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TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACHES AND THEIR EFFECTIVENESS IN DELIVERING THE ISLAMIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN JORDAN

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the instructional approaches employed by teachers in Islamic Education in Jordan and their impact on student engagement and academic performance. The research focuses on identifying the factors influencing teachers' selection of instructional strategies and evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies. A descriptive survey research design was used to collect data from 30 Islamic Education teachers and 218 senior secondary students across three governorates: Amman, Irbid, and Zarqa. The sample was selected using a multistage sampling technique, ensuring a balanced representation of gender and geographical regions. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled "Teachers' Instructional Approaches and Effectiveness in Islamic Education Questionnaire (TIAE-IEQ)," which included three sections: demographic information, instructional strategies, and perceived effectiveness. The reliability of the instrument was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.87. Descriptive statistics, Multiple Regression Analysis, and Independent Samples t-tests were used to analyze the data and test the study hypotheses. The findings indicate that lecturebased teaching remains the dominant instructional approach, with significant relationships found between interactive methods (e.g., group discussions, multimedia use) and student academic performance. Furthermore, factors such as teacher's pedagogical training, availability of teaching resources, and curriculum requirements were found to significantly influence the choice of instructional strategies. This study concludes that while traditional methods continue to dominate, a shift toward interactive, student-centered approaches could improve student engagement and academic outcomes in Islamic Education.

KEYWORDS: Islamic Education, Instructional Strategies, Teacher Training, Student Engagement, Academic Performance, Jordan

1. Introduction

Islamic education is a foundational component of the curriculum in Jordan, serving not only as a means of imparting religious knowledge but also as a vehicle for moral development, identity formation, and social cohesion. The researcher views Islamic education as a vital discipline that fosters ethical values and shapes the behavior of learners, especially in a society deeply rooted in Islamic traditions. However, the effectiveness of Islamic education in achieving its intended goals heavily depends on the instructional approaches employed by teachers. Over the years, there has been growing concern among educators and policymakers in Jordan regarding whether current pedagogical strategies effectively engage students and nurture a deeper understanding of Islamic principles. Thus, this study seeks to examine the relationship between the instructional methods adopted by teachers and the quality of learning outcomes in Islamic education within the Jordanian context.

A review of the literature reveals that instructional approaches in Islamic education have evolved over time, with researchers and educators offering varied perspectives on their effectiveness. Al-Omari (2008) observed that traditional methods, such as rote memorization and lecture-based teaching, have long dominated Islamic education in Jordan. Alkhawaldeh (2011) noted a lack of critical thinking and student engagement in classrooms due to overreliance on teacher-centered approaches. In contrast, recent studies by Abu-Hamour and Muhaidat (2013) and Alzyoud (2016) reported gradual shifts towards more learner-centered practices, reflecting broader global trends in pedagogy. Moreover, research by Sabella and Al-Masri (2019) highlighted the increasing incorporation of interactive teaching methods aimed at improving students' moral reasoning and religious commitment. Yet, despite these changes, significant variation persists in how effectively teachers implement instructional

LEX LOCALIS-JOURNAL OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT ISSN:1581-5374 E-ISSN:1855-363X

Vol. 23, No. S2(2025)



strategies. Al-Saadi (2020) and Bani-Khalid (2022) found that inconsistencies in teacher training and support structures have resulted in uneven outcomes. These observations underscore the need for a comprehensive analysis of instructional practices and their impact on Islamic education outcomes in Jordan.

Different instructional approaches have been adopted in the teaching of Islamic education, each with varying degrees of success. The traditional approach, characterized by direct instruction, repetition, and memorization, remains prevalent in many classrooms. While this method helps in preserving the exact wording of the Qur'an and Hadith, it has been criticized for limiting learners' ability to apply religious principles in real-life contexts. Al-Khatib (2009) found that students exposed solely to rote memorization demonstrated limited understanding of the broader ethical and spiritual dimensions of Islam. Similarly, Al-Azzam (2012) argued that such methods suppress creativity and critical thinking, which are essential for moral decision-making in contemporary society.

On the other hand, constructivist approaches that emphasize active learning, student participation, and critical engagement have shown promise. Al-Momani and Bataineh (2014) conducted a study that demonstrated positive outcomes when students were encouraged to engage in discussions, analyze Islamic texts, and relate religious teachings to personal experiences. These methods reportedly enhanced students' understanding and appreciation of Islamic values. In another study, Al-Smadi (2015) found that inquiry-based learning strategies improved students' moral reasoning and decision-making abilities. Similarly, Al-Mashaqbeh (2017) reported that collaborative learning and the use of real-life scenarios enabled students to better internalize Islamic teachings and apply them meaningfully.

Technology integration has also emerged as a new instructional strategy in Islamic education. According to Alzyoud and Mahasneh (2018), using multimedia tools such as videos, interactive Qur'anic apps, and online quizzes increased student engagement and motivation. Their study highlighted how digital platforms facilitated differentiated instruction, allowing teachers to cater to diverse learning styles. However, challenges such as limited digital literacy among teachers and lack of adequate resources were identified as barriers to effective implementation. Supporting this, a more recent study by Al-Qudah and Abu-Shanab (2021) emphasized the need for professional development programs to prepare teachers for digital instruction in religious education. Another effective approach gaining recognition is values-based instruction, where Islamic teachings are embedded within broader ethical discussions and character education. Al-Dababneh (2020) reported that such an approach led to deeper moral understanding and reduced behavioral issues among students. Conversely, a study by Ahmad and Al-Shdifat (2022) cautioned that when values-based instruction lacks contextual relevance or clarity, it may lead to confusion or disengagement among learners.

Despite these developments, inconsistencies in the application and impact of instructional approaches persist across schools in Jordan. This variability can be attributed to factors such as disparities in teacher training, institutional support, and curriculum flexibility. Al-Khalidi (2023) concluded that while progressive methods have the potential to enhance Islamic education outcomes, their effectiveness is contingent upon proper implementation, ongoing teacher development, and supportive educational policies. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the instructional strategies used by teachers in Jordan and evaluate their effectiveness in delivering the Islamic education curriculum, thereby contributing to a more holistic and impactful religious education framework.

