ Ananda Devan Sivalingam, *History of Malaysian Education System: Year 1824 to 2025*, (Social Sciences Education eJournal), November 22, 2020.

which incorporates elements from different schools of thought, including idealism, realism, pragmatism, and existentialism. This means that in this globalised world, the concept of education in Malaysia must change according to the globalised world without neglecting Islamic principles, especially for Muslims.

These explanations lead us to the conclusion that Malaysia can implement the integration program, and that Muslim students require additional attention¹⁶. As mentioned by Rosnani Hashim¹⁷, due to modernisation and global changes, Islamic education must also transform and strike a balance between academic and Islamic education using the philosophy of pedagogical inquiry mentioned in the earlier paragraph. The philosophy of inquiry is basically research into an idea or concept to generate more in-depth knowledge because it incorporates discussion and dialogue in this context. The exploration and analysis of philosophical ideas, theories, and concepts within the context of education are referred to as philosophical inquiry in education. To comprehend the fundamental concerns and challenges surrounding education and its underlying philosophical presumptions, it entails engaging in critical thinking, contemplation, and discussion. The nature of knowledge, the goal of education, the role of the teacher, the connection between education and society, and the ethical implications of education are just a few of the issues that are the subject of philosophical research in the field of education. It challenges academics, learners, and researchers to consider these issues carefully and to examine educational practices and regulations.¹⁸

Moreover, Nik Rosila Nik Yaacob asserted that the current Malaysian education system implemented by the Ministry of Education in Malaysia aims to produce students with balanced growth in spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical aspects. However, the current education is not aligned with this mission because Malaysia focuses more on the cognitive aspect of the learner to secure a good job in the future¹⁹. As a result, it is apparent that the young generation nowadays lacks interpersonal skills.

¹⁶ Ikwan Lubis, Maimun Aqsha lubis, Siti Hajar, Mohd Azaharin, Wan Ali Akbar, *Dasar Falsafah Dan Polisi Pendidikan Bersepadu: Pengalaman Malaysia*, (ASEAN Comparative Education Research Journal on Islam and Civilization), Vol 4 (1) , pg 1-19, January 2021.

¹⁷ Rosnani Hashim, *Reviving Islam's Pragmatism in Muslim Education*, (Proceedings of the Xxii World Congress of Philosophy 37: 87-97).

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Nik Rosila Nik Yaacob, *An Islamic Perspective on the Role of Education in Responding to Social Issues Among Students in Malaysia*, (US- China Education Review B, No 6, Vol. 3, p. 439-446, June 2013).

Therefore, one of the researchers argues that current Malaysian education should emphasise the teaching of religious sciences, encompassing the study of the Holy Qur'an, the Sunnah, Jurisprudence, theology, Islamic metaphysics, and linguistic sciences, and these sciences should be inculcated at every level of education, from primary and secondary to pre-university and university levels²⁰. These justifications rationalise that John Dewey's idea of pragmatism is present in several forms. Dewey argued that education should be viewed as life itself, not as a means of preparing for it²¹. However, the primary goal of education in Islam is to create a virtuous individual because, as Muslims, we are all aware that education exists exclusively to serve God.

Based on the foregoing discussion, it is commented that the education system in Malaysia is largely impersonal. The teaching is merely a profession rather than a vocation. It focuses on the development of knowledge but not moral understanding. This is in direct opposition to Islamic teaching, which views teachers as both spiritual resources and sources of professional guidance. However, if we look at the article on proper education in Malaysia, we can see that the government is attempting to provide thorough education for all people, regardless of their socioeconomic status, race, or religion. To ensure that all Malaysian children receive an equitable foundational education at the primary level, the government prefers that they adhere to the prescribed national curriculum, which was created in accordance with the social and economic demands of the nation.

4.3 PRAGMATIC ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA

As we are all aware, several nations are struggling with the rise of social problems among the people, and Malaysia is not an exception. Education is an effective tool in combating this problem. The role of religion is to help students shape their personality with good behaviour. The education system in Malaysia needs to be strengthened, as

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Rosnani Hashim, Pragmatic Education as A Tool for The Development of The Muslim Ummah, (Seminar on the Role of Muslim Organisations in Promoting Development and Human Fellowship in Muslim Minority Countries of The Muslim Ummah), p. 102, September 2004.

claimed by Nik Rosila²². There are numerous articles and studies emphasising the importance of providing students with a pragmatic education. However, all forms of pragmatic education are not appropriate for Muslim students. Before getting into the specifics of this subject, it can be helpful to recap the importance of education in Islam and how it differs from the education system in Malaysia.

4.3.1 Education in Islam and The Malaysian Educational System

As clearly mentioned in many literatures, the education system in Malaysia places greater emphasis on the cognitive part of learning. Consequently, learning is primarily focused on achieving excellent grades on exams and securing a decent career in the future. However, this approach may lead to a lack of inner purity and emotional stability, which are the primary goals of education. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that intelligence is not solely a product of cognitive and rational thinking but a combination of many aspects of a person²³. Therefore, it is necessary for the value of pragmatic education to align with the Islamic perspective for specific purposes.

When considering education from an Islamic perspective, al-Attas²⁴ claims that the term "*tarbiyyah*" is neither precise nor the right one to denote education in the Islamic meaning. Considering this, "*adab*" is an important Islamic educational idea. *Ta'dib*, derived from the '*adab*' root words, is the discipline of the body, mind, and soul. On the other hand, it ensures that one is aware of and accepts their rightful position regarding their physical, intellectual, and spiritual capacities and potentials. As a result, when we refer to education in this context using the term "*ta'dib*," we indicate that it has already involved both "*ilm*" and "*amal*."

Based on the current Malaysian curriculum, there are several values in the integrated curriculum for primary and secondary schools, including a value called

²² Nik Rosila Nik Yaacob, An Islamic Perspective on the Role of Education in Responding to Social Issues Among Students in Malaysia, (US- China Education Review), No 6, Vol. 3, p. 439-446, June 2013

²³ Ibid. P. 443.

²⁴ Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, (The Concept of Education in Islam, A Framework for An Islamic Philosophy of Education), International Institute of Islamic Thought And Civilization (ISTAC), Kuala Lumpur, 1999.

"passion for knowledge." This involves seeking knowledge not only through reading but also through discussions, research, debates, observations, and the production of compassion, self-reliance, moderation, respect, love, freedom, cleanliness, honesty, diligence, cooperation, rationality, public spiritedness, and good morals. In my opinion, Malaysia has tried to establish a good education system. However, Wan Muhammad Nur²⁵ asserted that it falls short in elucidating the full idea of the love of knowledge, which also includes virtues like wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice.

From this perspective, the reason it falls short in elucidating the full idea of the love of knowledge is that to enhance moral consciousness among students, their moral reasoning should be stimulated in teaching and learning, such as through moral reasoning activities. That's why al-Attas mentioned above that knowledge is involved in both '*ilm*' and '*amal*.' Once you comprehend this idea, you will discover that there is already a practical approach being used in Islamic education to uphold Islamic law.

Additionally, British colonisation in Malaysia from the late 18th century until its independence in 1957 had an impact on the country's education system²⁶. It was discovered during colonisation that the dualistic educational system had some issues. This is because during colonisation, they split education into three categories: English schools, Malay vernacular schools, and traditional *pondok* and *madrasah* religious schools. Two kinds of people emerged because of such a system, the first of which we may characterise as rigid, and the second as more liberal. Of course, they had their own unique way of thinking, leading to dilemmas and conflicts in Malaysia's education system. Such conflicts have also spread to different nations, and Muslim scholars have attempted to reintroduce Islam into secular education systems.

Returning to the topic of pragmatism, it should be noted that some Muslim scholars have already implemented and practiced it in the areas of education reform for the benefit of Muslims. Now that we have seen this, we can observe that Muslims are already pragmatic and capable of using it in their daily lives. However, the ideology of

²⁵ Nik Rosila Nik Yaacob, An Islamic Perspective on the Role of Education in Responding to Social Issues Among Students in Malaysia, (US- China Education Review), No 6, Vol. 3, p. 439-446, June 2013

²⁶ Prof Rosnani Hashim, The Reformation of Muslim education in Malaysia: Ensuring Relevance and Overcoming Challenge. International Symposium of Imam- Hatip, Vocational Religious School in their Centennial Anniversary, 23-25 November 2013.)

pragmatism is what confuses Muslims. Still, if we comprehend the true meaning of Islam, there will be no confusion between the two in terms of education.

There are also fewer institutes of higher education in Malaysia that offer courses in Islamic Studies, presenting another difficulty or issue for the Malaysian education system. In Malaysia, there is a debate about whether to have faculties or colleges for Islamic Studies, and this debate raises the question of where the graduates of these institutions will find employment, according to Prof. Rosnani Hashim²⁷. As a result, the former Malaysian Prime Minister, Tun Mahathir Mohamad, introduced an innovative idea in Islamic higher education: IIUM. This comprehensive university's mission is Islamisation, Integration, Internationalisation, and Comprehensive Excellence, with English and Arabic as its official languages.

Now, as one can see, IIUM stands out from other universities that only concentrate on Shari'ah studies. Based on the justifications, it is a good attempt to occasionally transform the education system in favour of a better one to be more pragmatic. John Dewey made significant contributions to education pragmatism as his ideas serve as a trailblazer for modern educators, and his educational philosophy placed a strong emphasis on experiential learning. However, Aliya²⁸ claimed that Dewey's approach lacks any objectives or criteria-based experiences. We are not informed, for instance, if the youngster is gaining more sophisticated, intellectual, or knowledgeable experiences. The second question is how educators would respond to various comments, feedback, and replies to comparable experiences? Even though Malaysia has until now prioritised the cognitive aspect of learning, Tun Dr. Mahathir's unique proposal²⁹ has led to the construction of a more comprehensive education system in Malaysia.

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Aliya Sikandar, John Dewey and His Philosophy of Education, (Journal of Education and Educational Development), Vol. 2, No.2 p. 191-201, December 2015.

²⁹ Prof Rosnani Hashim, The Reformation of Muslim education in Malaysia: Ensuring Relevance and Overcoming Challenge. International Symposium of Imam- Hatip, Vocational Religious School in their Centennial Anniversary, 23-25 November 2013.)

4.3.2 Methodologies in Malaysian Educational System and Its Issues

Despite Malaysia's emphasis on cognitive learning, it is crucial to build and develop human resources and abilities to create a progressive society and, ultimately, a progressive country. According to the Prime Minister's explanation of Vision 2020, titled *Malaysia: The Way Forward*, talents, skills, and creativity must be a country's most valuable resource. Thus, Vision 2020 emphasises the necessity for pupils to develop thinking skills. Therefore, the Ministry of Education has implemented the concept of critical and creative thinking in the education system during the introduction of the Integrated Curriculum for Secondary School in the late 1980s to achieve the vision (KBSM)³⁰. However, now in 2023, there are some new futures for the Malaysian education system. According to Ananda³¹, the Ministry of Education is preparing to move to a new phase known as "Wave 3" from 2021-2025, which focuses on moving towards excellence with increased operational flexibility.³²

This is because the Ministry realised that the previous curriculum lacked balance, leading to the proposal of certain new teaching techniques and the emphasis on KBSM³³, which aims to build and improve students' intellectual abilities in terms of critical, rational, and creative thinking. According to the description above, Malaysia has made attempts to improve its educational system in the past, but it must consider all factors, including those related to the economy, society, politics, psychology, spirituality, and culture. The Malaysian education system employs a realistic approach. Therefore, pragmatism is not just a philosophy of practical experience and an ideology. It goes beyond this when it comes to problem-solving and choosing the best course of instruction.

In 1996³⁴, the Teacher Education Division (TED) prepared and introduced a course titled "Critical and Creative Thinking Skills" for teacher programs to develop

³⁰ Prof Rosnani Hashim, *Investigation on the Teaching of Critical and Creative Thinking in Malaysia*, (Jurnal Pendidikan Islam), p. 39-56, 2002.

³¹ Ananda Devan Sivalingam, *History of Malaysian Education System: Year 1824 to 2025*, (Social Sciences Education eJournal), November 2020.

³² The details of "Wave 3 three 2021-2025, is Wave 1 starting from 2013-2015, which is turn around system by supporting teachers and focusing on core skills. Then for Wave 2, starting from 2016-2020, it accelerates system improvement, and then continue with wave 3 from 2021- 2025.

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Ibid

thinking skills in society through reflective inquiry. This was done, according to Rosnani, despite the introduction of the Integrated Curriculum for Secondary School (KBSM). Before teaching the pupils, teachers were required to undergo this course as part of their preparation to become a teacher, and that knowledge is expected to be practically and effectively implemented when they are teaching in an actual classroom. The Malaysian education system, particularly for teachers, must become more pragmatic, as proven by many literatures. Despite its several drawbacks, Aliya³⁵ suggested that there may be some parts of pragmatism that we can apply in this situation. But according to one of the studies³⁶, pragmatists believe that teachers shoulder the responsibility of fostering a realistic environment in the classroom where students will be encouraged to deal with a variety of real-life issues and to find solutions to those problems.

The primary responsibility of the teacher is to pose problems to his/her students and assist them in coming up with creative solutions³⁷. Additionally, according to another article, kids should be raised in such a way that they can effectively solve their daily problems and fit in with their social surroundings. Based on the explanation, it might be applicable to some educational aspects, but we must also consider other factors, particularly for Muslim students.

We are all aware of the close relationship between a child's right to education in Malaysia and their ability to grow intellectually, morally, and characteristically. In Islam³⁸, education must find a balance between meeting the country's economic demands and the growth of a person's character in accordance with God's pleasure. Therefore, according to al-Attas, Muslims should emphasise the importance of education at all stages of life and the comprehensiveness of education to include academic ability, physical prowess, and spiritual depth, as all these elements of education support personal growth³⁹.

³⁵ Aliya Sikandar, John Dewey and His Philosophy of Education, (Journal of Education and Educational Development), Vol. 2, No.2 p. 191-201, December 2015.

³⁶ Pratima Chamling Rai, Rupen Lama, Pragmatism and Its Contribution to Education, (International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts), Vol.8, 3 March 2020.

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ Zaleha kamaruddin, Ismail Sheikh Ahmad, Syahnaz Sulaiman, Education for All Children's Right To Education In Malaysia, (Educational Awakening: Journal of the Educational Sciences, Vol. 2, No. 2, 2005.

³⁹ Ibid

In addition, the National Education Policy, which is an important part of the Malaysian educational system, sets forth the goals for all national educational activities (NEP). In accordance with the National Principles (*Rukun Negara*), the NEP was formed primarily with the intention of improving the lives of its citizens and fostering social cohesion and progress. In this regard, a few things are crucial for the implementation of the NEP: ⁴⁰

- Direct and orient efforts to increase and enhance education.
- Serve as a guide for educators to carry out educational responsibilities, serving as a reference for educators (local or foreign) to better understand the Malaysian educational system. It can also serve as a basic policy and factor in establishing educational goals. These perspectives basically show how pragmatics is being used in this situation. However, there is no conclusive evidence that students who have completed secondary education have internalised the NEP's stated components, regardless of how teachers themselves feel about their students' internalisation of those components. The authorities who develop the curriculum must thus collaborate to realise the NEP, as noted in the conclusion of this study. The reason for this is that secondary schools run by the government and those run by private institutions differ slightly. ⁴¹

Moreover, teachers play an important role in shaping students' minds. From personal experience and observations, it is observed that there are some elements of pragmatism that confuse students, especially Muslims. The findings revealed an average level of understanding of pragmatism among the students. This average knowledge of the concept of pragmatism signifies that most university-level students are not exposed to the ideology of pragmatism and are unaware of its impact on their lives as Muslims.

⁴⁰ Shafeeq Hussain Vazhathodi al- Hudawi, Rosy Lai Su Fong, Mohammed Borhandden Musah, Lokman Mohd Tahir, *The Actualization of the Malaysian National Education Philosophy in Secondary Schools: Student and Teacher Perspectives*, (Internasional Education Studies), vol. 7, No. 4, 2014.

⁴¹ Ibid

4.3.3 Background of the Respondents⁴²

Table 4.1 Number of respondents by gender

No	Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	19	47.5
2	Female	21	52.5
	Total	40	100.00

According to Table 4.1, the total number of male respondents in this study was 19 (47.5%), while the total number of female respondents was 21 (52.5%). Although the respondents were chosen at random by the researcher, the number of female respondents was significantly higher than the number of male respondents.

4.3.4 Respondents' Pre- College Education

Table 4.2 Respondent's Pre- College Education

No	Pre-college Education	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Islamic School	5	12.5
2	Non- Islamic School	35	87.5
	Total	40	100.00

Table 4.2 shows that the percentage of students attending non-Islamic schools was higher than the percentage of students attending Islamic schools. Thirty-five

⁴² Findings from Literature Review by Sakinah Munarwarrah (self reference).

students (87.5%) attended non-Islamic schools, while only 5 respondents (12.5%) attended Islamic schools.

Respondents' Understanding of the Concept of Pragmatism and Islamic Perspective

Table 4.3 shows the respondents' responses on the concept of pragmatism. Out of the 15 questions featured in the questionnaire, 10 of them were about the students' understanding of pragmatism and its Islamic perspective.

Table 4.3 Respondents' Answers to Selected 10 Questions

No	Item	Frequency & Percentage				
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	We can do anything as long as it will bring benefits to us.	5 (12.5%)	4 (10%)	15 (37.5%)	15 (37.5%)	1 (2.5%)
2	Truth is man-made and can change depending on us.	1 (2.5%)	11 (27.5%)	12 (30%)	16 (40%)	-
3	Pragmatism is an action and can be practised in any circumstance.	-	3 (7.5%)	23 (57.5%)	14 (35%)	-
4	<i>Waqīyah</i> in Islam and realistic are similar to pragmatism.	2 (5%)	2 (5%)	22 (55%)	14 (35%)	-
5	We can destroy anything if it benefits us even it is in the expense of others.	11 (27.5%)	10 (25%)	12 (30%)	7 (17.5%)	-
6	A person can steal to survive.	19 (47.5%)	13 (32.5%)	1 (2.5%)	7 (17.5%)	-
7	We can break our fast if we cannot continue until <i>Maghrib</i> without a strong reason.	24 (60%)	7 (17.5%)	6 (15%)	3 (7.5%)	-
8	Ethics and morals can be based on reasoning and logic only.	4 (10%)	13 (32.5%)	17 (42.5%)	6 (15%)	-
9	We can change any law to make people satisfied.	11 (27.5%)	12 (30%)	11 (27.5%)	5 (12.5%)	1 (2.5%)

10	We can do whatever we want as long as it is beneficial to us.	6 (15%)	11 (27.5%)	12 (30%)	11 (27.5%)	-
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This is reflected in the percentage of students who agreed and were neutral to the first statement featured in the questionnaire. 40% of the respondents acknowledged that humans could do anything if it brings benefits to them, while another 40% were indecisive. This shows that most of the respondents were confused about the concept of pragmatism in this context.

Pragmatism is a critical issue that requires awareness. It is relevant to our daily lives, and if people cannot distinguish between *Waqīyah* and realistic Islamic principles, they may deviate from the straight path or the true teachings of Islam. Therefore, there is a need to clear this confusion among students.

In Malaysia, the understanding of pragmatism is not common; people are generally unaware of this ideology, even though it exists among them. This can be evidenced by the findings for the second question. Regarding their stance on the statement that the truth is man-made and susceptible to changes, most of the students were leaning towards the ideology of pragmatism, with 40% (16) of them agreeing to it, and 30% were indecisive. This shows that these students, whether consciously or unconsciously, adopt the viewpoint of pragmatism in their lives. In contrast, according to Islamic principles, it is known that only Allah can judge us, guarantee our place in the hereafter, or change any law, so we follow and obey all the commandments revealed to Prophet Muhammad [peace be upon him]. However, in the modern world, people sometimes believe they can change the law to make it more suitable for their contemporary lives.

The ethics and morals in Islam are well explained, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, as stated in the Qurān and hadith. Many verses in the Qurān encourage Muslims to do good things, such as in Surah Ali Imran verse 104 and Surah an-Nahal verse 90. Therefore, we cannot simply act at our own convenience without adhering to Islam's true teachings and rules. Allah has revealed guidelines for living to Prophet Muhammad [peace be upon him] to be followed and practiced by Muslims. In

this study, the percentage of students who understand the revelation about deed and action was quite high. For question three, 35% out of (14) students understood the statement about deed and action and are aware of the consequences of doing a good or bad action.

The ideology of pragmatism is claimed by its supporters to be relevant in any situation, making it adoptable for surviving in the modern world. Based on the findings, 35% of the respondents likened the concept of *Waqīyah* to the concept of pragmatism, while most of them were indecisive. This shows that the participants did not fully understand the difference between Islamic ideology and pragmatism ideology, indicating a greater influence of Western culture and lifestyle than the teachings of the Qurān and hadith.

The statement from question number 5 was also about people's actions and deeds. This statement or question asks if we can destroy anything if it benefits us, even if it means sacrificing others. As we all know, in Islam, there is a principle known as the *Maqāsīd Syariāh*, and according to this law, we cannot sacrifice others for our own benefit, and there is no power in this world other than Allah. Therefore, we must look after each other in every situation. Students' understanding of this question is high, with 27.5% (11) of them disagreeing that humans cannot destroy something or sacrifice others for their own use. Only 17.5% out of (7) students agreed that we can destroy something or sacrifice others for our own benefit.

Question 6 is also related to the true teachings of Islam, or *Maqāsīd Syariāh*. As we all know, Allah has already mentioned and stressed the forbiddance against stealing in the Qur'ān. Stealing is forbidden in Islam, even if we cannot find another way to survive. There are other Qurānic verses prohibiting Muslims from engaging in anything harmful to us. From the survey, 90% or (33) of students strongly disagreed that we could steal for the sake of surviving life. This is in line with the teachings of Islam and contradicts the ideology of pragmatism, which allows people to steal if they perceive stealing as a good thing or they do it to save their lives.

For question 7, which states that we can break our fast if we are unable to continue until dawn for any reason, 77% or (31) students strongly disagreed with this

statement. According to Islam, Muslims cannot break their fast without a compelling reason. Muslims are only allowed to do so if persisting to fast would be detrimental to health. Islam does not compel its followers to engage in activities that are harmful to our health. From the findings for this question, it can be concluded that the students understand their responsibility as Allah's vicegerent and rely on Allah for everything. Men will go to any length to achieve their goals in life, but Allah is the Master Planner of all things. This really contradicts pragmatism, and as we can see here, there are no similarities between pragmatism and *Waqīyah*.

In terms of morality and ethics, 42.5% or (17) students rejected the practice of morality and ethics without the presence of religion, while another 32.5% (13) were uncertain. When it comes to ethics and morals, as Muslims, we have been taught about the concept of *akhlaq* since childhood until adulthood. There are two kinds of *akhlaq*, namely *maḥmudah* and *māzmumah*. Generally, *maḥmudah* refers to a good deed, while *māzmumah* is a bad deed. Islam demonstrates itself as a practical and realistic way based on the Qur'ān rather than depending solely on human minds. For example, pragmatists can lie if they believe it will make people calm in any situation, which is contradictory to Islam's way of life. Another example of pragmatic ethics is when parents want to bring their child to see a dentist, and their child asks if it will be a painful experience; pragmatists can lie to their child to calm the child's anxiety.

Based on the analysis, 57.5% or (23) of the students disagreed with the statement that laws are changeable according to our convenience. As Muslims, we must follow our *Shariah* or Islamic primary rule, which is completely suitable and applicable in all aspects of life. This shows the comprehensive guidance to living provided by Islam, which encompasses the aspects of economics, politics, education, and other aspects of life. Therefore, there is no need for us to change the law that Islam has established for us because it is both practical and fair in all aspects.

In the context of this institution, although there are no lectures and classes for most of the time, the obligation of prayer does not change. Students still have to pray five times a day, and even with the presence of lectures and classes, students still have to manage themselves to pray accordingly. They cannot change the obligation as they like due to a tight schedule. In performing the prayer, Islam provides no restriction on

the place to pray. There is sufficient time for each prayer, and flexibility in terms of praying attire if it meets the requirement of covering the *aurah*. This shows that Islam is strict but practical.

As for statement number 10, 42% or (17) students disagreed that we could change the law or do whatever we want if it benefits us. This statement, once again, contradicts Islamic principles and law. We will be judged for what we have done in this world, whether it is against Islam or not. Therefore, this serves as a guide and reminder to Muslims on the element of accountability, thus making Muslims more cautious in their every action. In Islam, the end does not determine the means, which has been highlighted numerous times by the Qurān and Hadith. Islam emphasises the importance of being practical with guidance from the Qurān and Hadith.

Based on this survey and analysis, it is important for the lecturers at the university level to focus more on these issues to ensure that all students are aware of and understand the concept of pragmatism. This is crucial to protect their faith from concepts that are contrary to the true teachings of Islam, such as the concept of Waqīyah. Additionally, there is a need for relevant parties to play a significant role in helping students become more informed about these issues. Islamic committees, local committees, and parents, for example, should train children to connect themselves to the mosque and prayer room to strengthen their faith. They should also encourage them to attend religious activities in their area.

4.4 SIGNIFICANCE AND APPLICATIONS OF PRAGMATISM IN MALAYSIA EDUCATION

There are certain educational philosophies and practices based on a pragmatic worldview. Additionally, the curriculum and teaching strategies used in Islamic education are areas where many issues need to be dealt with pragmatically. In general, Rosnani mentioned that Islamic education has not been able to develop pupils who can think critically or come up with fresh and creative ideas⁴³. It is clear from the findings

⁴³ Rosnani Hashim, Investigation on the Teaching of Critical and Creative Thinking in Malaysia, (Jurnal Pendidikan Islam), p. 39-56, 2002.

discussed in this study that the system has not adequately educated Muslim youth and prepared them to confront the challenges of their time. Additionally, as we cannot prevent the globalisation of information and communication technologies, we also cannot stop the ideas and cultures of any nation in the world. The reason why Muslim youth and people today still prefer Western ideology or pragmatism is that they do not think clearly or critically. Many Muslim youngsters or individuals believe in Western metaphysics, which claims that change is the very foundation of reality and, as a result, there are no unchanging principles. As a result, all values are relative⁴⁴.

Therefore, the only way to encourage people to stand up for their own views and values is to teach them how to critically analyse, assess, and select the information they use. The ability of Muslim youth for critical and creative thought may be developed through pragmatic education. Additionally, there is evidence that Islam, in accordance with its own epistemological framework, does not reject the principles of pragmatism. Rather, it should be noted that Islam is a religion that places emphasis on practicality in various spheres of life. Studies have revealed that the Islamic perspective encompasses many essential elements for making practical decisions considering the situation. For instance, Islamic law, or "*fiqh*," acknowledges the concept of "*maslahah*." Furthermore, the Islamic idea of "*Ijtihad*" urges academics to reach sensible conclusions depending on the circumstances and the information at hand. The Islamic worldview is based on reasoning and the capacity to use critical thought to solve problems. Therefore, it should not seem strange to Muslims when Dewey or other pragmatists demand critical thinking. As we can see, we have already used this reasonable strategy for greater comprehension in line with Islamic teachings.

A few Muslim scholars, including Al-Attas and Al-Faruqi, claimed that the root cause of the division among Muslims is the dualistic educational system that includes both traditional, religious, and liberal, secular educational systems. Al-Attas claimed that the loss of "*adab*" (discipline) caused by the confusion over knowledge is where the problem lies. Meanwhile, Al-Faruqi linked the root cause to the liberal, secular

⁴⁴Rosnani Hashim, Pragmatic Education as A Tool for the Development of the Muslim Ummah, Three-Day Seminar on The Role of Muslim Organisations in Promoting Development and Human Fellowship in Muslim Minority Countries in Asia, p. 106, 24&26 September 2004.

educational system. The best solution that both have suggested includes an integrated educational system and the Islamisation of modern knowledge⁴⁵.

It is evident from the explanation above that Islam follows a pragmatic way, but the issue in pragmatism that goes against Islamic principles is the metaphysics of pragmatism by the West, making pragmatism not acceptable, especially for Muslims. Nevertheless, according to Rosnani Hashim, pragmatic education is necessary for the development of the Ummah⁴⁶.

Before analysing the details of pragmatic education, it is vital to examine the educational growth of the Ummah to reinforce the statement. Concerning religious sciences, it was initiated in the late Umayyad period, and regarding natural and mathematical sciences, it was initiated throughout the Abbasid period, up until the initial attempts at reformation by Ibn Taymiyah against the corrupted system during his time. Additionally, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Jamauddin al-Afghani, Sayyid Ahmed Khan, and Muhammad Abduh made some attempts at reforming the educational system. If we look at these three thinkers from that era, they were practical. They implanted the notion that the Ummah must be intelligent and educated.

Despite the reform movement, many Islamic institutions continue to use instructional strategies that lean toward moral prescription or unquestioned indoctrination. Rosnani, again, gave an example from one tragic incident: a few schoolgirls in Saudi Arabia were burned to death during a school fire. They were already at the front gate of the school, running for their lives when they were stopped by the *mutawwif* who chased them back inside because they wore no head covers. They passed away since it was too late by the time, they received their head coverings. From there, we can observe that the *mutawwif* acted wrongly in resolving the issue. Is wearing a hijab more significant than girls' lives? It is evident that Islamic religious principles are being imposed in this situation without using logic⁴⁷.

⁴⁵ Rosnani Hashim, Pragmatic Education as A Tool for the Development of the Muslim Ummah, Three-Day Seminar on The Role of Muslim Organisations in Promoting Development and Human Fellowship in Muslim Minority Countries in Asia, p. 104, 24&26 September 2004.

⁴⁶ Prof Rosnani Hashim, Pragmatic Education as A Tool for the Development of the Muslim Ummah, Three- Day Seminar on The Role of Muslim Organisations in Promoting Development and Human Fellowship in Muslim Minority Countries in Asia, p. 108, 24&26 September 2004.

⁴⁷ Ibid

In addition, she emphasised that the issue stems from the Malaysian education system itself because teachers are not inventive and creative in coming up with efficient ways to teach subjects that could be related to the Quran and Islamic history. Additionally, some Islamic religious schools do not place a high priority on teaching mathematics and natural sciences in comparison to the teaching of religious sciences. From my personal standpoint, Malaysian education has placed a greater emphasis on cognitive syllabuses than on problem-based learning or the project approach, even though we are beginning to practice the practical approach to learning, like the fact that some subjects do not have final exams, and all assessments are measured by projects or something similar. Rosnani argued that despite all of these observations, we can still recognise some aspects of pragmatism, particularly its concern with critical and creative intelligence, its support for the scientific process, and its encouragement of an inquisitive mentality. By establishing a religious curriculum that is sound in its metaphysics and Quranic ethics side by side, we need to check and balance things at the same time⁴⁸. However, according to Prof. Mumtaz Ali, from the perspective of the Islamic revivalist, critical thinking must aim to discover the truth in every situation, and it must be founded from the outset on the divine knowledge provided in the Quran and the Sunnah, which are the main sources of true and authentic knowledge about the metaphysical aspects of our lives. As a result, as we can see here, Islam really made note of the importance of critical and creative thinking for the advancement of life and society.

Besides, further analysis of the National Education Policy in Malaysia revealed another article⁴⁹ that highlights the Islamic Education Policy in Malaysia. This article mentions several elements, including social, political, economic, individual, and universal, that affect that policy. According to what I've been led to believe, curricular integration is essential for all forms of education in this world, particularly Islamic education in Malaysia. Because of this, Malaysia's Islamic education policy is influenced by several issues. This study underlines the importance of adhering to the following four characteristics for Islamic education policy in Malaysia: responsibility,

⁴⁸ Prof Rosnani Hashim, Pragmatic Education as A Tool for the Development of the Muslim Ummah, Three- Day Seminar on The Role of Muslim Organisations in Promoting Development and Human Fellowship in Muslim Minority Countries in Asia., 24&26 September 2004.

⁴⁹ Ibid

reciprocity, contemplation, and innovation. Despite these four characteristics, it was also claimed that teaching and learning must be combined to develop good students both internally and externally and to foster knowledge and critical, creative, and innovative thinking as well as good morals based on religion.

Furthermore, in her paper⁵⁰ on the idea of thinking ability, Salma also underlined another relevance of pragmatism. She discussed the applicability of Lipman's pragmatism and the applicability of philosophy to kids in her paper⁵¹. Once more, she claimed that Malaysia's education system is still mostly exam oriented. As a result, kids will only memorise what they learn and respond to questions to ace the exams. Consequently, it is challenging to gain support for teaching philosophy to children from groups other than parents, teachers, and the community. Finding educators interested in incorporating philosophy into children's activities might be difficult. Teachers already have a lot on their plates, so it is unreasonable to expect them to take additional training classes in philosophy for kids and then expect them to implement "philosophical thinking" in their classrooms. Because of this, Rosnani Hashim⁵² argued that training the teachers is the simplest approach to reintroduce philosophy back into the classroom in Malaysia.

Both kids and adults can learn different perspectives on how to see and comprehend the world through philosophy. Instead of blindly accepting assumptions and preconceptions, philosophy teaches how to critically assess assertions made by others and how to think critically. Philosophy must be reintroduced to society, starting with schoolchildren, as it is highly relevant to Malaysian culture today⁵³. Thus, there is a need for the teaching of philosophy for children in the Malaysian context, but there is still a need to step back and re-examine some of the fundamental foundational aspects of philosophy for children and how it might be helpful to the Malaysian education

⁵⁰ Salma binti Ismail, Matthew Lipman's Pragmatism and The Relevance of Philosophy for Children (P4C) to children's Education in Malaysia, (Living Islam: Journal of Islamic Discourses), Vol. 3, No 1, p. 167-188, June 2020

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² Prof Rosnani Hashim, Pragmatic Education as A Tool for the Development of the Muslim Ummah, Three- Day Seminar on The Role of Muslim Organisations in Promoting Development and Human Fellowship in Muslim Minority Countries in Asia., 24&26 September 2004.