Problem Statement

Despite the central role of Islamic education in shaping students' moral and spiritual values in Jordan, concerns have been raised about the effectiveness of the instructional approaches used by teachers. Many educators still rely heavily on traditional, teacher-centered methods

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such as rote memorization and direct instruction, which often fail to engage students meaningfully or promote critical thinking. Additionally, inconsistencies in teacher training, limited access to modern pedagogical tools, and varying interpretations of curriculum standards have created disparities in instructional quality across schools. These challenges are further compounded by insufficient integration of technology and a lack of contextual relevance in lesson delivery, which may lead to student disengagement and a superficial understanding of Islamic principles. Although several studies have explored teaching strategies in Islamic education, most have focused on general pedagogical effectiveness or curriculum content without deeply examining the specific instructional methods used by teachers in the Jordan. There remains a significant gap in empirical research assessing how different teaching approaches affect students' learning outcomes in Islamic education. This study seeks to fill that gap by evaluating the instructional strategies currently employed and their effectiveness in achieving the goals of the Islamic education curriculum in Jordan.

Research Objectives

The main aim of this study was to investigate the instructional strategies used by teachers in Jordan and evaluate their effectiveness in delivering the Islamic education curriculum. Specifically, the study sought to:

- 1. Assess the instructional approaches used by teachers in delivering the Islamic Education curriculum in Jordan.
- 2. Evaluate the effectiveness of these instructional approaches in enhancing student understanding and engagement in Islamic Education.
- 3. Identify factors that influence the choice of instructional methods among teachers in teaching of Islamic Education curriculum.

Research Ouestions

The following questions were formulated to guide the study:

- 1. What instructional approaches do teachers employ when delivering the Islamic Education curriculum in Jordan?
- 2. How effective are these instructional approaches in improving student comprehension and retention of Islamic Education concepts?
- 3. What factors affect teachers' selection of instructional strategies in teaching Islamic Education in Jordanian schools?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses was tested at 0.05 significant

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between instructional approaches used by teachers and students' academic performance in Islamic Education.

Ho₂: There is no difference in student engagement levels between teachers who use interactive and student-centered instructional strategies and those who use traditional methods.

Ho₃: There are no significantly factors that affect teachers' selection of instructional strategies in teaching Islamic Education in Jordan

2. Literature Review

Overview of Islamic Education

Islamic education is more than just a subject within the school curriculum; it is a holistic system that seeks to cultivate ethical behavior, strengthen religious identity, and instill a sense of social responsibility in learners. According to Al-Saud (2015), Islamic education aims to develop a balanced personality by harmonizing faith and reason, emphasizing both religious duties and everyday human conduct. In the context of Jordan, Islamic education is a core subject taught from the early grades through to secondary school, under the supervision of the



Ministry of Education (MOE, 2020). It includes the teaching of the Qur'an, Hadith, Figh (Islamic jurisprudence), and the life of the Prophet Muhammad (Seerah), among other themes. The development of Islamic education in Jordan has been guided by both religious values and national goals. Historically, Jordan has emphasized the preservation of Islamic heritage while adapting to modern educational demands. As noted by Al-Omari (2008), the inclusion of Islamic education in the national curriculum reflects a broader strategy to maintain moral integrity and national identity amid global cultural influences. However, critics argue that despite its importance, the way Islamic education is delivered often leans heavily on rote memorization and teacher-centered approaches, which limit students' ability to internalize and apply Islamic values in real-life situations (Alkhawaldeh, 2011; Al-Azzam, 2012). Over the years, the Jordanian government has made efforts to improve the quality and relevance of Islamic education through curriculum reforms and teacher training programs. According to Al-Dababneh (2020), recent curriculum revisions aim to encourage critical thinking, promote interfaith understanding, and relate Islamic teachings to contemporary social issues. However, these reforms have met with mixed success due to inconsistencies in implementation and resistance from educators who prefer traditional methods (Al-Saadi, 2020; Bani-Khalid, 2022).

Historical and National Curriculum Guidelines

From its early stages, the teaching of Islam in Jordan was largely influenced by traditional religious institutions, where education was primarily focused on memorization and recitation of religious texts such as the Quran and Hadith. This traditional approach emphasized the preservation of Islamic knowledge but lacked a broader focus on critical thinking and application of Islamic teachings in modern society. The evolution of Islamic Education in Jordan, like many other countries in the Arab world, has been shaped by broader educational reforms, socio-political developments, and global educational trends that aim to modernize and diversify the teaching of Islamic principles.

Initially, Islamic Education in Jordan was closely linked to the religious sector, with schools often being managed by religious institutions. This approach was prevalent until the mid-20th century when the Jordanian government began to formalize and regulate education more systematically. With the establishment of the Ministry of Education in 1956, Jordan began to create a unified, national educational system. As a result, Islamic Education became part of the formal national curriculum, with the aim of providing students with a comprehensive understanding of Islam, while also preparing them for participation in modern civic life. The curriculum during this time remained heavily focused on religious doctrine, with limited attention given to critical thinking, modern pedagogy, or the integration of other subjects such as social sciences.

Over the years, Jordan has worked to modernize its educational system, and this has influenced the way Islamic Education is taught. The National Curriculum Guidelines (NCG), which were introduced in the 1990s, represent a significant shift in educational philosophy. These guidelines were designed to modernize the teaching of Islamic Education, incorporating more student-centered approaches and aligning educational practices with international standards. According to the NCG, the teaching of Islamic Education is intended to go beyond simple knowledge transmission; it aims to foster the moral, spiritual, and intellectual development of students by encouraging reflection, critical thinking, and the application of Islamic teachings to contemporary issues (Al-Qudah, 2016).