⁵³ Salma binti Ismail, Matthew Lipman's Pragmatism and The Relevance of Philosophy for Children (P4C) to children's Education in Malaysia, (Living Islam: Journal of Islamic Discourses), Vol. 3, No 1, p. 167-188, June 2020

system, given the distinctive characteristics of Malaysia. Again, this demonstrates the significance or value of a pragmatic way in having the capacity for both creative and critical thought. However, according to another paper⁵⁴, the education philosophies highlighted do not complete the wholeness of human life as they do not pay attention to the spiritual aspects of human entities⁵⁵, and that is the reason Rosnani mentioned why we need to maintain the principle of check and balance at the same time as a Muslim. Another paper⁵⁶ also mentioned that there are some proponents of pragmatism believing that knowledge is integrated between acquired and revealed knowledge, therefore claiming that the Islamic philosophy of education is essentially pragmatic because it combines acquired knowledge and revealed knowledge, which cannot be separated.

4.5 THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND PRAGMATIC PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

The current study compares the fundamentals of Islamic and modern education to determine whether there are any similarities or differences. As we are all aware, contemporary education is influenced by numerous "isms," various theories, the perspectives of various educators, as well as by societal and national cultures. Before we go into the specifics, it should be made clear that the fundamental sources of Islamic education are the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) As-Sunnah (his life's guiding principles). When we consider the goals of education, we see that they highlight the growth of intellectual, moral, spiritual, harmonious, and physical understanding. In addition to that, if we examine philosophers' and educators' perspectives on education, we can discover its many aspects, including its value-based, moral, reasonable, inventive, holistic, spiritual, and pragmatic components. However, the first stage in Islamic education is to impart the teachings of the Quran because the Islamic education philosophy emphasises the importance of knowledge, belief, and practice in human

⁵⁴ Qazi Nusrat Sultana, *Philosophy of Education an Islamic Perspective*, (Philosophy and Progress), January-June, July-December 2012.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Aminuddin Hassan, Asmawati Suhid, Norhasni Zainal Abiddin, Habsah Ismail, Haziyah Husin, *The Role of Islamic Philosophy of education in aspiring holistic learning*, (Procedia Social and Behavioural Sciences), Published by Elsevier, 2010.

life⁵⁷. Once more, if we look closely, we can find that Islam asks us to be practical and realistic and apply its teachings in our daily lives.

4.5.1 Principles of Islamic Education Vs Western Education

As I stated earlier, the fundamentals of Islamic education are drawn from revelation, and the three most important tenets of Islam—Tawhid (Allah is One), *Fardhu Ain* [obligatory], and *Fardhu Kifaya* [optional]—are concisely reflected in the curriculum. The curriculum also emphasises the importance of providing students with a pure and ideal outlook on life so that they can become closer to Allah, and everything they learn must be related to Him.⁵⁸

In addition, one of the greatest scholars of our time, Mawdudi⁵⁹, emphasised in his discussion of the idea of Islamic education that Islam provides guidance in nearly every area of life, and it is fundamentally different from other religions. As a result, Islamic culture takes on a distinctive character, and the survival of Muslims depends on upholding it. Islamic education loses its meaning if it does not consider all aspects of life. Al-Attas, on the other hand, believed that the goals of an Islamic education system should be "the balanced development of man's whole personality through the training of man's spirit, intellect, reasoning self, sentiments, and bodily senses to realise his status as Khalifa." All Muslims must be taught the fundamental teachings of Islam. They need to achieve this goal, and all children must receive basic primary education, eradicating illiteracy throughout the Muslim world⁶⁰. The Oneness of Allah must, therefore, be taught to children at a young age, and the curriculum must begin with Islamic education. However, in Malaysia, we continue to follow the government's standard curriculum, particularly for public schools.

⁵⁷ Samiul Sk, Dr. Kausik Chatterjee, Relationship between Principles of Modern Education and Islamic Education, (International Journal of Innovative Science, Engineering & Technology, Vol. 8, Issue 5, May 2021.

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ Muhammad Abid Ali, Islamic and Western Education systems- Perceptions of Selected Educationists in Malaysia, (Journal

⁶⁰ Ibid

Nik Rosila stated that the sole goal of education in Islam is to serve God. In fact, Islam views education as having the dual goal of promoting the good (divine) and prohibiting the bad (evil) aspects of the human soul. Therefore, the fundamental goal of these two components is to ensure that an individual's body, intellect, and spirit are all developed in a balanced manner. This relates to one of the main goals of education, according to the Ministry of Education, which is to produce individuals with a balanced development of their spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical senses. However, this goal cannot be fully attained because, as I already mentioned, Malaysian education places a greater emphasis on cognitive standards.

In addition, there are numerous difficulties that must be addressed in today's world, and to educate pupils and develop Muslims' thinking, particularly, we must consider the Islamisation of contemporary knowledge. All knowledge comes from Allah, according to some traditional Muslim thinkers, who also claimed that it had been de-Islamised. Thus, the re-Islamisation of it is necessary. In addition, secularists and modernists concur that the Islamisation of knowledge is unnecessary, but for a different cause. The idea of the Islamisation of knowledge has, nevertheless, been the subject of multiple translation attempts over the past ten years. Without a doubt, S.M. Naquib al-Attas and the late Ismail R. al-Faruqi were two of the foremost scholars involved in this effort. Syed Naquib and al-Faruqi, two distinguished Muslim academics, both have their own views on the Islamisation of knowledge, although they do concur on several points⁶¹.

Al-Attas clearly explained the crucial ideas that are to be eliminated from the corpus of contemporary Western body of knowledge. For example, the concept of dualism, which includes their conception of reality and truth, their separation of intellects and ratio, as well as their dualism of the mind and the body. Another secular ideology to be concerned with is humanism. As for Al-Faruqi, he explained that we must Islamise modern information because doing so truly recasts knowledge in the light of Islam. As a result, he believed that Islamising knowledge entails "redefining" and rearranging the information, as well as re-evaluating the justification for those decisions and redefining the objectives, all of which must be done in a way that allows the various

⁶¹ Rosnani Hashim, Imron Rosidy, Islamization of Knowledge: A Comparative Analysis of the Conceptions of Al-Attas and Al-faruqi, (Intellectual Discourse), Vol 8, No 1, p. 19-44, 2000.

disciplines to enhance the Islamic cause. Al-Faruqi defined the Islamisation of modern knowledge as the process of incorporating "the new information into the corpus of the Islamic inheritance by removing, revising, re-interpreting and adopting its components as the world view of Islam and its principles dictate." ⁶²

Rosnani Hashim discussed the reformation of education and how it has been affected by colonisation in Malaysia, both before and after. The dualistic educational system, which includes the traditional, religious "pondok" or "madrasah" and the national, secular English and Malay Vernacular schools, was created because of colonisation, particularly by the British. To ensure comprehensive and well-balanced learning, the education curriculum was changed as it became clear that settling the Muslim conundrum would be difficult⁶³.

Additionally, according to this paper, ⁶⁴ the First World Conference on Muslim Education, which took place in Makkah in 1977, was also said to have inspired Malaysia's reformation of Islamic education. As a result of that conference, recommendations were made regarding the need to spread information in a way that would inspire people to acknowledge Allah as the one Creator and Ruler of humanity. The subservience of this fact should, therefore, be the goal of all fields of knowledge. Since knowledge is a gift and a trust (*amanah*) from Allah to man, therefore, man is obligated to use it in accordance with His will in carrying out his duties as the earthly servant and vicegerent (*khalifah*) of Allah. This is how knowledge-seeking is seen as a form of adoration.

Therefore, as we can see here, the basic requirement of Islamic education is that students must surrender to the ONE and only God. Moreover, despite reformation in education, this paper emphasises the Islamic Philosophy of Education as a holistic educational medium that includes all the various facets of knowledge, even though

⁶² Ibid

⁶³Rosnani Hashim, *The Reformation of Muslim Education in Malaysia: Ensuring Relevance and Overcoming Challenges*.

http://irep.iium.edu.my/35224/5/rh_imam_hatip_paper.pdf

⁶⁴Sidek bin Baba, Mohamad Johdi Salleh, Tareq M. Zayed, Ridwan Harris, *Historical development of Islamic integrated education in Malaysia since 15th Century: current needs for the globalized world*, (*History of Education & Children's Literature*), XIII, 2, p.9-30, 2018.

education reforms have been implemented. Humans are seen as an integral component of nature in accordance with holistic philosophy.

The Islamic Philosophy of Education also puts a lot of emphasis on the idea of stability, which encompasses a person's emotional, spiritual, intuitive, and imaginative elements. The idea that each component is simultaneously interrelated is another theme in this philosophy of interconnected reality⁶⁵. The Islamic Philosophy of Education has been incorporated into the subject of Islamic Education, which is comprehensive and integrative from a curriculum perspective. Through this subject, a range of topics is covered, including the practical method, which enables students to think critically and resolve every problem in the light of the Quran. Thus, it is possible to gain a holistic and thorough understanding of all facets of life through the application of Islamic philosophy of education within the field of education.

The implementation of Islamic Philosophy of Education among students through the teaching of Islamic Education has proven to be an effective strategy because it creates individuals who are well-balanced in terms of their physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual personalities, which is what the National Philosophy of Education seeks to achieve⁶⁶.

Then, we also learned about some perspectives on the Western education system in relation to this topic⁶⁷. According to this paper, the goal of the Western educational system is to concentrate on the development of human potential so that society and individuals can grow successfully. Secondly, according to some people's perspectives, the American educational system is very pragmatic and adheres to John Dewey's philosophy of human development and human resources development to produce good citizens who will work hard for the advancement of their country.

⁶⁵ Aminuddin Hassan, Asmawati Suhid, Norhasni Zainal Abiddin, Habsah Ismail, Haziyah Husin, *The Role of Islamic Philosophy of education in aspiring holistic learning*, (Procedia Social and Behavioural Sciences), Published by Elsevier, 2010.

⁶⁶ Aminuddin Hassan, Asmawati Suhid, Norhasni Zainal Abiddin, Habsah Ismail, Haziyah Husin, *The Role of Islamic Philosophy of education in aspiring holistic learning*, (Procedia Social and Behavioural Sciences), Published by Elsevier, 2010.

⁶⁷ Muhammad Abid Ali, *Islamic and Western Education systems- Perceptions of Selected Educationists in Malaysia*, (Journal

Thus, it is clear from this point of view that Western culture only pays attention to material factors. Al-Attas claimed that this is why, from an Islamic perspective, the goal of Western secular education in Muslim cultures is to de-Islamise the Muslim's minds because their notion of knowledge is the control of nature and society. Al-Attas also delved deeper into the matter from an Islamic perspective since he wanted to develop great minds who are not subjected to any Western education. According to this paper⁶⁸, it was also highlighted that some Western educationists, including Holt (1995), Gatto (2005), Robinson (2006), and Illich (2000), admitted that Western education systems have failed to achieve their goals and are inappropriate in terms of children's learning psychology. This further supports the explanation provided by Al-Attas.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on the Malaysian education system and its emphasis on educating Muslims, in particular. From these angles, the Malaysian education system seeks to achieve the goals set forth by the Islamic education system, which is to establish a balanced education system. However, the Malaysian education system is not fully capable of realising it due to the problems. It is crucial to remember that teachers play a vital role in educating children. According to the statistical data provided, there are students who continue to mix up some of the Western education philosophy with Islamic teachings or the Islamic root of education when it comes to the "knowledge of pragmatism and Islamic perspective." In addition, this chapter discussed the goal of Islamic education from the viewpoint of a few Muslim scholars and made comparisons to Western education. If we can properly comprehend the foundation of the Islamic education system, one can say the use of the pragmatic term in education seems to be useful. We do require Rosnani Hashim's explanation of the pragmatic phrase in terms of education, but we also need to be explicit and adhere to the law as Muslims. In other words, the government must understand how to educate and develop children who will be worthy representatives of the Muslim community or Ummah in the future and are not easily influenced by Western beliefs, particularly when it comes to education. This is the rationale behind Syed Naquib al-Attas' desire to Islamise secular concepts derived

⁶⁸ Ibid

from any Western philosophies. It is desired that Muslim students and the Muslim community in Malaysia would be a well-balanced and moderate community, with a strong educational system that primarily highlights and appreciates the role of the teacher in education.



CHAPTER FIVE

CASE STUDY ON PERCEPTION OF PRAGMATISM IN MALAYSIA AND MALAYSIAN EDUCATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Even though there have been numerous discussions about what pragmatism is, as evident in the previous chapters, education has emerged as one of the most crucial areas of study in which efforts are being made to teach students in Malaysia how to think critically, creatively, and practically to meet any intellectual challenges, particularly in today's world of globalisation. We may observe that Malaysia is currently dealing with several problems while also being influenced by a few new belief systems, isms, and ideologies, particularly among teenagers. Because of this, the Malaysian government has taken steps to ensure that all students receive a well-rounded, balanced, holistic, and moderate viewpoint through education, with the hope that it will help them develop both their physical and spiritual strength.

The definitions of pragmatism, its guiding principles, and its practical applications are examined in this chapter based on interviews with some academicians. The ramifications of these views on pragmatism, as well as its principles and constraints, are further examined. The main viewpoints expressed by Muslims in Malaysia reflect their perspectives on the circumstances there now. The ideology of pragmatism, its positive and negative effects, its benefits and disadvantages, and suggestions for its reference need to have been examined and evaluated through interviews with four Muslims. Two of the four Muslim interviewees come from backgrounds that are predominantly Islamic, while the other comes from a non-Islamic background. In addition to that, the findings that address the topic are also included in this chapter.

5.2 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY ACCORDING TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Noteworthy, this finding will be separated into two parts, as mentioned previously. The first part will concentrate on those with an Islamic background, while the second part will do the same for individuals with a non-Islamic position. The debate that follows will outline the opinions and points of contention raised in these two situations, their significance, and potential solutions for coping with diversity.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS (FROM THE INTERVIEW OF ACADEMICIAN) (MUSLIM ACADEMICIAN WITH ISLAMIC BACKGROUND)

5.2.1 PART A: Characteristics of Pragmatism

Muslim scholars have expressed their point of view about pragmatism and its characteristics in terms of the practical implications of our actions and beliefs, which I have discussed in the previous chapter, especially the views of Syed Qutb and Iqbal. As we all know, both have given different definitions based on their great understanding and background. Just to revise a little bit here, the definition of pragmatism from Syed Qutb affirms that Muslims must base their perspectives and arguments from the viewpoint of the Quran, even though we live in a contemporary world that follows a different worldview¹. However, for Iqbal, due to differences in culture and lifestyle, Iqbal's views and concepts of Islam are more moderate than those of Syed Qutb. According to Iqbal, some Muslim scholars were influenced by Greek philosophy. He mentioned that some Muslim scholars believed in the wisdom of Greek Philosophy, such as starting to read the Qur'an in the light of Greek thought, which cannot be practiced as there are clear fundamental differences between the Qur'an and Greek philosophy. Aside from that, when it comes to religion and science, Islam and science, according to Iqbal, they are not at odds.

¹ Jamaludin Noordin Ibrahim, *The Political Thought of Sayyid Qutb*, (A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of MPhil), University of St Andrews, p. 79, 1988.

5.2.1.1 Theme 1: Definition of Pragmatism (How would you define pragmatism?)

Muslim Malaysians with an Islamic background emphasise that there is another meaning associated with the term pragmatism. According to Khairul Hamimah's understanding, pragmatism is a Western philosophy and practical theory, and everything will be determined by the viewpoint of the individual and its usefulness. She claimed that when pragmatism is understood from the perspective of its founders, such as John Dewey and Pierce, it is truly unrelated for Muslims because their founders solely placed importance on reasoning and logical concepts. Several Muslims in Malaysia are aware of these doctrines, and it should be acknowledged. As explained by Qutb, no Western philosophies can be integrated into the development of Muslims, and pragmatism has no place in the Muslim world, according to Khairul Hamimah² also. On the other hand, Zurul³ also supported the similar definition of pragmatism, saying that it is founded on logic if it results in benefits for you, such as rewards for betterment and development, regardless of whether it is permissible under Islamic law or not. Hence, it implies being practical; however, it is not applicable to everything for us, especially as Muslims.

5.2.1.2 Theme 2: Connection of Pragmatism with other Western ideologies of Liberalism, Pluralism and Secularism.

(Do you agree that pragmatism is a Western theory that has strong connection with the Western ideologies of Liberalism, Pluralism and Secularism?)

Despite the above definition of pragmatism, pragmatism not only exists by itself but is also connected to several other strong ideologies like liberalism, pluralism, and secularism. As we can see today in Malaysia, we are struggling with the ideologies of liberalism, pluralism, as well as secularism. Therefore, according to the mention of the author of the article⁴, Malaysian Muslims need to be critical of the current issues. Therefore, finding solutions such as the issue of *Tajdid hadhari* or the civilisational

² Khairul Hamimah

³ Zurul Asya

⁴ Marina Munira Abdul Mutalib, *Religious Pluralism in Contemporary Malaysia: Muslim and Christian perspective*, (A Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy), p. 146, 2018.

renewal of Islam constitutes one of the many ways to promote a positive approach to the current controversies. And as a result, we can address the related issues that contradict the negative testimony of the West.

To relate to the above question, it is observed that the connection of pragmatism is not merely by itself. According to Khairul Hamimah, pragmatism is related to the ideologies of liberalism, pluralism, and secularism. She also asserted that, according to her understanding and in the context of Malaysia, several meanings can be associated with the perspective of pragmatism in education. She explained:

Pragmatism is a Western theory but with no strong connection with the ideologies of Liberalism, Pluralism and Secularism. However, it is still related to each other. For me, pragmatism focuses more on education. However, based on my understanding, if we mention about the basic of pragmatism, the truth theory in pragmatism is not only applicable for education, but also can be used in the concept of societies as well as in term of daily working. Then for the ideologies of Liberalism based on my understanding, it focuses on open minded or free thinking as well as neglects the values of moral and ethics. Then, for the definition of pluralism, from my opinion it can have several meanings. For me, if it's related to Malaysian societies, it brings the meaning of multi society in Malaysia. Then, if it is related to the concept of religion, it's brought another meaning like, all religion is same or transcendent unity of religion or some relativism concept. However, overall, it is not related to pragmatism. And we need to understand that the culture in Malaysia and Western is different. Finally, some elaboration for the concept of secularism. For secularism, I think it separates religion and life. I conclude that, there are many ideologies from Western based on Western people issues and current situation. When we do comparison with Islam, Islam is already holistic and covers all aspects of comprehensively. For Western people, they tried to find the best solution for their life that is why they create many ideologies to suit their life and try to relate any ideologies with each other like pragmatism, liberalism and secularism.⁵

Alternatively, to put it another way, she claimed that Islam is already all-encompassing and covers both internal and external issues. She also explained liberal, pluralist, and secularist views in a straightforward manner. The theories of Qutb, according to which all ideologies created by humans share the same materialistic

⁵ Khairul Hamimah

worldview despite variations in their methods and organisational structures, may be seen in this.⁶

The relationship between pragmatism and liberalism, pluralism, and secularism was discussed by Zurul⁷ in greater detail than Khairul Hamimah. Zurul claimed that the significant association between pragmatism in Western thought and Western ideology is a man-made association. Interestingly, as we can see, they both expressed the view that all Western ideas are artificial or man-made, and that Westerners will alter their ideologies in response to their needs. But we should comprehend Islam correctly and avoid blending it with Western beliefs, especially in the context of today's globalised society. This element stands out clearly that in Islam, which is already comprehensive, there is no room to add anything, but we can interpret Islam according to our situation. Islam stands to guide us to face every situation and solve our problems. According to Qutb, Islam is not only applicable to all situations and times but also capable of leading humanity and civilisation in a time-space context.⁸

5.2.1.3 Theme 3: (Freedom, Modernism and Non-Absolute truth) are the main elements of pragmatism and any other elements of pragmatism from Malaysian Perspective.

(Freedom, Modernism and Non-Absolute truth are the main elements of pragmatism. What are other main elements of pragmatism from a Malaysian Perspective?)

Zurul, on the other hand, when looking at the perspective of Malaysians, especially in the globalised world today, focused on the multi-racial society in Malaysia. In terms of freedom and modernism, according to her, it depends on the context of our definition. In Malaysia, especially for Muslims, she asserted that we have *Shariah* regulations. However, when living in a multi-society, the boundaries between yes and no in Islam in Malaysia have become vague.

⁶ Jamaludin Noordin Ibrahim, *The Political Thought of Sayyid Qutb*, (A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of MPhil), University of St Andrews, p. 79, 1988.

⁷ Zurul, "Do you agree that pragmatism is a Western theory that has strong connection with the Western ideologies of Liberalism, Pluralism and Secularism?"

⁸ Tommy Larson, *The Islamist Ideology of Hassan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb, A Comparative Analysis*, (Master's Thesis in History, Department of Archaeology, Conservation and History Faculty of Humanities), University of Oslo, 2017.

She argued that⁹:

In term of freedom and modernism it depends on the context of our definition of freedom and modernism. One of the messages of freedom is doing whatever you want freely. But again, we have the boundaries for something like in Malaysia for example especially for Muslims, we have *Shariah* regulations. In my opinion, in the context of Malaysia, it has multi-racial society, therefore the boundaries between yes and no in Islam in Malaysia has been vague because the mixture of Malaysian people, races and religion. In my opinion, freedom and modernism are not defined properly, and for that we tend to follow the western of freedom and modernism. In terms of non-absolute truth, I am not sure, by the meaning of that. I think it's very much within what I view on freedom and modernism because the yes and no in the Western world has been very much putting everything together without the boundaries of *Shariah* and from Malaysian perspective because of the multi-cultural and religion it has been absorbed into society. However, as a Muslim, we need the boundaries in all the aspects elements of pragmatism, what I can say is that Western elements have been occupied within the Malaysian society. That is the element of pragmatism that I see has prevailed in Malaysian, like freedom and modernism.

Regarding freedom, modernism, and the idea that there are no absolute truths, Malaysians genuinely view these concepts as primarily supporting human rights and, certainly, as essential components of pragmatism. As can be seen from the foregoing discussion, Dr. Hamimah's¹⁰ conclusion that we live in a multiracial and multi-religious nation—Malaysia—means that respecting human rights in Malaysia requires pragmatism, even when some individuals disagree because doing so is against their religious beliefs, particularly those of Muslims. However, if some pragmatism can be employed, we can strive to implement it and make it work for our daily lives. Then, we may say that Dr. Zurul and Dr. Hamimah both held the belief that for Muslims, there is *Shariah* which guides them. However, given that Malaysia is home to many different groups and religions, pragmatism may be appropriate in some sense for this situation. My understanding is that it is difficult not to try to include pragmatism in Malaysia. However, to apply these ideas needs to be more careful, especially in the educational system, since we know the ideas come from Western ideology.

⁹ Zurul Asya.

¹⁰ Khairul Hamimah.

5.2.1.4 Theme 4: Opinions of some Muslim Scholars Regarding the Threats of Pragmatism

(Some scholars said that Muslims should be aware of the Threats of Pragmatism. What is your opinion on that?)

Although we live in a multiracial and multi-religious society in Malaysia, certain Muslim scholars have reminded us of Western ideologies. For example, Syed Naquib al-Attas states that even in a world of globalisation, Islam has undergone no changes. Al-Attas contended that the cultural, religious, and intellectual traditions of Islam have not changed over time and have instead been divided into distinct ages, each characterised by the dominance of a system of thought based on materialism or idealism, supported by accompanying methodological positions such as empiricism, rationalism, realism, nominalism, pragmatism, positivism, logical positivism, and criticism.¹¹

Dr. Hamimah¹² initially agreed with al-Attas' assertion that pragmatism is a threat to Muslims, and both parties now support this position. She does, however, bring up a few issues related to colonisation in Malaysia and the necessity for Malaysians to find better lives following colonisation. This is because Malaysia, known for its diverse society and religion, was impacted by British colonisation. "If pragmatism is wonderful, then perhaps we should use it, but we also need to develop a new version that fits our lifestyle, especially for Muslims," she said. As a result of this conversation, when we brought up how al-Attas¹³ referred to the concept of *waaqiiyah* as *haqiqah* (reality), Al-Attas claimed that reality and truth in Islam are metaphysical. Therefore, I can draw the following conclusion: Even the shift in Islam's worldview must be a result of God's prioritisation. Zurul and Khairul Hamimah reached the same conclusion regarding this section, which is that Muslims must adhere to pragmatism, *Shariah*, and cultural and societal limitations as well as religious ones. According to Khairul Hamimah's

¹¹ Ahmad Murad Merican, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and The Dialogic of Occidental Knowledge: A Passing Glance to The Study of Society in the Malay Archipelago, (Review Essays, Al-Shajarah), Vol. 26, No 1, pg. 106, 2021.

¹² Khaitul Hamimah.

¹³ Ahmad Murad Merican, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and The Dialogic of Occidental Knowledge: A passing Glance to The Study of Society in the Malay Archipelago, (Review Essays, Al-Shajarah), Vol. 26, No 1, pg. 106, 2021.

explanation above, many have attempted to reimagine pragmatism to better fit Muslims. Zurul¹⁴, however, maintained that boundaries are essential, particularly for Muslims.

5.2.2 PART B: Pragmatism in Malaysia

5.2.2.1 Theme 1: Current issues led to the practice Pragmatism

(Current issues nowadays have led people to practice pragmatism in tackling certain issues in Malaysia. What is your comment on that?)

There is vocal resistance to pragmatism from Islamic scholars like Syed Qutb. Regarding this ideology and Muslims in general, and particularly when dealing with contemporary concerns, there are opposing views held by Islamic scholars. For instance, Yusuf Qaradawi is recognised as a modern-day Islamic scholar with excellent ideas or concepts such as *tajdid*, *mujaddid*, or reformation¹⁵. We all know that the major objective of his ideas or way of thinking is to find solutions to any issues. As shown in that article, the contribution or idea is more dynamic to comprehend the concept of "Shariah" through some of the concepts of *fiqh*, such as *fiqh al-Nusus*, *fiqh al-waqi*, *fiqh al-muwazanat*, *fiqh al-awlawiyat*, *fiqh al-Jihad*, and so forth. He made a significant contribution to the community and became a well-known Muslim figure worldwide¹⁶. Therefore, from this perspective, Muslims have a better solution to solve any issues nowadays by following the true teachings of Islam.

As a result, Malaysian Muslims must be critical of any problems or challenges without compromising anything that is in accordance with Islamic principles, according to current events. It has been noted that some Muslim opinions on the pragmatism used in Malaysia hold that nothing can be changed if it is related to the "Shariah," but that we also have "*fiqh*," known as "*Ijtihad*" at the same time. However, from the interview session with Khairul Hamimah, she is aware that some of this "*Ijtihad*" is pragmatism¹⁷, but she must nevertheless adhere to the conditions set down by Islam. Another opinion

¹⁴ Zurul Asya.

¹⁵ Zulkifli Hasan, Yusuf al- Qaradawi and Contribution of His Thoughts, (Global Journal Al- Thaqafah), June 2013, Volume 3, Issue 1.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Khairu Hamimah.

based on observations of pragmatism in Malaysia is that people there tend to utilise pragmatism when solving problems because doing so is simple¹⁸. Then, as we can see, some can link to the "*Shariah*" and provide specific explanations of these concerns.

5.2.2.2 Theme 2: Keep the Distance in Prayer during Covid-19

(During this pandemic, Muslim cannot go to mosque for prayer and need to keep the distance if we are allowed to pray. Is this situation can be described as pragmatic? What is your opinion?)

Different people nowadays react differently to recent issues such as the Covid-19 pandemic. If we want to relate to the concept of Ijtihad and issues during the pandemic, especially related to our *Shariah* or Islamic law, then we need to take it seriously and not just apply Ijtihad solely upon the legal concept of the contemporary. As we all know, from the end of 2019 until 2021, every country faced major challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This virus not only causes disease but can also be life-threatening. To highlight, this current issue and the current situation did not happen before. It requires a new approach involving religious matters to curb the spread of diseases that can be life-threatening. Therefore, nowadays, most of the new problems related to Islam arise among Muslims in a certain place or time, where the past scholars did not discuss it; then it will be submitted to the mufti in Malaysia, especially. The mufti uses *usul al-fiqh*, a branch of Islamic science, to resolve these questions¹⁹. The main prerequisite for the qualification of a mufti is mastering *usul al-fiqh*, which is the main component of a fatwa's procedure.

To be steadfast with our fundamentals is necessary. The kind of argumentation used and the fatwa's parallel adherence to *maqasid al-shariah* are two important factors that affect its accuracy. A mufti is a mujtahid who can perform ijtihad and inferring the law, as mentioned by al-Ghazali, which is another crucial point²⁰. According to what I've observed, most Muslim scholars emphasise Ijtihad as the effort of a mujtahid who

¹⁸ Zurul Asya.

¹⁹ Fathullah Asni, Ahmad Yusairi Yusli and Amirah Izzati Umar, (The Role of the Perlis State Mufti Department in Restraining Covid-19 Through Fatwas and Legal Guidelines), International Journal of Academic Research in Business & Social Sciences, 8 October 2021.

²⁰ Ibid

exerts all of his mental and intellectual resources to study and comprehend the intention of the *Shariah*. Since this virus can spread easily, we need to be extra careful and maintain distance during prayer even if it has not happened before. This is related to the issues in Malaysia during the pandemic, where we need to keep distance during prayer, demonstrating one thing: the Ijtihad among Mufti for the solution. Ijtihad in this case, according to Khairul Hamimah, might be interpreted as pragmatic and useful in relation to the subject of this study. She argued that any solution must, however, be in line with the Quran and the Hadith because, according to Western philosophies, pragmatism is all that is used based on human knowledge²¹. Zurul²², in fact, claimed that keeping your distance from others in prayer is both logical and practical to safeguard life from the virus because it is so fresh. However, both people who were questioned agreed that any new circumstances involving Ijtihad must adhere to the *Shariah*, or Islamic law, to be correct.

5.2.2.3 Theme 3: Is Pragmatism the Best Way to Deal with current issues.

(There are Muslims in Malaysia who argue that pragmatism is the best way to deal with current issues in Malaysia now. What is your suggestion?)

In fact, the scenario that Malaysians are currently facing is brand new and calls for some Ijtihad. For some Muslims, especially those in the public, this is new and normal, as seen in the example of the distance in prayer in the preceding paragraph. It is therefore not surprising that some Muslims were hesitant to adhere to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for congregational prayers in the mosque or prayer room, with a space of one meter during the congregations. This is the most effective technique to handle the current problem in this context, or it may be described as pragmatism.

As a result, Khairul Hamimah²³ believed that whether being pragmatic is the appropriate approach depends on the problem at hand and the proposed solution, as well as on our ability to understand the implications and adhere to Islamic law. This is because Islam is viewed differently in the West, where practices are often carried out

²¹ Khairul Hamimah.

²² Zurul Asya.

²³ Khairul Hamimah

without consideration for the effects they may have. In contrast, the fuqaha²⁴ addressed and approved of worshippers' distance from one another when there was a legitimate reason for it. Additionally, this article stated that the choice to maintain a 1-meter physical distance during prayer due to the Covid-19 outbreak is not in violation of *Maqasid Shariah*, which places significant concern on the security of Muslims' lives and the need to fight the worsening pandemic²⁵. If pragmatism is the best approach to addressing contemporary difficulties in Malaysia? Zurul elaborated when asked about it.

“...Pragmatism is one of the ways to deal with current issue nowadays, but we cannot say it is the best way. But maybe it can be the alternative way to deal with the current issues because again we must see what kind of the norm that has been done by the people and what the way is accepted by majority of the people, however at the same time, we need to think about whether it aligns with Islamic principles or not. To saying that is the best way it is an over claim, I can say that is an alternative way.”

As a result, it may be concluded that Islam has its own approach to resolving contemporary problems. Islam uses the term *Ijtihad* to describe this approach, yet the *Shariah* is nevertheless followed in terms of practicality. Additionally, I believe that the Mufti departments in Malaysia have a significant responsibility in relation to the current situation, particularly regarding this Covid-19, because most Malaysians tend to obey official decisions even when some groups of people do not necessarily agree with them. However, it is important to note once more that Islamic law, despite the *Shariah's* moderate and adaptable features, is always strict in upholding the fundamentals of the law, such as the requirement of prayer that cannot be disregarded.

²⁴ Irwan Mohd Subri, Hamza Abed Al-Karim Hammad, Hasanah Abd Khafidz, Mohd Hapiz Mahaiyadin, Muhammad Firdaus Ab Rahman, Arieff Salleh Rosman, Aqeel Khan, (Malaysian Muslim Knowledge and Compliance with the Rule of Distancing Prayers by One Meter During the Covid-19 Pandemic), 14 Mei 2021.

²⁵ Ibid

5.2.3 PART C: Application of Pragmatism in Education

5.2.3.1 Theme 1: Pragmatism a Good Alternative in Education

(Can pragmatism become a good alternative in terms of education?)

Since most Muslim countries attained independence, many colleges and institutions, particularly in Malaysia, specialise in Islamic education. In her article, Prof. Rosnani Hashim claimed that many Malaysia's higher educational institutions have departments that focus on Islamic traditional sciences or Islamic studies, integrating an Islamic viewpoint into all fields of knowledge. However, Prof. Rosnani also argued that several higher education programs in Malaysia still lack satisfactory or comprehensive curricula²⁶.

From my interpretation of this remark, there seems to be a lack of integration between academic knowledge and practical knowledge in the curriculum, creating an imbalance. As far as Malaysia is concerned, the curriculum in some higher learning institutions remains unbalanced. For instance, in IIUM, despite being more integrated and broader, with Islamic traditional sciences at its core, it still lacks courses in science, art, and literature. Courses like "Central Issues in Science" or the philosophy of the natural and social sciences are absent, as noted by Prof. Rosnani in her article. This deficiency renders the curriculum unsatisfactory or incomplete, failing to nurture an appreciation for the arts and literature or the affective domain, and it doesn't sharpen students' scientific or mathematical analytical abilities²⁷.