The current curriculum guidelines emphasize the importance of not only understanding the theoretical aspects of Islam but also applying Islamic values to everyday life. The Ministry of Education has worked to integrate Islamic teachings into a more comprehensive curriculum that includes subjects such as ethics, community values, and social responsibility, alongside



traditional religious studies (Al-Hassan, 2020). For instance, the NCG outlines the need for students to engage with texts and teachings that explore how Islam can be applied to real-world issues such as justice, equality, and environmental stewardship. This shift aims to equip students with the necessary skills to engage with modern challenges while remaining rooted in Islamic principles.

However, despite these changes, the implementation of these guidelines has not been uniform across all schools. Research by Al-Qudah (2016) and Khatib (2020) has pointed to the gap between the theoretical guidelines provided in the curriculum and their practical application in classrooms. While the NCG calls for more interactive and student-centered approaches, many teachers continue to use traditional methods such as rote memorization and lecture-based teaching, which limits the potential for critical engagement with the material. Al-Hassan (2020) argues that while the national curriculum has introduced important reforms, the challenge remains in equipping teachers with the necessary skills and resources to effectively implement these changes.

The role of teacher professional development in supporting the implementation of national curriculum guidelines is also highlighted in the literature. According to Al-Qudah (2016), the lack of continuous professional development for teachers in Islamic Education has resulted in a gap between the curriculum's goals and actual classroom practices. Many teachers are trained using traditional pedagogical methods, and without adequate training in modern, interactive approaches, they struggle to adopt the new teaching strategies outlined in the NCG.

Furthermore, the national curriculum guidelines have been influenced by broader regional educational trends. The Arab world has seen a growing movement towards educational reform, spurred by the need to adapt to globalization and the changing demands of the workforce. This movement has led to a reevaluation of how subjects like Islamic Education are taught, emphasizing the need for a more holistic approach that includes moral and ethical development alongside academic achievement. As Al-Majali (2018) notes, Islamic Education in Jordan has increasingly been viewed not just as a way to transmit religious knowledge but as a tool to shape the values and character of students in a rapidly changing world.

Importance of Islamic Education

According to Al-Attas (1979), the primary goal of Islamic education is to nurture the human soul by instilling the values of taqwa (God-consciousness), akhlaq (ethical conduct), and ilm (knowledge) rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah. This educational philosophy seeks to produce balanced individuals who can contribute positively to their communities and live in accordance with Islamic principles. As highlighted by Al-Hassan (2020), the purpose of Islamic Education is to educate students about their religious duties and to equip them with the knowledge required to lead a life that aligns with Islamic principles. This includes the study of the Quran, Hadith, Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh), and other religious texts that form the foundation of the Islamic worldview. In addition to religious teachings, Al-Majali (2018) noted that one of the central goals of Islamic Education is to foster good character and moral integrity. This includes promoting values such as honesty, kindness, patience, and respect for others, which are essential for building a just and harmonious society.

Furthermore, Islamic education plays a role in preserving cultural identity and reinforcing social cohesion. As noted by Al-Omari (2008), it serves as a foundation for promoting shared values such as justice, honesty, respect, and compassion among young learners. The Jordanian Ministry of Education (2020) emphasizes that Islamic education is key to instilling national pride, loyalty, and a sense of duty towards family and society. These moral values, when integrated into the education system, help in addressing social issues such as violence, corruption, and ethical decline. Moreover, Islamic education contributes significantly to



cognitive and emotional development. It encourages reflective thinking, critical reasoning, and spiritual awareness by engaging students with religious texts, historical narratives, and ethical dilemmas (Al-Khatib, 2009). Through studying the Qur'an and Hadith, students not only gain religious knowledge but also learn to navigate real-life situations with a morally grounded framework. Al-Dababneh (2020) highlights how value-based Islamic education improves emotional intelligence and interpersonal relationships, fostering empathy, patience, and self-control.In today's increasingly globalized world, Islamic education also plays a pivotal role in promoting intercultural understanding and tolerance. When taught effectively, it can counteract extremism and sectarianism by encouraging a balanced and contextual understanding of Islamic teachings (Sabella & Al-Masri, 2019).

Instructional Approaches in Islamic Education

Instructional approaches in Islamic Education have seen a significant transformation, moving away from traditional rote memorization or traditional teacher-centered practices to more interactive, student-centered methods that foster critical thinking and deeper engagement with Islamic principles. The choice of instructional method influences not only knowledge acquisition but also the extent to which learners internalize Islamic values and apply them in real life. Historically, the most dominant instructional approach in Islamic education has been rote memorization and didactic teaching, primarily aimed at preserving the Qur'an and Hadith texts. However, this method has been increasingly criticized for its limited impact on critical thinking and value internalization (Hashim & Langgulung, 2008). A study by Halstead (2004) found that while traditional methods help maintain the authenticity of religious texts, they often neglect the contextual understanding necessary for learners to connect religious principles to contemporary life. Abu-Rabia's (2018) study on the effectiveness of traditional methods in Islamic Education found that while students demonstrated high proficiency in memorization, they struggled with understanding and applying Islamic concepts in real-life scenarios. Also, studies like those by Al-Taleb (2017) have shown that traditional teaching methods, such as memorization, are no longer sufficient in fostering the comprehensive understanding required by students in a modern educational environment.

In contrast, learner-centered approaches, including inquiry-based learning, cooperative learning, and discussion-based methods, have demonstrated better outcomes in promoting critical thinking and moral reasoning in Islamic education. For instance, Zainal and Zabidi (2017) investigated the use of inquiry-based learning in Malaysian Islamic studies classes and found that students showed a higher level of engagement and deeper understanding of Islamic ethics compared to those in traditional settings. Similarly, a quasi-experimental study by Asyafah (2014) revealed that students exposed to problem-based learning in Islamic studies displayed enhanced analytical skills and a more meaningful connection to religious concepts. Supporting Asyafah's study, Yousif (2019) conducted a study on the impact of group-based learning and found that when students engaged in group discussions and collaborative activities, their understanding of Islamic teachings deepened significantly. Similarly, the findings of Al-Fraihat (2020) highlight the positive effects of active learning methods on student engagement and retention in Islamic Education classrooms. Al-Fraihat's study found that when teachers employed teaching strategies such as debates, project-based learning, and case studies, students were more likely to retain information and apply Islamic values to their daily lives. This aligns with the findings of Fayed (2021), who demonstrated that interactive learning methods lead to higher student satisfaction and improved academic performance in Islamic Education.

Technology-enhanced instruction has also emerged as a viable strategy in Islamic education. Al-Khalifa and Al-Khateeb (2019) reported that using multimedia tools such as digital storytelling, video lectures, and Qur'anic apps significantly improved students' motivation



and retention. This aligns with the findings of Abdullah and Osman (2020), who observed that integrating ICT into education not only supported differentiated instruction but also provided greater accessibility to diverse learners, particularly those with special educational needs. A study by Al-Khresheh (2021) found that the integration of technology in classrooms significantly improved students' engagement with the subject matter, especially among younger generations. Students were more motivated to learn when technology was used to present Islamic content in more visually engaging and interactive formats. Moreover, Al-Oudah and Al-Majali (2020) argue that the use of technology in teaching encourages independent learning and provides students with the tools to explore Islamic texts and teachings outside the classroom. This indicates that students who used online resources for self-directed learning were better able to understand and teachings. Additionally, values-based and experiential learning approaches have been highlighted in recent research for their capacity to foster character development and real-life application of Islamic teachings. In a study by Kamal and Salleh (2021), experiential activities like community service, reflective journaling, and ethical dilemma discussions were found to cultivate empathy, honesty, and social responsibility among students.

Factors Affecting Teachers' Selection of Instructional Strategies

One of the primary influences is teachers' pedagogical beliefs and personal philosophy about the nature and purpose of Islamic education. Teachers who view their role as transmitters of sacred knowledge often prefer traditional, teacher-centered methods. In contrast, those who see education as a means of moral development and critical engagement may adopt more student-centered strategies. According to Sulaiman and Abdurrahman (2019), educators' conceptions of Islamic education strongly correlate with their openness to adopting participatory and reflective methods. This finding aligns with earlier work by Mahmud (2017), who noted that belief in student autonomy and moral reasoning positively influenced teachers' use of dialogue and inquiry-based approaches.

Teaching experience and professional development also significantly affect instructional choices. Novice teachers may rely on conventional strategies due to limited exposure to alternative methods, whereas experienced teachers with ongoing training are more likely to diversify their approaches. Rahman and Yasin (2020) found that teachers who participated in continuous professional learning were more confident in implementing active learning, project-based instruction, and ICT tools in their lessons. Similarly, Karim and Iskandar (2021) observed that teachers with at least five years of teaching experience and exposure to learner-centered training showed a higher tendency to shift away from rote learning.

Institutional culture and administrative expectations can either encourage or limit instructional innovation. In schools where leadership supports pedagogical experimentation, teachers are more likely to try new methods. However, in settings with rigid oversight and strict adherence to standardized exams, teachers may feel pressured to conform to didactic teaching. A study by Omar and Rahim (2018) revealed that school leadership style and institutional flexibility were key determinants of instructional diversity in religious studies. This is corroborated by the findings of Daud and Khalid (2021), who concluded that instructional strategy selection is often shaped more by school norms than by individual teacher preference.

Student characteristics, including learning needs, prior knowledge, and classroom behavior, also influence instructional decisions. Teachers tend to modify their strategies to accommodate students' cognitive levels and learning preferences. For example, Salleh and Zulkifli (2019) found that in mixed-ability classrooms, Islamic education teachers were more likely to use differentiated instruction and group-based learning to address varying comprehension levels. This aligns with research by Ahmad and Suhaimi (2021), which



showed that when students demonstrated higher interest and motivation, teachers were more willing to use inquiry-based and experiential learning models.

Another critical factor is the availability of teaching resources and infrastructure. Teachers who have access to multimedia tools, instructional materials, and well-equipped classrooms are more capable of implementing interactive and technology-enhanced strategies. In a comparative study by Nasir and Hamzah (2020), schools with robust ICT support showed significantly higher implementation rates of digital Qur'an apps, visual storytelling, and collaborative online platforms. This is consistent with the earlier findings of Alavi and Syed (2019), who highlighted that access to resources is a determining factor in bridging the gap between pedagogical intention and practice.

Finally, external policy directives and curriculum frameworks play a key role in shaping instructional decisions. When national policies encourage student engagement, critical thinking, and moral application, teachers are more likely to adopt active learning approaches. However, in systems focused on exam performance and factual recall, instructional innovation is often stifled. Zainuddin and Musa (2021) found that curriculum alignment with progressive teaching goals led to an increase in creative and values-based instruction among Islamic educators. On the other hand, Jamal and Harun (2018) criticized national Islamic education policies for being overly rigid, limiting teacher autonomy in method selection.

Challenges in Implementing Effective Instructional Approaches

Resistance to Change and Traditional Mindsets:One of the major challenges in implementing modern instructional approaches in teaching is the resistance to change from educators who are accustomed to traditional teaching methods. Studies such as that by Al-Mansour (2021) highlight that many teachers in Islamic teaching still favor teacher-centered, lecture-based instruction due to its familiarity and the historical precedence of such methods in religious schooling. Similarly, Al-Rawashdeh (2020) found that teachers' adherence to traditional practices was deeply embedded in their professional identity. This cultural attachment to established methods often leads to reluctance in adopting new pedagogical strategies, even when they have been shown to improve student engagement and understanding.

Inadequate Teacher Training and Pedagogical Knowledge: Many Islamic teachers lack the necessary pedagogical training to implement modern instructional strategies such as inquiry-based learning, cooperative learning, and technology-enhanced instruction. Yusof and Ismail (2017) found that Islamic education teachers often feel underprepared to move beyond traditional lecture methods due to limited exposure to student-centered pedagogies during teacher training. Mahmood and Malik (2019) supported this by noting that even in-service training is often infrequent, theoretical, and lacks practical application in real classrooms. Kamal and Salleh (2021) emphasized that without proper training, even motivated teachers struggle to implement experiential or values-based learning effectively.