The University of Malaya, on the other hand, offers broader specialisations in response to the demands of professional education, such as combining *Shariah* with modern economics, management, or law. However, neither institution provides its students with a comprehensive or balanced education that fully realises their potential²⁸.

Which course, then, can be appropriate and comprehensive for our students' mental faculties, critical thinking skills, and deductive reasoning? Can we learn from

²⁶ Rosnani Hashim, (Intellectualism in Higher Islamic Traditional Studies: Implications for the Curriculum), American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, July 2007.

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Ibid

both our Islamic tradition and the West to address this question? Matthew Lipman and pragmatic philosophy can be relevant for children's education in Malaysia, as demonstrated by an example in Malaysia from one of the articles that introduced certain methods by Lipman. Lipman argued that philosophy imparts skills of logic and reasoning²⁹. What then makes philosophy unique? Since philosophy deals with topics relevant to our daily lives, including formal logic and linguistic analysis, values and ethics, aesthetics, and epistemology, it covers a wide range of subjects. We also have Muslim thinkers supporting Islam, including Imam al-Ghazali, Jamaluddin al-Afghani, and Sayyid Ahmad Khan³⁰. However, Islamic philosophy should be viewed differently than Western philosophy. Khairul Hamimah³¹ explained that for Muslims, especially in the 21st century, to know the outcome and be holistic in all areas, we should learn from both Western philosophy and Islamic philosophy. She also mentioned the importance of pragmatism. If we use a practical approach, philosophy can become a good substitute. The concept of Islamic education is naturally pragmatic when it comes to practical matters, as it blends learned knowledge with given knowledge, validated by the article that made that claim³². On the other hand, Zurul³³ stated that although she was initially unsure about the importance of pragmatism in education, she later realised that it had been successfully adopted in other developed nations. In other words, pragmatism is a good alternative for students in terms of education. According to Zurul, they introduced the pragmatic approach at the beginning so that students know what they can or cannot do. However, it is not entirely established how they will behave in the future.

²⁹ Salma binti Ismail, (Matthew Lipman's Pragmatism and The Relevance of Philosophy for Children (P4C) to Children's Education in Malaysia), *Living Islam, Journal of Islamic Discourses*, Vol 3, No 1, June 2020.

³⁰ Rosnani Hashim, (Intellectualism in Higher Islamic Traditional Studies: Implications for the Curriculum), *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, July 2007.

³¹ Khairul Hamimah.

³² Aminuddin Hassan, Asmawati Suhid, Norhasni zainal Abiddin, Habsah Ismail, Haziyah Husin, (The role of Islamic Philosophy of education in aspiring holistic learning), *Elsevier, Procedia Social Behavioral Sciences*, 2010.

³³ Zurul Asya.

5.2.3.2 Theme 2: Possible or Not Practice the ideas of pragmatism for the Malaysian Education

(Is it possible for the Malaysian education system to practice the ideas of pragmatism?)

Most Muslim scholars take a firm stance on this issue because pragmatism is a Western worldview. According to Al-Attas³⁴, throughout the history of Western cultural, religious, and intellectual traditions, shifts in worldviews have occurred and continue to occur. However, in Islam, there are no distinct areas identified by the predominance of a system of thinking founded on materialism or idealism, backed by related methodological methods and stances like empiricism, rationalism, realism, pragmatism, and so on. I agree with this remark, at least to the extent that I understand it, as the Quran and Hadith are the cornerstones of Islam.

On the other side, perhaps we need to make a few changes to educate people today, but as Muslims, we will continue to reflect on our original sources. In her writing on pragmatism, Prof. Rosnani Hashim³⁵ claimed that the Islamic worldview incorporates elements of pragmatism when they relate to or are present in thinking and critical intelligence in problem-solving. In other words, it is evident that Islam does not disagree with the core principles of pragmatism from an epistemic standpoint. However, Muslims do have significant issues with the metaphysics of pragmatism, so we must be particularly cautious with this.

Additionally, metaphysics holds that all values are relative, and that reality is characterised by change, indicating that there are no unchanging values. Despite all these claims about the metaphysics of pragmatism, in terms of education, we have educational reforms, and in terms of education, we might be able to consider them as potential solutions to any problem-solving activity, as mentioned by one of the

³⁴ Ahmad Murad Merican, (Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas and The Dialogic of Occidental Knowledge, A Passing Glance to the Study of Society in the Malay Archipelago), Al-Shajarah, ISTAC Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization, IIUM, Volume 26, Number 1, 2021.

³⁵ Rosnani Hashim, (Pragmatic Education as A Tool for The Development of The Muslim Ummah), Three Day Seminar on The Role of Muslim Organizations in promoting Development and Human Fellowship in Muslim Minority Countries in Asia, Jamiyah Singapore in Co-operation with The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and The Ministry of Awqaf, Kuwait, 24-26 September 2004.

pragmatists, John Dewey, who emphasised that one should not outright reject traditional values and ideas³⁶.

Khairul Hamimah went on to explain that this calls for a revision of Malaysia's educational framework and the use of pragmatic education based on the needs of the individual child and the environment in which they are raised. This is due to her comment that some places, especially those in rural Sabah and Sarawak, cannot provide the same education to residents as those in the peninsula³⁷. However, Zurul³⁸ contended that it is not impossible; it is conceivable but not simple because Malaysian education is heavily absorbed into this examination-oriented approach rather than a practical one. In her view, although it is still a long way to go, it is not impossible. I believe we can draw the following conclusion: although they both agree that education needs to be revised, not all teachers fully comprehend pragmatic education and how to put that system into practice.

5.2.3.3 Theme 3: Suggestion for a better understanding and practice of Pragmatism in Malaysia Muslim Education
(What would you suggest for a better understanding and practice of pragmatism for Muslim education in Malaysia?)

Both Muslims and Westerners have the right to cultural and educational distinction. From my perspective, the Malaysian people are not accustomed to the pragmatism ideology. They often adhere to the recommendations of the National Education Policy on schooling. As we all know, the Malaysian government aspires to generate citizens who are both mentally and physically balanced for the present and the future.

In terms of pragmatism in Malaysian Muslim education, any education should foster man's creative desire to dominate himself and the world as a true servant of Allah³⁹, rather than by resisting and falling into conflict with nature. I concur with Al-

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ Khairul Hamimah.

³⁸ Zurul Asya.

³⁹ Muhammad Abid Ali, Islamic and Western Education Systems – Perceptions of Selected Educationists in Malaysia, (Journal of Education and Educational Development), Volume 3, No 2, December 2016.

Attas from this perspective, stating that we should adhere to our core Islamic principles. To put this pragmatism into practice in education, particularly for Muslims, it must be handled carefully by experienced educators or individuals to avoid confusing others between Western ideas and Islam.

In fact, Khairul Hamimah⁴⁰ advised that to realise the idea of pragmatism, an education team must be created. Therefore, it is not simply sufficient to assign the same syllabus or curriculum to all Muslim students. Rather, we must carefully comprehend it and be able to apply it in our daily lives. Zurul⁴¹, however, made a pragmatic suggestion that the Malaysian educational system should not place greater emphasis on the examination-based syllabus but rather should teach students more about future preparation. She continued by saying that as teachers are responsible for most of the student's education, it is important for them to receive good training and have a solid understanding of the subject matter to help the students grasp it.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS (FROM THE INTERVIEW OF ACADEMICIAN) (MUSLIM ACADEMICIAN WITH NON- ISLAMIC BACKGROUND)

5.2.4 PART A: Characteristics of Pragmatism

The following discussions present the opinions of Muslim educators with a non-Islamic background.

5.2.4.1 Theme 1: Definition of Pragmatism **(How would you define pragmatism?)**

In the previous paragraphs, we saw the opinions from educators who are from an Islamic background regarding pragmatism. Now, we will observe the understanding and opinions from non-Islamic background educators. Some parts of the answer might be

⁴⁰ Khairul Hamimah.

⁴¹ Zurul Asya.

slightly different; we will explore this later. Every person or scholar has their own unique ideas and opinions. In this article⁴², the debates between Sayyid Qutb and Fethullah over the limits of pragmatism, particularly in Muslim education, are discussed. Fethullah Gulen has become more moderate because, in contrast to Sayyid Qutb, he is stronger in his ideas.

In this regard, Puan Asra⁴³ has offered a simplification of the definition of pragmatism, as she perceives the theory to be truly practical or action-based based on our judgment. However, according to Azanee⁴⁴, the word "pragmatic," which comes from pragmatism, was utilised in the use of language. In language, this is one of the methods we react to in any circumstance. Azanee might go into details about the pragmatism that he described, which many would agree on. Yes, that is also true, as I did mention this definition in my earlier explanation in the prior chapter. But it is better for our actions if we relate to the concepts themselves.

5.2.4.2 Theme 2: Connection of Pragmatism with the Western ideologies of Liberalism, Pluralism and Secularism

(Do you agree that pragmatism is a Western theory that has strong connection with the Western ideologies of Liberalism, Pluralism and Secularism?)

It goes without saying that pragmatism and other Western philosophies, such as liberalism, pluralism, and secularism, are tied to one another. This is because pragmatism offers us the theory of the practical and can be based on our own opinions, as we can see from the word itself and the explanation above. Consequently, it can potentially lead us to become more liberal, secular, or even further, upholding the pluralism ideology. However, from my perspective as a Muslim, being pragmatic does not necessitate adhering to the intellectual system that goes by the same name. Often, being a pragmatist simply means to be practical. Is not the teaching of Islam to be practical? So, which comes first, Islam or pragmatism? Pragmatism does not only mean

⁴² Jeffrey Guhin, (The boundaries of pragmatism in Muslim Education: Comparing the Islamic pedagogies of Sayyid Qutb and Fethullah Gulen), Critical Research on Religion, SAGE, 2020.

⁴³ Puan Asra.

⁴⁴ Azanee

to be practical but to see the benefit in terms of consequence. If there is apparently no benefit, you cannot apply some principle. You need to sacrifice it for the sake of benefit. It also means to be more committed to the immediate objective than to methods of action as ends in themselves.

On the other hand, Puan Asra⁴⁵ based its meaning on what people typically understand. She said, and I couldn't agree more, that pragmatism has significant ties to other Western ideals. Azanee⁴⁶ concurred with this assertion, noting that all Western beliefs are tied to one another. Sayyid Qutb⁴⁷ claimed that this is the reason why he continuously stresses the need to maintain Islam's purity and the fact that it cannot tolerate any synthesis with anything else. This serves as a reminder to us if we want to engage with any Western ideas or ideologies.

5.2.4.3 Theme 3: (Freedom, Modernism and Non-Absolute Truth) are the main elements of pragmatism and any other elements of pragmatism from Malaysia perspective

(Freedom, modernism and non-absolute truth are the main elements of pragmatism. What are other main elements of pragmatism from a Malaysian perspective?)

When it comes to this topic, it is important to note that not all Malaysians are familiar with Western ideologies, particularly with pragmatism. Most Muslims obediently follow all decisions made by religious authorities. For instance, according to this article, during the Covid-19 outbreak, it asked the Mufti Department to stop the disease's spread based on persuasive Islamic justifications. From this vantage point, the fact that this pandemic is occurring is evidence that the Mufti needs to make a new judgment depending on the circumstances⁴⁸. Therefore, we can find a good solution in Islam and use it in a practical way for all people.

⁴⁵ Puan Asra

⁴⁶ Azanee

⁴⁷ Jeffrey Guhin, (The boundaries of pragmatism in Muslim Education: Comparing the Islamic pedagogies of Sayyid Qutb and Fethullah Gulen), Critical Research on Religion, SAGE, 2020.

⁴⁸ Fathullah Asni, Ahmad Yusairi Yusli and Amirah Izzati Umar, (The Role of the Perlis State Mufti Department in Restraining Covid-19 Through Fatwas and Legal Guidelines), International Journal of Academic Research in Business & Social Sciences, 8 October 2021.

In response to the assertion that pragmatism encompasses more than just freedom, modernism, and non-absolute truth from a Malaysian perspective, Puan Asra⁴⁹ stated that she was unsure of what pragmatism entails. She claimed that she was only familiar with secularism beliefs in Malaysia. In the same vein, Azanee⁵⁰ can only agree that modernism and freedom are the major components of pragmatism, but he is unsure of whether there are other components from a Malaysian perspective. Then, as I previously stated, many Malaysians are unaware of pragmatism and its traits, even though it significantly impacts every part of life, including religion. So far, we can distinguish between the views and opinions of people in Malaysia with Islamic and non-Islamic backgrounds based on these three questions from the first half.

5.2.4.4 Theme 4: Opinions of some Muslim Scholars regarding the threats of Pragmatism.

(Some scholars said that Muslims should be aware of the threats of pragmatism. What is your opinion on that?)

The emergence of Western ideologies has had a significant impact on all facets of human existence. In fact, some of their views are completely inappropriate for Muslims. But given some current problems, perhaps we could take them into consideration, but only sparingly, and look for the right approach to put them into practice. We should also think back to our main sources, the Quran and Hadith. As stated by Gulen in this article⁵¹, he was more moderate when it comes to Western ideologies, particularly pragmatism, but he did not accept all the pragmatic philosophies. He merely wanted to compare Islam and philosophies in some areas, like education. However, it is important to note that Qutb and Gulen both publicly and tacitly rejected John Dewey's secular pragmatism.

According to Puan Asra⁵², based on her knowledge, she said that pragmatism is genuinely based on the situation and does not turn into the largest threat, despite the

⁴⁹ Puan Asra.

⁵⁰ Azanee.

⁵¹ Jeffrey Guhin, (The boundaries of pragmatism in Muslim Education: Comparing the Islamic pedagogies of Sayyid Qutb and Fethullah Gulen), Critical Research on Religion, SAGE, 2020.

⁵² Puan Asra.

rejection of pragmatism because it will be a threat for Muslims. This is a result of it falling within personal practices. She contended that to live as a Muslim, we must understand what is right and wrong. Azanee explained what he knew and added that;⁵³

Yes, could not agree more, every individual need to know or awareness with this idea of pragmatism, when we already been exposed by any ideologies nowadays. And I think Muslim scholar should play an important role to give the awareness on Western ideologies like pragmatism. But every individual need to have basic or fundamental about this ideology that it can help us to filter any truth or non-truth information.

Azanee asserted that we must consider how Western ideologies have shaped our minds and lives, not just recently, but this goes back much further in time. As a result, after we have been exposed to Western scholars, certain scholars made a significant reformation to bring Islam back in the 20th century.

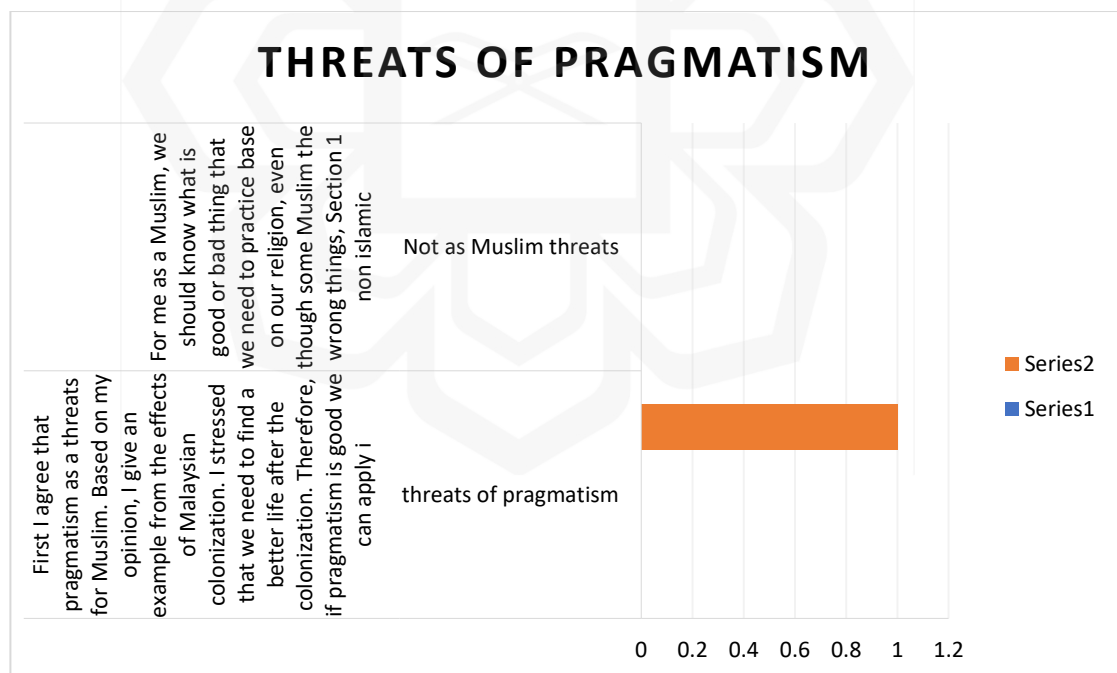


Figure 5.1 The Overall Decision from 4 of respondents regarding the pragmatism

⁵³ Azanee.

As can be seen from the figure above, all four respondents came to the same conclusion: pragmatism poses a threat to Muslims because of its traits that conflict with Islamic principles, particularly when it comes to metaphysical matters.