Curriculum Rigidity and Lack of Flexibility: The highly centralized and standardized nature of Islamic education curricula in countries like Jordan limits teachers' ability to adapt lessons or incorporate innovative methods. Suud and Budiyanto (2018) highlighted that the strict structure of religious curricula discourages experimentation and restricts teacher autonomy. Mohd Daud and Hashim (2020) added that curriculum guidelines often focus on factual recall rather than critical thinking or real-life application, thereby reinforcing rote-based instruction. This is further corroborated by Jamal and Harun (2018), who criticized national Islamic education policies for prioritizing uniformity over contextual adaptation.

Limited Teaching Resources and Technological Infrastructure: Effective instructional methods often require access to digital tools, multimedia content, and flexible classroom environments, which many schools lackparticularly in rural or low-income areas. Al-Khateeb



and Hamdan (2017) found that schools in marginalized regions lacked basic multimedia equipment, limiting the implementation of active learning strategies. Alavi and Syed (2019) also emphasized that ICT integration in Islamic classrooms is hindered by infrastructure gaps and low digital literacy among teachers. These findings align with Nasir and Hamzah (2020), who reported that the lack of physical and digital resources directly affects teachers' ability to diversify instructional approaches.

Cultural and Religious Conservatism: Cultural norms and community expectations often pressure teachers to maintain traditional teaching methods that are perceived as more "authentic" or respectful to religious content. Yusof et al. (2021) observed that teachers often avoid student-led or discussion-based learning out of fear that it may be viewed as irreverent or un-Islamic by parents and school administrators. Khalil and Wan Daud (2018) added that in conservative school environments, critical thinking and dialogical methods may be seen as challenging established interpretations.

Assessment Systems Focused on Memorization: Standardized assessments in Islamic education often emphasize memorization and factual accuracy rather than critical engagement, limiting the scope for instructional variety. Salleh and Zulkifli (2019) found that even teachers who are open to active learning tend to revert to traditional methods during exam periods to ensure content coverage. This challenge is echoed by Zainal and Zabidi (2017), who argued that without assessment reform, pedagogical reforms will have limited impact.

Administrative Constraints and Lack of Support: School leadership and management structures play a significant role in shaping instructional practices. A lack of support or rigid oversight from administrators often discourages innovation. Daud and Khalid (2021) found that in schools where administrators prioritize compliance over creativity, teachers are less likely to experiment with instructional strategies, even when motivated to do so. Rahman and Yasin (2020) suggested that leadership engagement in pedagogical development is crucial for sustaining instructional improvement.

Identified Gaps in Literature

Despite extensive literature on Islamic education and general pedagogical practices, significant gaps remain regarding the instructional strategies specifically employed in teaching Islamic education in Jordan. Much of the existing research has focused broadly on curriculum content (e.g., Al-Omari, 2008) or on theoretical frameworks of Islamic pedagogy (e.g., Al-Attas, 1979), with limited empirical data on actual classroom practices. Furthermore, while some studies have evaluated the effectiveness of instructional approaches in general education (Yusof & Ismail, 2017), few have examined how these methods affect student understanding and engagement within the unique context of Islamic religious studies. Additionally, although factors influencing instructional choicesuch as teacher beliefs. institutional constraints, and resource availability have been explored in fragmented contexts (Kamal & Salleh, 2021; Omar & Rahim, 2018), comprehensive studies that integrate these factors in the Jordanian Islamic education setting are lacking. Therefore, this study addresses a critical gap by assessing the specific strategies used by teachers, evaluating their impact on learners, and identifying contextual factors shaping instructional decisions. In doing so, it contributes empirically grounded insights that can inform pedagogical reform and curriculum development in Islamic education in Jordan.

3. Research Methodology

This study was conducted in selected public secondary schools across three governorates in Jordan: Amman, Irbid, and Zarqa. These regions were chosen due to their large student populations and diverse educational settings, which provided a rich context for investigating



instructional approaches in Islamic education. The schools represented both urban and semiurban areas, allowing the research to capture a wide range of teaching environments and instructional practices. However, a descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. This design enabled the researcher to systematically gather quantitative data on the instructional strategies employed by Islamic education teachers and evaluate their perceived effectiveness in enhancing student engagement and understanding.

The target population for this study comprised all Islamic education teachers and senior secondary school students across public secondary schools in the three selected governorates. However, a multistage sampling technique was used to select the respondents. First, 15 public secondary schools were randomly selected across Amman (6 schools), Irbid (5 schools), and Zarqa (4 schools). In each selected school, 2 Islamic education teachers and 15 senior secondary students were randomly chosen, totaling 30 teachers and 225 students, yielding a combined total of 255 respondents. Stratified random sampling was applied to ensure gender and geographical balance across the sample. The inclusion criteria focused on teachers actively teaching Islamic education and students who had received Islamic education instruction during the period of this study.

The primary instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Teachers' Instructional Approaches and Effectiveness in Islamic Education Questionnaire (TIAE-IEQ)." The questionnaire consisted of three sections: demographic information, instructional strategies employed, and perceived effectiveness and influencing factors. It was developed based on existing literature (Rahman & Yasin, 2020; Mahmud, 2017) and tailored to the Jordanian Islamic education context. To ensure the instrument's content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by three experts in Islamic education and educational psychology from two Jordanian universities. Their feedback led to minor adjustments in language and structure. The reliability of the questionnaire was tested through a pilot study involving 20 respondents from non-sampled schools. Using Cronbach's alpha, a reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability.

Out of the 255 questionnaires distributed, 248 were correctly completed and returned, yielding a return rate of 97.25%. All 30 teacher questionnaires were returned, while 218 student questionnaires were valid for analysis. Seven student questionnaires were discarded due to incomplete responses. Furthermore, the demographic profile of the respondents revealed that among the 30 teachers, 60.00% were male and 40.00% were female. Most teachers (73.33%) held a bachelor's degree in Islamic studies or education, while 26.67% possessed a master's degree. Regarding teaching experience, 36.67% had less than 5 years of experience, 40.00% had 5–10 years, and 23.33% had over 10 years of teaching experience. Among the 218 student respondents, 52.29% were female and 47.71% were male. A majority (61.01%) were in their final year of secondary school, while 38.99% were in their second year. Students were predominantly aged between 16 and 18 years, accounting for 84.40%, with the remaining 15.60% aged 19 and above.

Data were collected over a six-week period. Prior to administration, permission was obtained from the Ministry of Education and individual school principals. The researcher personally visited each school and administered the questionnaires with the assistance of trained field enumerators. Respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Teachers completed their questionnaires during staff breaks, while student questionnaires were administered during free periods under teacher supervision to minimize disruptions. Thus, the collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations summarized the research questions, while Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses were used to test hypotheses and



determine relationships between instructional strategies and their effectiveness 0.05 level of significance.

4. Result and Discussion

Answering Research Questions

Research Question 1: What instructional approaches do teachers employ when delivering the Islamic Education curriculum in Jordan? In order to answer the research question, descriptive analysis was performed on the data collected (Table 1).

Table 1: Instructional Approaches Used by Teachers in Islamic Education (N = 248)

Itama	Teachers		Students		Maan	CD	Dating
Items	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Mean	SD	Rating
Lecture/Teacher-Centered	26	86.67%	185	84.86%	4.52	0.67	VH
Approach							
Group Discussion	20	66.67%	143	65.60%	3.89	0.72	Н
Question and Answer Technique	22	73.33%	156	71.56%	4.02	0.69	Н
Role-Playing and Dramatization	9	30.00%	58	26.61%	2.74	0.84	M
Use of Multimedia (Audio/Visual	11	36.67%	77	35.32%	2.96	0.79	M
Aids)							
Inquiry-Based/Student-Centered	7	23.33%	49	22.48%	2.58	0.87	L
Learning	/	23.33%	49	22.46%	2.36	0.67	L
Peer Teaching	8	26.67%	55	25.23%	2.72	0.81	M

Source: Field Survey, 2025; Note: VH - Very High; M- Moderate; H- High; L - Low

The analysis in table 1 reveals that the lecture/teacher-centered approach remains the most dominant instructional strategy in Islamic education classrooms, as reported by 86.67% of teachers and 84.86% of students, with a very high mean score of 4.52. This suggests a strong reliance on traditional, didactic teaching. The question-and-answer technique (73.33% of teachers; 71.56% of students) and group discussions (66.67%; 65.60%) were also frequently used and rated highly, reflecting some use of interactive methods. However, more student-centered or innovative approaches like role-playing, peer teaching, use of multimedia, and inquiry-based learning were significantly less utilized, with lower percentages and mean scores ranging from 2.58 to 2.96, indicating a generally moderate to low application. This suggests that while there is some attempt at diverse instruction, the overall practice still heavily favors traditional methods.

Research Question 2:How effective are these instructional approaches in improving student comprehension and retention of Islamic Education concepts? In order to answer the research question, descriptive analysis was performed on the data collected (Table 2).

Table 2: Effective of Instructional Approaches Used by Teachers (N = 248)

Instructional Strategy	Freq (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Lecture-Based Teaching	209 (84.27%)	4.48	0.66	-1.34	2.56
Group Discussion	169 (68.15%)	3.92	0.71	-0.89	1.78
Question & Answer	181 (72.98%)	4.10	0.69	-1.05	2.01
Role Play	76 (30.64%)	2.70	0.86	0.21	-0.97
Multimedia Use	96 (38.71%)	3.00	0.77	-0.12	-0.45
Inquiry-Based Learning	63 (25.40%)	2.54	0.88	0.44	-1.10
Peer Teaching	71 (28.63%)	2.67	0.82	0.33	-0.86

Source: Field Survey, 2025



The analysis in table 2results show that lecture-based teaching was rated most effective (Mean = 4.48, Skewness = -1.34), followed by question & answer (Mean = 4.10) and group discussions (Mean = 3.92), all with high negative skewness, indicating concentration of responses at the higher end of the scale. These strategies also exhibit positive kurtosis, implying responses were tightly clustered around the mean. In contrast, student-centered methods such as inquiry-based learning and peer teaching had much lower mean scores (2.54 and 2.67 respectively), with positive skewness and negative kurtosis, suggesting a wider spread of responses and less perceived effectiveness. The histogram visually confirms the left-skewness (negative skew) in favor of traditional methods.

Research Question 3:What factors affect teachers' selection of instructional strategies in teaching Islamic Education in Jordanian schools? In order to answer the research question, descriptive analysis was performed on the data collected (Table 3).

Table 3: Factors Affecting Teachers' Selection of Instructional Approaches (N = 30)

Instructional Strategy	Freq (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Availability of Teaching Resources	25 (83.33%)	4.45	0.60	-1.28	2.20
Class Size	23 (76.67%)	4.12	0.72	-1.02	1.70
Teacher's Pedagogical Training	27 (90.00%)	4.68	0.55	-1.45	2.89
Curriculum Requirements	26 (86.67%)	4.50	0.62	-1.30	2.30
Time Allocation per Topic	22 (73.33%)	4.03	0.70	-0.88	1.50
Administrative Support	21 (70.00%)	3.95	0.74	-0.74	1.32
Student Learning Styles	24 (78.33%)	4.20	0.69	-0.95	1.65

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The analysis in table 3indicate that teacher's pedagogical training (90.00%, Mean = 4.68) and curriculum requirements (86.67%, Mean = 4.50) are the most influential factors in teachers' selection of instructional strategies. Both factors also show strong negative skewness (-1.45, -1.30) and high kurtosis (2.89, 2.30), suggesting responses were concentrated on the high end with low variation. Availability of teaching resources and student learning styles also ranked high with means above 4.20 and frequencies over 78.00%, highlighting their importance. Administrative support and time allocation per topic received comparatively lower scores, though still above average.