5.2.5 PART B: Pragmatism in Malaysia

5.2.5.1 Theme 1: Current Issues led to Practice of Pragmatism.

(Current issues nowadays have led people to practice pragmatism in tackling certain issues in Malaysia. What is your comment on that?)

Due to several concerns that arise nowadays, there have been challenges and attempts to incorporate the pragmatic technique into daily life. Even though we live in the modern era, according to the preceding explanation from a famous Muslim scholar like Al-Attas, there are no clearly defined ages in Islam⁵⁴. Yes, that is true, but from a different angle, perhaps we need to make some adjustments to address the problem since it did not rise earlier but we are still not going over the line as Muslims. As a result, Yusuf al-Qaradawi⁵⁵ coined the name "*Tajdid*." He drew most of his inspiration for his ideas, which are highly trustworthy in the modern world, from this setting. He introduced the methodologies of 'fiqh' and the concept of 'fiqh' by him like *fiqh al-maqasid*, *fiqh al-Nusus*, *fiqh al-waqi'*, *fiqh al-muwazanat*, *fiqh al-awlawiyyat*, *fiqh al-taghayyur*, *fiqh al-Jihad*, *fiqh al-thaurah*, *fiqh al-iqtisadi al-Islami*, *fiqh al-daulah*, *fiqh al-aqalliyat*, *fiqh al-wasatiyyah*, *fiqh al-da'wah dan manhaj al-salafi*. Then it became clear that while a fresh approach is required, Islamic principles are being upheld. Whether it leads to pragmatism or not, we can say that we just use a practical or pragmatic approach. Puan Asra⁵⁶ mentioned this principle as a positive thing, although she was unsure of the specifics of what pragmatism entails. Despite this, Azanee⁵⁷ pointed out that it is already practical when he justified his response with the example of "*Jama*" and "*Qasar*" (combining and condensing prayer). As in my explanation from

⁵⁴ Ahmad Murad Merican, (Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas and The Dialogic of Occidental Knowledge, A Passing Glance to the Study of Society in the Malay Archipelago), Al-Shajarah, ISTAC Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization, IIUM, Volume 26, Number 1, 2021.

⁵⁵ Zulkifli Hasan, Yusuf al-Qaradawi dan Sumbangan Pemikirannya, (Yusuf al-Qaradwi and Contribution of His Thoughts), (GJAT, Global Journal Al-Thaqafah, June 2013).

⁵⁶ Puan Asra

⁵⁷ Azanee.

the previous chapter, what I can infer from . Azanee's remark is that some Muslims truly attempt to link the “Waqiiyah” or ‘Thabat/Murunah’ notion with pragmatic ideas.

5.2.5.2 Theme 2: Keep the Distance in Prayer during Covid-19

(During this pandemic, Muslim cannot go to mosque for prayer and need to keep the distance if we are allowed to pray. Is this situation can describe as pragmatic? What is your opinion?)

When asked about this question from the Malaysian context, this is an example based on the reality during the Covid-19 pandemic recently. Clearly in Malaysia, the Mufti or responsible authorities need to provide a solution on whether we need to keep the distance in prayer or not because the virus, as a fact [Covid-19], can spread easily. Therefore, discussing this matter, as from the previous explanation, Muslim people who have an Islamic background would say this is a pragmatic way and needs to be backed with reference and reflection from the Quran and Hadith. Therefore, adopting a practical solution is approved by Muslims who have knowledge. Furthermore, Puan Asra added it is pragmatic, and we do like that for the benefits of all of us. It is the best solution we need to implement in the effort to solve the issue in a proper way that is based on Islamic principles.

5.2.5.3 Theme 3: Is Pragmatism the best way to deal with current issues.

(There are Muslims in Malaysia who argue that pragmatism is the best way to deal with current issues in Malaysia now. What is your suggestion?)

Living in a dangerous scenario during a pandemic especially requires us to discover the best technique and solution to deal with it and stop the virus from spreading further. As was already mentioned, the Mufti plays a significant role as the religious authority who makes choices that are good for everyone, especially Muslims. To relate once more, whether we apply pragmatism or not, this essay provides us with some evidence that

does so⁵⁸. For instance, it was discovered that there are four formal fatwas in Malaysia that are connected to efforts to stop COVID-19. First, a fatwa on the COVID-19 vaccine, and then one on immunisation for people who are fasting without making the fast invalid. Thirdly, a fatwa to skip Friday prayer because of work obligations during a time when COVID-19 was a serious concern, and finally, a fatwa on marriage contracts was delivered through a live video conference. Puan Asra⁵⁹ clarified that Malaysia is already pragmatic in this location based on her understanding because she indicated that we would debate and reach a decision jointly on everything. Giving everyone a better solution is the goal. Azanee⁶⁰, on the other hand, reiterated his previous understanding that any decision must be made by religious authorities rather than by an individual based solely on what they understand and how it will benefit them. This is because pragmatism, like Western ideologies, focuses on both practical considerations and one's own interests. Therefore, in this situation, in my opinion, we cannot be more open; instead, we must exercise moderation both inside and outside. When faced with serious problems or situations, such as the COVID-19 virus, Malaysians typically merely abide by the fatwa's ruling.

5.2.6 PART C: Application of Pragmatism in Education

5.2.6.1 Theme 1: Pragmatism a good alternative in Education

(Can pragmatism become a good alternative in terms of education?)

The following examples help to demonstrate how Muslims without an Islamic background view pragmatism in education. From Prof. Rosnani's description above, we can acquire some of the pragmatism that applies to this educational system, but we shouldn't entirely accept it as being used by Westerners. What we strive to accomplish is to approach it from the standpoints of practicality and critical thinking. Of course, we are aware of the depth and harmony between thought and deed in Islamic education. However, there is an imbalance in the curriculum structure between theoretical and

⁵⁸ Fathullah Asni, Ahmad Yusairi Yusli and Amirah Izzati Umar, (The Role of the Perlis State Mufti Department in Restraining Covid-19 Through Fatwas and Legal Guidelines), International Journal of Academic Research in Business & Social Sciences, 8 October 2021.

⁵⁹ Puan Asra

⁶⁰ Azanee

practical knowledge, even though some institutions of higher learning have already used that system like IIUM, albeit not in a comprehensive way. Al-Attas' choice prompted him to come up with the concepts, but Prof. Rosnani⁶¹ afterwards suggested a different one that would be more appropriate, particularly in the context of Malaysia after her experience teaching in IIUM.

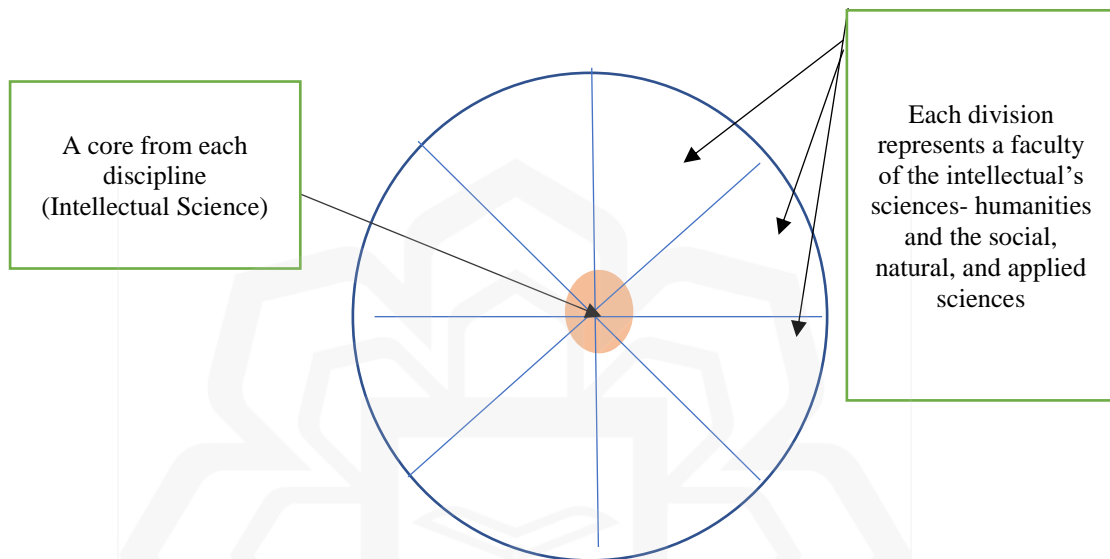


Figure 5.2 The Curriculum of Western Universities

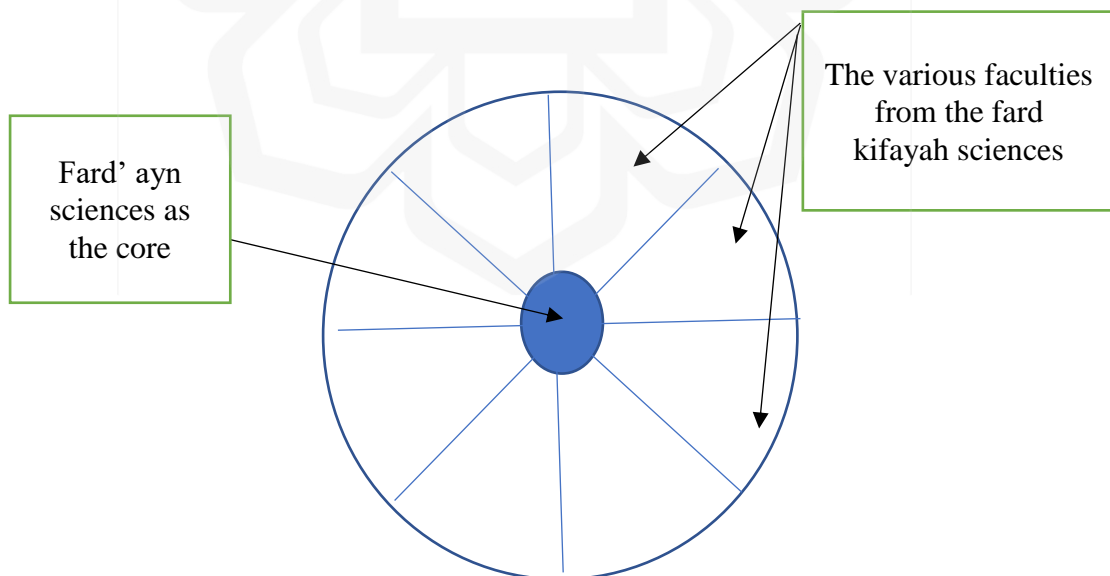


Figure 5.3 Al-Attas Curriculum of an Islamic University

⁶¹ Rosnani Hashim, (Intellectualism in Higher Islamic Traditional Studies: Implications for the Curriculum), American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, July 2007.

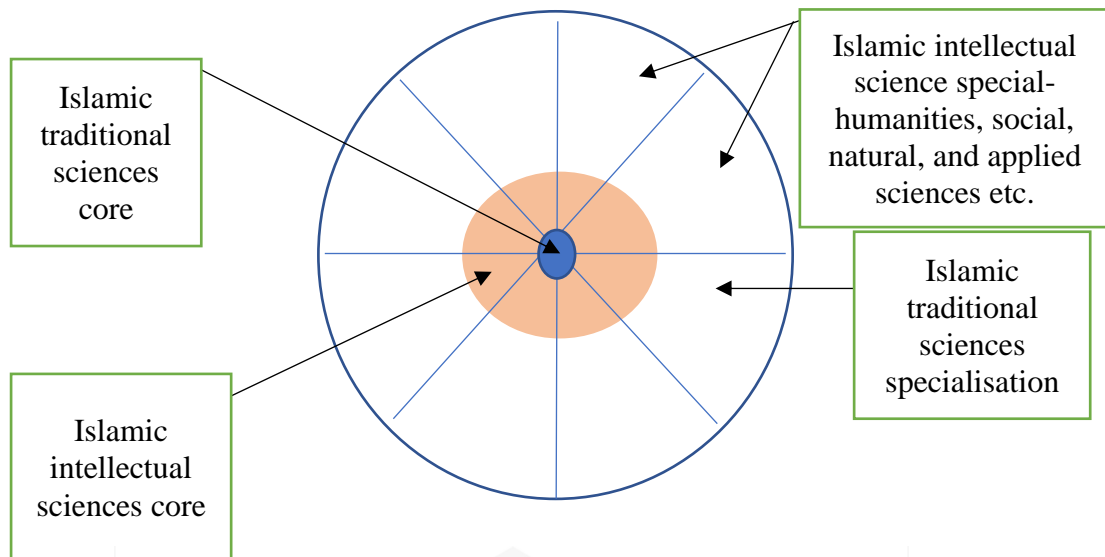


Figure 5.4 The proposed curriculum of an Islamic University by Prof Rosnani.

By analysing Western educational pragmatism for a good system in modern contemporary life and education, we need to be conscious that we are being practical in education in our own ways as Muslims, as we addressed this issue earlier. The rest of Puan Asra's⁶² explanation is also based on her experience as a general tourist lecturer. She emphasised that any decisions must come from everyone, and that doing so is pragmatic since they relate to social humanities and other topics, among other things, based on her understanding in general. Additionally, Azanee⁶³ concurred with Puan Asra in saying that pragmatism is an excellent replacement for the current system of education for students, but again, I add, that we need to know what pragmatic in a correct way as a Muslim is.

⁶² Puan Asra.

⁶³ Azanee.

5.2.6.2 drTheme 2: Possible or not practice the ideas of pragmatism for the Malaysian Education

(Is it possible for the Malaysian education system to practice the ideas of pragmatism?)

Regarding the preceding question, it was claimed that the Malaysian educational system may put pragmatism's principles into practice. This is so because, in the opinion of some educators, pragmatism is a good way to improve the state of society as it already exists, and this is also agreed upon by Puan Asra⁶⁴. As she illustrated and discussed in the figure above, Prof. Rosnani also asserted that pragmatic education is essential for the development of the Ummah – the development of Muslim minds. She stated that she thought of some aspects of practicalities, particularly its concern for critical and creative intelligence, its fostering of the questioning attitude, and its use of the scientific method; however, it is not specific only for pragmatism. Muslim teachers must also keep an eye out for students who can fall into the trap of pragmatism if it is practiced without proper examination. By guaranteeing a religious curriculum that teaches Quranic ethics and solid metaphysics side by side, the checks and balances will be realised. She also opined that only in this way would we be able to live both our lives in a balanced way for both the commonplace and the terrifying realms.⁶⁵

5.2.6.3 Theme 3: Suggestion for a better understanding and practice of pragmatism in Malaysia Muslim Education

(What would you suggest for a better understanding and practice of pragmatism for Muslim education in Malaysia?)

After debating the query, it may be possible to recommend an adaptation of pragmatic ideas in Muslim education in Malaysia that promotes a better understanding and application of pragmatism. In my opinion, collaboration between academics and

⁶⁴ Puan Asra.

⁶⁵ Rosnani Hashim, (Pragmatic Education as A Tool for The Development of the Muslim Ummah), Three Day Seminar on The Role of Muslim Organisations in promoting Development and Human Fellowship in Muslim Minority Countries in Asia, Jamiyah Singapore in Co-operation with The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO) and The Ministry of Awqaf, Kuwait, 24-26 September 2004

religious organisations is essential for realising the concept. Prof. Rosnani⁶⁶ has also discussed this topic before, saying that Muslim scholars should consider the operational definition of "*abd*" and "*khalifah*" as well as the nature of the knowledge tree for Islamic higher education from an epistemological standpoint. Understanding the Western ideology and the Islamic viewpoint is necessary to become more critical and creative in thinking. This is also highlighted by Puan Asra⁶⁷.

Based on our modern life today, we need changes, what kind of changes and in which are and more practical. This is because students can more understand when we teach them practical things. And for Muslim education, it could be also. And maybe we need to also emphasise the ideologies in students' syllabus or theories (philosophy) since primary school in fact in modern liberal education they are teaching. For example, we can teach them, we cannot become more liberal and so on.

In her earlier article, Prof. Rosnani explained how philosophy is introduced. She also made it clear that, to satisfy the need for intellectualism among experts in Islamic traditional studies, it is advised that philosophy, and in particular the philosophy of science and religion, be reintroduced. As you can see from his earlier explanation. Azanee⁶⁸ is likewise concerned about the pragmatist philosophies of the West and takes special care to adhere to some parts of them to safeguard us as Muslims from any heresy or overstepping of our bounds. When dealing with these ideals or context, he therefore requested the creation of a proper curriculum for Muslim education.

⁶⁶ Rosnani Hashim, (Intellectualism in Higher Islamic Traditional Studies: Implications for the Curriculum), American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, July 2007.

⁶⁷ Puan Asra.

⁶⁸ Azanee.

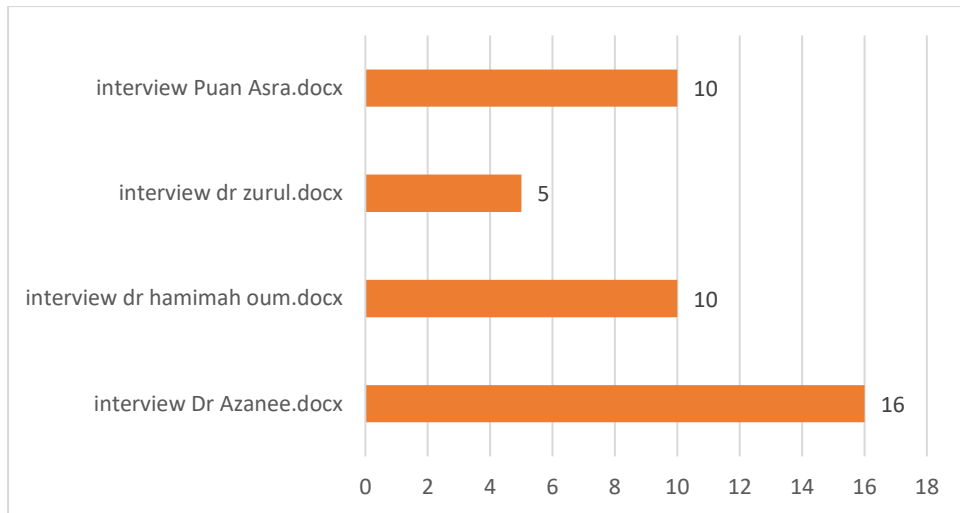


Figure 5.5 The overall suggestion for the use of pragmatism in Malaysian Education system from respondents.

I just want to make a point about whether the application of pragmatism in the educational system in Malaysia is acceptable. According to many scholars, even though Puan Hamimah is from an Islamic background, except for Puan Asra and Azanee, who are both from non-Islamic backgrounds, pragmatism can be a good alternative in today's educational system.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Even if pragmatism is not a new ideology, it is discussed in the context of Malaysia or by certain Malaysians in general as if it were. Although we weren't aware of it, this ideology affects how individuals live their daily lives. These ideas can pose a threat, particularly to Muslims, as we all know from the discussion in the preceding chapter. Aspects of these ideas, however, may have a positive effect on education in a practical way, say some educators, but they must be handled with extreme caution by knowledgeable individuals. This is crucial for some outstanding teachers to provide Muslims with specifically a well-balanced understanding of the hereafter. Despite this, non-Muslims also need to grasp these concepts to prevent themselves from being influenced to become more radical. This is because, as we are all aware, pragmatism

refers to the idea that there is no ultimate, singular, or truth in any area of your life other than the educational system.

In order to shield young people from any moral decline brought on by any Western ideologies and forces, Malaysia, a country with a mainly Muslim population, needs to be alert to any Western influences. Pragmatism has been introduced in education as previously noted. The educators did, however, propose that it is conceivable and that it could be used, but we must be aware that not all of pragmatism's traits are used in our lives, particularly when pragmatism conflicts with Islam in terms of metaphysical truths. The discussion of this subject above for some instructors with backgrounds in Islam is very clear regarding this element.

Sometimes non-Islamic educators who just have a general understanding of Islam accept pragmatism. The impact of pragmatism in education, particularly whether it can result in good or terrible things, is something that some of their thoughts and understandings just really seem to lack awareness of. Additionally, the study emphasises the effects of pragmatism in line with the viewpoints of Muslim educators and is backed up by the theories of famous Muslim scholars. To put it simply, when it comes to religious matters, the Muslim community and the significant group that educators need to understand thoroughly to defend Islam cannot simply follow modern living. In Malaysia, it is hoped that more initiatives and unconventional strategies will raise awareness of any such issues among Malaysians as a whole, not just among educators with an Islamic background who are knowledgeable in this area.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher has attempted to outline how pragmatism is understood by Muslims in Malaysia. We can distinguish between pragmatism and practicality or being pragmatic in Islam, now that we have a better understanding of the differences, as was stated and illustrated in the previous chapters. Speaking with the participants from the interview session who provided insight into how Muslims view pragmatism and how such knowledge has taught them new strategies for interacting with Western beliefs in the modern world.

Second, it has helped to paint a clear picture of what pragmatism is, its principles and traits, whether it poses a threat to Muslims, and what it would mean if applied, particularly to Muslims in Malaysia. Pragmatism is a Western philosophy, as previously stated, and its principles are in opposition to those of Islam. The study has also demonstrated that Muslim educators with Islamic backgrounds are very concerned about this issue and how pragmatism may be used in teaching. Although this is the case, Malaysians will continue to debate Western ideologies and the educational system considering the challenging times we live in today.

6.2 OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The pragmatism ideology not only influences or exists in the Western world but also affects Muslim countries. Chapter Two discussed how the idea of pragmatism was initially introduced by Western philosophers, particularly by American philosopher James. His view of pragmatism not only focused on certain aspects but later developed new ideas related to pragmatism, making its way into the field of education, with John Dewey being a pioneer of these ideas. The study then attempts to delve into the

definition and characteristics of pragmatism, referencing various scholars to cover all aspects.

Furthermore, the study compares the opinions of Islamic scholars regarding the pragmatism ideology and its impact on Muslim life. Two prominent scholars, al-Attas and Iqbal, express their unique opinions, with al-Attas emphasising the incompatibility of Western ideologies with Muslim life, while Iqbal presents a different perspective. Both scholars, however, do not tolerate the integration of Western ideology that contradicts Islamic principles. The chapter also explores debates on the methodologies of pragmatism applicable to Muslims.

In the following chapter, the study thoroughly discusses the impact or advantages of the modern education system and pragmatism in Malaysia, especially for Muslim people. This perspective is supported and recommended by Muslim educator Prof. Rosnani to prepare students with valuable skills for the future.

Chapter Five presents an analysis of responses from Muslim individuals with both Islamic and non-Islamic backgrounds regarding their understanding of pragmatism and its application in Malaysia. The aim is to illustrate how Muslims in Malaysia perceive Western ideologies and how they navigate their responses within the boundaries of Islamic principles. This chapter reflects the diversity of views on pragmatism in Malaysia while emphasising the importance of maintaining adherence to Islamic principles.

The chapter also explores the application of pragmatism in the current context, considering the various challenges faced by society. Respondents suggest that pragmatism can be applied but should be context dependent. The role of religious authorities or Mufti in finding appropriate solutions, such as during the Covid-19 pandemic, is highlighted.

Additionally, the chapter delves into debates on whether pragmatism is a suitable alternative for the education system in Malaysia. While scholars like al-Attas express reservations about integrating Western ideas, respondents in the interviews believe that pragmatism can serve as a beneficial alternative, especially in the Malaysian education

system. It is emphasised that the application of pragmatism should be guided and controlled by knowledgeable educators, as articulated by Prof. Rosnani. Positive efforts in this direction may contribute to the holistic development of students and create a balance between worldly and spiritual aspects.

In conclusion, this study aimed to raise awareness among Muslims in Malaysia about the potential risks of indiscriminately adopting Western ideologies, such as pragmatism, especially in the contemporary era of globalisation where simplistic problem-solving approaches are prevalent. While numerous articles have explored the impacts of Western ideas in the past, this study specifically focused on understanding the effects of pragmatism on the lifestyle and educational landscape of Muslims in Malaysia. It is important to note that other aspects deeply ingrained in Muslim politics and the economy are not extensively covered in this study.

6.3 SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the research, a key aspect of this ideology is that it poses threats, particularly to Muslims. However, in the modern world, revisions may be necessary. As I already indicated, another goal of this study is to investigate how pragmatism is understood in the Malaysian context and to determine whether it can be used or if there are any other beneficial features to this philosophy. Yes, there is evidence that educators have debated this idea and how to handle it. And, based on the general conclusions and discussion, we might apply the idea of ideologies in terms of a better educational system, but we must be very careful to do so. Moreover, to make Malaysian people aware and understand any ideologies from the West during this era of globalisation, therefore, the suggestions and recommendations that the researcher tends to pursue fall into three main groups:

1. The Government
2. Ministry of Education
3. Religious Representatives

It is hoped that the government will constantly consider how to advance in the current world of globalisation. The previous Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's concept of 'Islam *Hadhari*' should be implemented by the government, together with Malaysia's present 'Madani' motto. This is because most people are too liberal in their thinking and behaviour today because of globalisation. Yes, we live in a contemporary society, but we still need to maintain a healthy balance that is neither too strict nor too extreme. Additionally, the government ought to set an example for other countries by promoting the concept of '*Wasatiyyah*,' or a balanced approach to life, especially for Muslims.

Secondly, creating effective educators who have a balanced and healthy mind is an essential goal that falls under the purview of the government as well as the Ministry of Education. This is because research shows that certain educators are not sufficiently exposed to Western ideas, even though I have already indicated that we practice some of them, such as pragmatism, in our daily lives. Additionally, some of the pragmatism ideologies are not suitable for us as Muslims. Therefore, to generate excellent students, we must first have excellent instructors. Thus, it is my opinion that all educators in Malaysia must complete pedagogical training. The Malaysian Government has introduced some alternatives for long-term education in Malaysia (Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025), known as "SULAM"³⁵⁸ or Service-Learning Malaysia. SULAM is also one of the alternative community-engaged pedagogies. However, this focuses more on the student. In other words, it starts with students and ends with the student. Other than that, "SULAM" is not like pragmatism, but it focuses more on constructivism.

As an educator, I believe that we need to include training around religion from the beginning of the workshop rather than only focusing on preparing the students to learn in the future. This is because we are training to become excellent instructors even though our backgrounds do not primarily include Islam. In general, for instance, we are

³⁵⁸ Service-Learning Malaysia by Ministry of Education in Malaysia. A course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which the student participates in a structured service activity that meets identified community needs, reflects on the service activity and experiences to achieve desired learning outcomes, in such a way as to gain deeper understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility. <https://www.iium.edu.my/media/60247/SULAMPlaybook-eBook.pdf>

experts in our industry, but we are also more informed about current events, modern philosophy and ideologies, as well as how these things relate to Islam. In the diagram below, the pedagogical³⁵⁹ steps for educators are represented by the stages I have just provided as an example from my point of view.

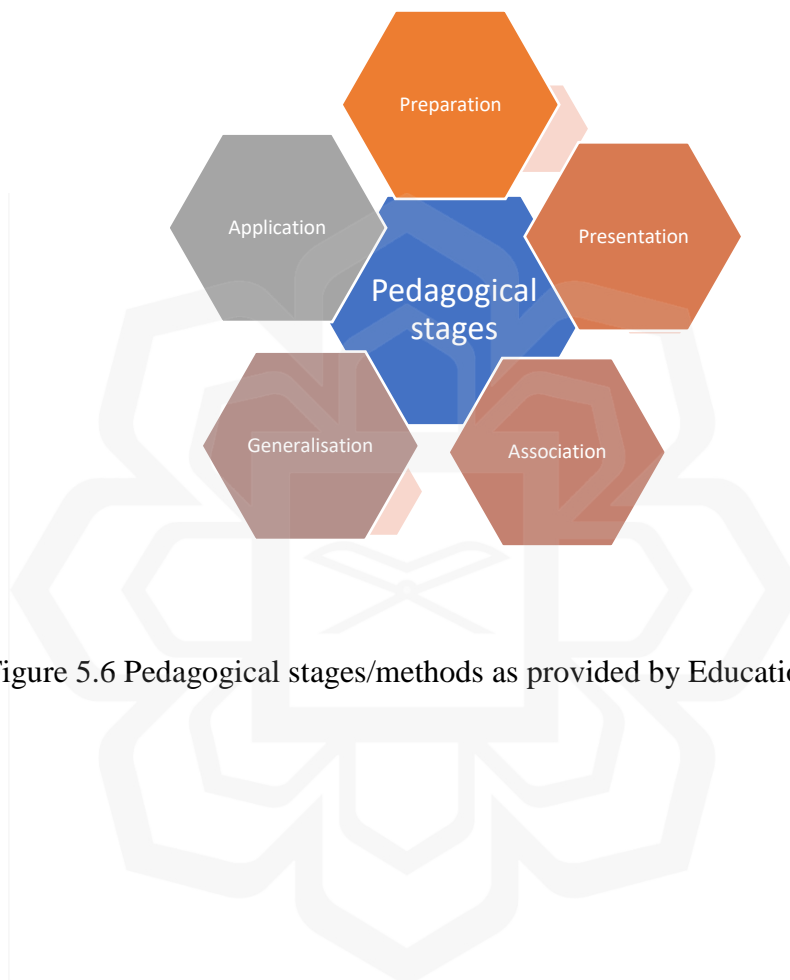


Figure 5.6 Pedagogical stages/methods as provided by Education system.

³⁵⁹ Pedagogy means the teaching practices and theories deployed to teach. It stimulates the unique interaction between teachers and students.



Figure 5.7 Pedagogical stages/method proposed by researcher.

In addition, religious authorities like the Mufti Departments have a significant role to play in this. It is also hoped that the Mufti department will continually seek out opportunities to advance Islam in Malaysia. Islam's values should be promoted to enable Malaysian Muslims to live up to their faith both now and in the future.

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APPENDIX I

NON- ISLAMIC BACKGROUND RESPONDENTS

1. Dr Azanee
IIUM Lecturer

Interview date: June 22, 2022

Section 1: Characteristics of Pragmatism

Question 1 How would you define pragmatism?

Answer Not familiar very much about this pragmatism. In my opinion, what I understand the word pragmatic is in the use of language, if in language this is actually the way of we react according to any context.

Question 2 Do you agree that pragmatism is a Western theory that has strong connection with the Western ideologies of Liberalism, Pluralism and Secularism?

Answer I believe pragmatism has a connection with the Western ideologies of liberalism, pluralism and secularism when you told me the definition of pragmatism, that there is no absolute or single truth.

Question 3 Freedom, modernism and non-absolute truth are the main elements of pragmatism. What are other main elements of pragmatism from a Malaysian perspective?

Answer I just can said agree from the above statement that modernism and freedom are the main elements of pragmatism, but I am not so sure for the other elements of pragmatism in Malaysia perspective.

Question 4 Some scholars said that Muslims should be aware of the threats of pragmatism. What is your opinion on that?

Answer Yes could not agree more, every individual need to know or awareness with this idea of pragmatism when we already been exposed by any ideologies nowadays. And I think Muslim scholars should play an important role to give the awareness of Western ideologies like pragmatism. But actually, every individual needs to have basic or fundamental knowledge about this ideology so that it can help us to filter any correct or incorrect information.

Section 2: Pragmatism in Malaysia

Question 1 Current issues nowadays have led people to practice pragmatism in tackling certain issues in Malaysia. What is your comment on that?

Answer From my understanding, I gave an example, in prayer Jama' and Qasar (combining and shortening prayers), will follow and understand this as stated in Islamic principal. To consider as pragmatic or not, for me it is known as pragmatic.

Question 2 During this pandemic, Muslim people cannot go to mosque for prayer and need to keep the distance if we are allowed to pray. Is this situation can describe as pragmatic? What is your opinion?

Answer Yes, it can be described as pragmatic. From my observation, there are many issues and certain group of people come out with argument saying that the Prophet never practice this before (to keep the distance in prayer) and why we need to keep the distance. Therefore, from my understanding, this is what we call pragmatic, we need to find the solution and try to solve it in a proper way based on Islamic principal.

Question 3 There are Muslims in Malaysia who argue that pragmatism is the best way to deal with current issues in Malaysia at the moment. What is your suggestion?

Answer I am not so sure, but I think if pragmatism is described as the best way, then everyone will openly give their opinion and become very free. For example, for those who know nothing or don't have depth understanding about Islamic law or Islamic principal, can they say something about Islam? Therefore, I think the best way to deal with current issues in Malaysia at the moment to educate the people.

Section 3: Application of Pragmatism in Education

Question 1 Can pragmatism become a good alternative for students in terms of education?

Answer I think it can, and it is a good thing for students. At least, all students and people know and are aware of this ideology of pragmatism with the right teaching to the student.

Question 2 Is it possible for the Malaysian education system to practice the ideas of pragmatism?

Answer No problem I think and no further comment on that.

Question 3 What would you suggest for a better understanding and practice of pragmatism for Muslim education in Malaysia?

Answer I think number one is that, people who want to implement this ideology of pragmatism need to understand what is actually of pragmatism when it comes into our real life. Then, when they start to teach their students, they need to relate the ideology with everyday situation. Therefore, students know and understand what the ideology of pragmatism in term of definition is actually, what kind of skill they can apply when their finish school or universities and need to face the real life. Then, for the number two, in terms of the syllabus of education for Muslims, maybe we can relate with this ideology and discuss the current issues in Malaysia as well as do a comparison with others countries as well. This is my suggestions for this topic.

2. Puan Asra
UniKL UBiS Lecturer

Interview date: June 22, 2022

Section 1: Characteristics of Pragmatism

Question 1 How would you define pragmatism?

Answer I don't really know what is of pragmatism, but what I understand pragmatism is a kind of philosophy. And the theory of pragmatism is actually practical or action based on our opinion.

Question 2 Do you agree that pragmatism is a Western theory that has strong connection with the Western ideologies of Liberalism, Pluralism and Secularism?

Answer Yes from my understanding, I agree that pragmatism has strong connection with others Western ideologies.

Question 3 Freedom, modernism and non-absolute truth are the main elements of pragmatism. What are other main elements of pragmatism from a Malaysian perspective?

Answer I'm not so sure. I think pragmatism is more on individual attitude or individual practice. In Malaysia, I think, we are not aware of this ideology compared to secularism.