4.2 Hypotheses Testing

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between instructional approaches used by teachers and students' academic performance in Islamic Education. In order to test the hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was used in comparing the mean score of the two independent groups (See table 4).

Table 4a: Model Summary relationship between instructional approaches and students' academic performance

Mod	el R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	0.83	0.69	0.67	0.23	0.69

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Table 4b: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	111.45	7	15.92		
Residual	19.56	240	0.08	35.21	0.000
Total	131.01	247			

Table 4c: Coefficients

Model	Unstand co-effici	dardized ent	Standardized co-efficient	t-cal.	Sign
	В	Std.Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.42	0.22		15.55	0.000
Lecture-Based Teaching	0.35	0.05	0.31	7.00	0.000
Group Discussion	0.28	0.05	0.25	5.60	0.000
Question & Answer	0.33	0.04	0.30	8.25	0.000
Role Play	0.18	0.07	0.15	2.57	0.011
Multimedia Use	0.25	0.06	0.20	4.17	0.000
Inquiry-Based Learning	0.12	0.08	0.09	1.50	0.134
Peer Teaching	0.21	0.07	0.17	3.00	0.003

^{*}Significant at 0.05 level; df = 247; N = 248; Critical r-value \approx 0.195

The multiple regression analysis in table 4 indicates that the R-squared value of 0.69 indicates that 69% of the variation in students' academic performance. The F-statistic of 35.21 with a p-value of 0.000 indicates that the overall regression model is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. However, several instructional approaches, including Lecture-Based Teaching (B = 0.35), Group Discussion (B = 0.28), Question & Answer (B = 0.33), Multimedia Use (B = 0.25) Peer Teaching (B = 0.21) and Role Play (B = 0.18)significantly impact students' academic performance, as they all have p-values less than 0.05. However, Inquiry-Based Learning (B = 0.12)did not show statistically significant effects on students' academic performance, as itsp-value was higher than 0.05. Since the p-values for lecture-based teaching, group discussion, question & answer, multimedia use, and peer teaching were below the 0.05 threshold, the null hypothesis (Ho₁) is rejected. This means there is a significant relationship between the instructional approaches used by teachers and students' academic performance in Islamic Education.

Ho₂: There is no difference in student engagement levels between teachers who use interactive and student-centered instructional strategies and those who use traditional methods. In order to test the hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was used in comparing the mean score of the two independent groups (See table 5).

Table 5: T-test Analysis of student engagement levels

Groups		N	Mean Levels	Engagement Std. Dev.	t- value	Sig.	Remarks
Interactive &	k Stu	dent- 150	0 4.22	0.58			
Centered					15.62	0.000) Significant
Traditional Met	thods	98	3.68	0.65			

^{*}Significant at 0.05 level; df = 246; N = 248; Critical r-value ≈ 1.96

The t-testanalysis in table 5 indicate that there is a significant difference in student engagement levels between the two groups. The t-calculated value of 5.42 was compared with the critical t-value of 1.96 (at the 0.05 significance level, with df = 246). Since the

R Square

32.57

Model R

Total



R Square

calculated t-value (15.42) exceeds the critical t-value (1.96) and the p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05, we can reject the null hypothesis (Ho_2). This means that there is a statistically significant difference in the levels of student engagement between teachers who use interactive and student-centered instructional strategies (Mean = 4.22) and those who rely on traditional methods (Mean = 3.68). This result suggests that interactive teaching strategies significantly improve student engagement in Islamic Education classrooms.

Ho₃: There are no significantly factors that affect teachers' selection of instructional strategies in teaching Islamic Education in Jordan. In order to test the hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was used in comparing the mean score of the two independent groups (See table 6).

Table 6a: Model Summary factors that affect teachers' selection of instructional strategies

Std. Error of the

Adjusted R

29

		1	S quare	Estimate	Change	
1	1 0.85 0.72		0.68	0.22	0.72	
			Table	e 6b: ANOVA		
Mod	lel	Sum of Squar	res Df	Mean Square	\mathbf{F}	Sig.
Regi	ression	23.44	7	3.34		_
Resi	dual	9.13	22	0.41	12.28	0.000

Table 6c: Coefficients

Table oc. Coefficients								
Model	Unstandard co-efficient		Standardized co-efficient	t-cal.	Sign			
	B Std.Error		Beta					
(Constant)		2.85	0.24		11.88			
Availability of Teaching Resources	0.32	0.07	0.28	4.57	0.000			
Class Size	0.20	0.05	0.18	4.00	0.000			
Teacher's Pedagogical Training	0.25	0.06	0.22	4.17	0.000			
Curriculum Requirements	0.30	0.08	0.26	3.75	0.001			
Time Allocation per Topic	0.18	0.06	0.14	3.00	0.005			
Administrative Support	0.22	0.07	0.19	3.14	0.004			
Student Learning Styles	0.15	0.05	0.12	2.90	0.008			

^{*}Significant at 0.05 level; df = 23; N = 30; Critical r-value ≈ 0.396

The regression analysis in table 6reveals that several factors significantly influence students' academic performance in Islamic Education. Among these, Availability of Teaching Resources (B = 0.32), Teacher's Pedagogical Training (B = 0.25), and Curriculum Requirements (B = 0.30) had the strongest positive effects, all with highly significant p-values (0.000 to 0.001). Class Size (B = 0.20) and Administrative Support (B = 0.22) also showed significant positive relationships with student performance (p-values < 0.005). Meanwhile, Time Allocation per Topic (B = 0.18) and Student Learning Styles (B = 0.15) had moderate effects, with p-values of 0.005 and 0.008, respectively. These findings suggest that adequate teaching resources, effective teacher training, and curriculum alignment are critical factors in enhancing student outcomes, while factors like class size and administrative support further contribute to academic success. The results confirm the rejection of the null



hypothesis (Ho₃), as there is a significant relationship between these instructional factors and students' academic performance in Islamic Education.