Question 4 Some scholars said that Muslims should be aware of the threats of pragmatism. What is your opinion on that?

Answer It depends on the situation, because it is based on individual practices. For me as a Muslim, we should know what is good or bad thing that we need to practice based on our religion, even though some Muslims do the wrong things. So I don't think, this

can bring to negative impact because it depends on the individual. Not the biggest threats based on my understanding.

Section 2: Pragmatism in Malaysia

Question 1 Current issues nowadays have led people to practice pragmatism in tackling certain issues in Malaysia. What is your comment on that?

Answer I think can, and it is good, as well as can practice in Malaysia.

Question 2 During this pandemic, Muslim people cannot go to mosque for prayer and need to keep the distance if we are allowed to pray. Can this situation be described as pragmatic? What is your opinion?

Answer Yes, of course, from individual perspective and get approval from others. And it is actually pragmatic and we do like that for the benefits of all of us.

Question 3 There are Muslims in Malaysia who argue that pragmatism is the best way to deal with current issues in Malaysia at the moment. What is your suggestion?

Answer Pragmatism is good. From my understanding just now, I think Malaysian is actually pragmatic but we are not aware about this ideology. Because anything happening in Malaysia, we will discuss together and find the solution for any problem. Therefore, from all of that, it automatically can become as pragmatic.

Section 3: Application of Pragmatism in Education

Question 1 Can pragmatism become a good alternative for students in terms of education?

Answer Based on my field, as a tourism lecturer, at first for any program or curriculum we will discuss it together with other lecturers. So, I think, it is pragmatic. For example, we will discuss, and

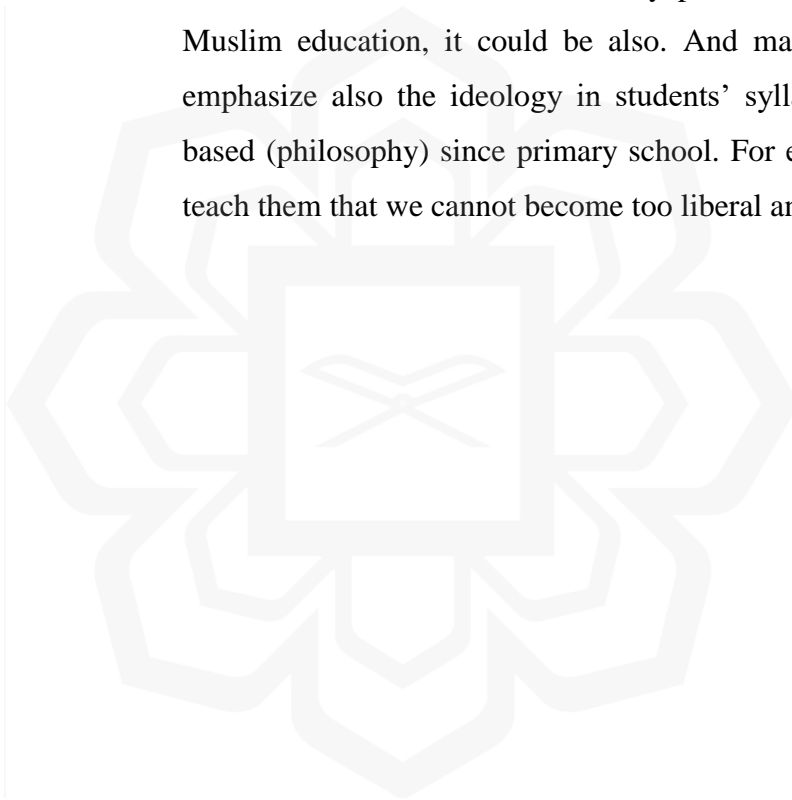
everyone needs to work together. And I think some part of pragmatism is actually there in terms of education.

Question 2 Is it possible for the Malaysian education system to practice the ideas of pragmatism?

Answer Yes of course.

Question 3 What would you suggest for a better understanding and practice of pragmatism for Muslim education in Malaysia?

Answer I think yes, based on our modern life today, we need changes and to be more practical. This is because students can more understand when we teach them by practical thing. And, for Muslim education, it could be also. And maybe we need to emphasize also the ideology in students' syllabus or theories based (philosophy) since primary school. For example, we can teach them that we cannot become too liberal and so on.



ISLAMIC BACKGROUND RESPONDENTS

1. Assoc Prof. Dr Hamimah
OUM Lecturer

Interview date: June 1, 2022

Section 1: Characteristics of Pragmatism

Question 1 How would you define pragmatism?

Answer Based on my reading, pragmatism is a Western philosophy, and practical theory, in general the truth theory is actually based on people perspective. And for me, pragmatism prioritizes reasoning and logical concept only as mentioned by founders of pragmatism like John Dewey and Peirce. And for me, pragmatism is not related to Muslims.

Question 2 Do you agree that pragmatism is a Western theory that has strong connection with the Western ideologies of Liberalism, Pluralism and Secularism?

Answer Yes, agree pragmatism is a Western theory but not strong connection with the ideologies of Liberalism, Pluralism and Secularism, however they are related to each other. For me, pragmatism focuses more on education. However, based on my understanding, if we mention about the basic of pragmatism of the truth theory in pragmatism, it is not only applicable for education, also can be used in the concept of societies as well as in terms of daily working. Then, for Liberalism, based on my understanding, it focuses on being open minded or free thinking as well as neglect the values of moral and ethics. Then, for the definition of pluralism, from my opinion it can have several

meanings. For me, if it's related to Malaysian societies, it brings the meaning of multi society in Malaysia. Then, if it related to the concept of religion, it's brings another meaning like, all religions are same or transcendent unity of religion or some relativism concept. However, overall, it is not related to pragmatism. And actually we need to understand, the culture in Malaysia and Western is really different. Last but not least, some elaboration for the concept of secularism. For secularism, I think it separates religion and life. I can conclude that, there are many ideologies from Western based on Western people issues and current situation. When we do comparison with Islam, actually Islam is already holistic and covers all things inside and outside. For the Western people, they try to find a best solution for their life that is why they create many ideologies to suit for their life and try to relate any ideology with each other like pragmatism, liberalism and secularism.

Question 3 Freedom, modernism and non-absolute truth are the main elements of pragmatism. What are other main elements of pragmatism from a Malaysian perspective?

Answer In Malaysia, generally yes, freedom, modernism and non-absolute truth are the elements of pragmatism. In the Malaysia context, in terms of human rights in Malaysia, pragmatism plays some parts for the human rights, freedom or modern life in Malaysia. In Malaysia, there are some people who supports this element of pragmatism especially when it comes to human rights. At the same time, there are some people who object these things because it contradicts with religion especially in Islam. However, if pragmatism can be practiced, then we can apply it and try to suit in our daily life.

Question 4 Some scholars said that Muslims should be aware of the threats of pragmatism. What is your opinion on that?

Answer First, I agree that pragmatism is a threat for Muslim. Based on my opinion, I give an example from the effects of Malaysian colonization. I stressed that we need to find a better life after the colonization. Therefore, if pragmatism is good, we can apply it but we need to create a new one to suit with our life especially for Muslims to practice it especially in our modern and challenges world today. However, again here, actually in Islam we already have *Waqiyah*, the practical things.

Section 2: Pragmatism in Malaysia

Question 1 Current issues nowadays have led people to practice pragmatism in tackling certain issues in Malaysia. What is your comment on that?

Answer There are some issues in Malaysia that led to practice pragmatism in Malaysia. When it's related to *shariah*, it is firm and uncompromisable, but at the same time we have *fiqh* which can be flexible, for example prayer is compulsory but for certain time we have *Rukhsah* and it is called Ijtihad. We as Muslim we do have step by step guidelines in *fiqh*. Actually in Islam, it is this Ijtihad that we call pragmatism. Then, in Islam it can be flexible when it comes to certain problems, but need to follow the situation itself.

Question 2 During this pandemic, Muslim people cannot go to mosque for prayer and need to keep the distance if we are allowed to pray. Can this situation be described as pragmatic? What is your opinion?

Answer The meaning of practical or pragmatic in Islam depends on situation, time and problem. Ijtihad it's actually pragmatism, but if we need to do some ijthad we do need a depth knowledge of that thing. In terms of prayer, it is compulsory to all Muslim, but it can be flexible when it comes to certain situation. I gave an example of pragmatism in Islam and I stress that it must be based

in Quran and Hadith. For Western ideologies, they just apply pragmatism based on their knowledge only.

In my opinion, the vaccine issue also can become an example of pragmatism (especially vaccine covid 19). And why we need vaccine nowadays because it is actually for our health. Because the situation nowadays it's different from the old time.

Overall, to do Ijtihad, it must come from the knowledgeable people and only that people (Ulama) will give the solutions based on the divine revelation and proofs. Again there are some differences between the previous time and today. Nowadays, there are many problems and challenges we need to face. That is why we need to find the best solution. Therefore, we need to understand the word pragmatism and the needs must align with Islam. Actually, we apply and need pragmatism in our life. And the result of pragmatism, if we think and follow based on the understanding of Islam, we will a get a good solution and not deviate from Islamic teaching.

Question 3 There are Muslims in Malaysia who argue that pragmatism is the best way to deal with current issues in Malaysia at the moment. What is your suggestion?

Answer For me, we can apply pragmatism based on the situation and solution as well as we need to know the consequence. The best way we need to deal with pragmatism is follow the guideline in Islam. I assert that, pragmatism in Western is actually different with Islam. This is because they apply it without thinking of any consequences such as pragmatism that deal with the ideologies of liberalism and so on.

Section 3: Application of Pragmatism in Education

Question 1 Can pragmatism become a good alternative for students in terms of education?

Answer Based on my understanding, pragmatism can become a good alternative in education, and I agree with this concept. In this 21st century, we need new concept in teaching and learning like problem-based learning and need practical thing. Therefore, the teaching and learning do not only involve one-way communication. I give an example, based on history in the previous system of education, I can say, it just used one-way communication, and for me it's not suitable in modern world. Another example, like *Tahfiz* program, the students will just focus on cognitive aspect only, and therefore abandoning the psychomotor domain. Practicalities for me (pragmatism) need to give student more activities in learning like group discussion and so on.

Again, I agree with the practice of pragmatism in education, however we need to know the outcome of the program and must be holistic in all field especially for Muslim.

Question 2 Is it possible for the Malaysian education system to practice the ideas of pragmatism?

Answer Yes it a must, in Malaysia we need changes like in Japan, and their education will focus according to their needs and situation. Another example for Orang Asal (Aborigine people) the education system will focus on them also based on their culture and situation. However, in Malaysia, we follow the same system for all people or children, then it's not suitable for all. Therefore, we need to focus based on the situation at some places, especially for people in the countryside of Sabah and Sarawak, we cannot give the same education as people in the Peninsular because they are not exposed to early education for example the syllabus of Mathematics and Science in English, not all can accept it. Then again, the education system must be pragmatic based on their situation, place and people.

Question 3 What would you suggest for a better understanding and practice of pragmatism for Muslim education in Malaysia?

Answer For me, we need to understand the basic of Islamic principal. This is because Islam has already had the concept of *waqiyah* (realistic), *thabat murunah* (Stability and flexibility). Therefore, pragmatism in Islam is already there. Then, the issue is, we need to carefully understand it and need to apply it in our life. In terms of education, we can practice in education and need to understand the concept of pragmatism in education. Other than that, I suggest that in Malaysia, we need to build one education team to realize the idea of pragmatism, not just give the same syllabus or curriculum to all students.

2. Dr Zurul

UniKL UBiS Lecturer

Interview date: June 22, 2022

Section 1: Characteristics of Pragmatism

Question 1 How would you define pragmatism?

Answer From my understanding of pragmatism, pragmatism is based on logic as long as something benefits for you, for example benefits in term of development, improvement, without taking into consideration whether they are Islamic or not. So that is the meaning of being pragmatic.

Question 2 Do you agree that pragmatism is a Western theory that has strong connection with the Western ideologies of Liberalism, Pluralism and Secularism?

Answer In my opinion, the strong connection between pragmatism in the Western theory and Western ideologies is a man-made

connection. Then, in my opinion also pragmatism is always there in Islam, however in Islam it has some boundaries of *Shariah* whether you want to be pragmatic or not. Unfortunately, in the Western world, they try to make it within their own context. Therefore, the strong connection is fabricated and man-made by their own Western world.

Question 3 Freedom, modernism and non-absolute truth are the main elements of pragmatism. What are other main elements of pragmatism from a Malaysian perspective?

Answer In term of freedom and modernism, it depends on the context of our definition of freedom and modernism. Some message of freedom is doing whatever you want freely. But, again we have boundaries, like in Malaysia for example especially for Muslim, we have *Shariah* boundaries. In my opinion, in the context of Malaysia, it has multi-racial society, therefore the boundaries between yes and no in Islam in Malaysia has become vague because of the mixture of Malaysia people, races and religion. In my opinion, freedom and modernism have not been defined properly, and we tend to follow the Western concept of freedom and modernism. In term of non-absolute truth, I am not sure, by the meaning of that. I think it's very much similar to how I view on freedom and modernism because the yes and no in the Western world has been very much putting everything together without the boundaries of *Shariah*, and from Malaysian perspective, because of the multi-cultural and religion, it has been absorbed into society. However, as a Muslim, we need the boundaries in all the aspects elements of pragmatism, and what I can say is that Western elements have been practiced by the Malaysian society. That is the elements of pragmatism that I see that is prevalent in Malaysian like freedom and modernism.

Question 4 Some scholars said that Muslims should be aware of the threats of pragmatism. What is your opinion on that?

Answer My opinion, we should be aware of the threats of pragmatism. And, in my opinion if the foundation of pragmatism in Islam for every Muslim is strong enough, then, we should be able to put the differences between the boundaries of pragmatism and *Shariah* or not. And, the boundaries are not just religion, but also culture.

Section 2: Pragmatism in Malaysia

Question 1 Current issues nowadays have led people to practice pragmatism in tackling certain issues in Malaysia. What is your comment on that?

Answer I think that people tend to practice pragmatism in tackling certain issues because it is easy to do so, it is straight forward and because people think it will be accepted by majorities of the people in the society. Then, that is my comment and justification for the reason why people to do so.

Question 2 During this pandemic, Muslim people cannot go to mosque for prayer and need to keep the distance if we are allowed to pray. Can this situation be described as pragmatic? What is your opinion?

Answer In my opinion is actually for the protection as stated in *Maqasid Shariah* (Principal of Islamic Law), for example to protect the life and I believe it is rational by doing so. And this virus is very new, and people do not know how to react to it. Then, we tend to follow by whatever is done from majorities. So from this situation, I believe it can be described as a pragmatic way that we need during that time. And, people at that time lacked information on how to deal with the virus that was non-existent before this. In my opinion, that time we did not have any other

choices, but I believe in the future that we have many other mechanisms that we learn from that.

Question 3 There are Muslims in Malaysia who argue that pragmatism is the best way to deal with current issues in Malaysia at the moment. What is your suggestion?

Answer In my opinion, pragmatism is one of the ways to deal with current issue nowadays but we cannot say it is the best way. But, maybe it can be the alternative way to deal with the current issues because again we have to see what kind of the norm that it is been done by the people and what way is accepted by majorities of the people. However, at the same time, we need to think about whether it is accepted within Islamic boundaries or not. To say that is the best way it is exaggerated, I can say that is an alternative way.

Section 3: Application of Pragmatism in Education

Question 1 Can pragmatism become a good alternative for students in terms of education?

Answer At first I am not so sure, but if in term of practical way, it has been proven actually in many developed countries that not rely on examination and it is a good way to secure a proper education that is more sustainable. This is because if we rely too much on examination, there are students who score and there are students who do not, and it does not reflect what is happening in their future. However, being more pragmatic, at the beginning, the students know what they can or cannot do. Then, they can choose what is the best that they should do in their future by not relying on exam. This is because, examination is a traditional way to access how people score and do things, and however it is not really fully determined how they will behave in the future and what kind of future they will secure. In my opinion, pragmatism is a good alternative for students in term of education.

Question 2 Is it possible for the Malaysian education system to practice the ideas of pragmatism?

Answer I am not saying that it is impossible, it is possible, but it is not easy because Malaysian education is very much examination oriented and when they try to change some parts of the system, it actually will create two different groups in society, one group contains people who agree, and another group is for people who do not agree. Therefore, in my opinion, it is not impossible it is possible, but it is a long way to go.

Question 3 What would you suggest for a better understanding and practice of pragmatism for Muslim education in Malaysia?

Answer In my opinion, education for Muslims or non-Muslims, when we talk about conventional education, it will be the same approach. For example, we want them to be able to do what is the best for them. In this case, I believe the school has tried to conduct more holistic assessments and review their curriculum, or give test based on their abilities. That starting point is very a good point. However, in the future, we need to put more in terms of practical and of course to reduce exam-based syllabus. Then, for example for kids, we can follow some developed countries style, when they ready for secondary school, they know whether they want to go for vocational or universities. And when they go to vocational institutions, they know they will focus more on technical skills and excel in that, and they do not study the way in the universities. In this case, in the school itself, the schoolteacher is the one who has lot of saying for the student therefore, the teacher needs to be trained and understanding to make the kids understand.