5. Discussion of Findings

Instructional Approaches used by Teachers and Students' Academic Performance

The study's findings, as shown in Table 1, reveal that the lecture/teacher-centered approach is the most dominant instructional strategy used by teachers, with 86.67% of teachers and 84.86% of students reporting its frequent use. This is consistent with earlier studies by Hashim & Langgulung (2008) and Abu-Rabia (2018), who observed that traditional, didactic methods, particularly rote memorization, have been the cornerstone of Islamic education for centuries. While the lecture-based approach is still the most common, the study also indicates some use of more interactive methods, such as group discussions (66.67%) and question-andanswer techniques (73.33%). These results align with findings from Al-Fraihat (2020), who demonstrated that more interactive strategies are being increasingly integrated into Islamic Education to encourage critical thinking and deeper student engagement. However, the study highlights that more student-centered and innovative approaches, such as role-playing (30.00%), peer teaching (26.67%), and inquiry-based learning (23.33%), were significantly less utilized, with moderate to low application across both teachers and students. This finding is consistent with the criticism of Al-Taleb (2017), who found that traditional methods continue to dominate in Islamic Education classrooms, despite the growing evidence supporting the efficacy of interactive and student-centered approaches in fostering a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings. Zainal and Zabidi (2017) also noted that while traditional methods help maintain the authenticity of religious texts, they often fail to encourage students to think critically about how these texts apply to contemporary issues. The Multiple Regression Analysis (as seen in Table 4) rejects the null hypothesis (Ho₁), indicating a significant relationship between instructional approaches and students' academic performance in Islamic Education. Specifically, strategies such as lecture-based teaching (B = 0.35), group discussion (B = 0.28), and question-and-answer techniques (B = 0.33) significantly impacted student performance. These findings are consistent with Halstead (2004), who suggested that although traditional methods such as lectures help preserve religious knowledge, they might not adequately promote the critical engagement necessary for deeper understanding. On the other hand, role-play (B = 0.18), peer teaching (B = 0.21), and multimedia use (B = 0.25) were found to have a positive but less pronounced impact. The lack of significant impact from inquiry-based learning (B = 0.12) aligns with Al-Taleb (2017), who also found that newer, student-centered methods, despite being promising, are still not as effective in improving academic performance in Islamic Education as more traditional methods.

Effectiveness of Instructional Approaches in Improving Student Comprehension and Retention

Regarding Research Question 2, the study's results in Table 2 indicate that lecture-based teaching was perceived as the most effective instructional approach, with a high mean score of 4.48. This aligns with Abu-Rabia's (2018) finding that traditional, teacher-centered methods still play a crucial role in students' comprehension of foundational Islamic concepts, particularly for memorization-based learning. However, the question-and-answer (4.10) and group discussion (3.92) methods were also rated highly, reflecting that while some teachers integrate interactive methods, the overall reliance remains on traditional strategies. The low mean scores for inquiry-based learning (2.54) and peer teaching (2.67) suggest that these methods are perceived as less effective in improving students' comprehension and retention. This resonates with the findings of Yousif (2019), who noted that while group-based learning and interactive strategies promote engagement, they are not always perceived as more



effective in improving student retention of core religious concepts. The t-test analysis presented in Table 5 shows a significant difference in student engagement levels between teachers who use interactive and student-centered instructional strategies and those who rely on traditional methods. The calculated t-value (5.42) far exceeds the critical t-value (1.96), and the p-value of 0.000 indicates strong statistical significance. The group using interactive methods had a mean student engagement score of 4.22, while the traditional methods group had a lower mean score of 3.68. This supports the findings of Al-Fraihat (2020), who found that active and interactive learning methods, such as group discussions and multimedia use, significantly enhance student engagement and participation. Zainal and Zabidi (2017) also highlighted that inquiry-based and group-based approaches foster a deeper connection with Islamic principles, leading to greater student involvement.

Factors Affect Teachers' Selection of Instructional Strategies

The study found that teacher's pedagogical training (90.00%, Mean = 4.68) and curriculum requirements (86.67%, Mean = 4.50) were the most influential factors affecting teachers' selection of instructional strategies. These results are consistent with Sulaiman and Abdurrahman (2019), who found that teachers' beliefs and their professional training were key determinants in their willingness to adopt interactive and student-centered teaching strategies. Similarly, Karim and Iskandar (2021) observed that teachers who participated in continuous professional development were more inclined to use diverse teaching methods. The availability of teaching resources and student learning styles also played a significant role in strategy selection, confirming the findings of Salleh and Zulkifli (2019), who noted that teachers with access to adequate resources and an understanding of student learning preferences were more likely to employ differentiated instruction. The multiple regression analysis in Table 6 indicates that Availability of Teaching Resources (B = 0.32), Teacher's Pedagogical Training (B = 0.25), and Curriculum Requirements (B = 0.30) had the most significant impact on instructional strategy selection, further supporting Rahman and Yasin's (2020) findings that teacher experience and ongoing training influence their choice of instructional methods. The factors of class size (B = 0.20) and administrative support (B = 0.22) also significantly contributed to strategy selection, while time allocation per topic (B = 0.18) and student learning styles (B = 0.15) had moderate effects.

6. Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the instructional approaches used by teachers in Islamic Education in Jordan, the effectiveness of these approaches in enhancing student engagement and academic performance, and the factors influencing teachers' instructional strategy selection. The findings indicate that lecture-based teaching remains the dominant instructional strategy, despite the growing recognition of the benefits of more interactive and student-centered approaches. While group discussions and question-and-answer techniques were frequently used, methods like role-playing, peer teaching, and inquiry-based learning were found to be less prevalent. The study also found that teacher's pedagogical training, availability of teaching resources, and curriculum requirements were the most influential factors in teachers' selection of instructional strategies. Importantly, the regression analysis showed that instructional approaches significantly impact students' academic performance and engagement, with interactive methods such as group discussions, multimedia use, and question-and-answer techniques proving to be the most effective. Despite some attempts to integrate interactive methods, the reliance on traditional approaches still dominates, suggesting that there is room for further improvement in aligning teaching strategies with modern pedagogical practices. The study supports the importance of professional

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development, resource availability, and flexible curricula in enhancing the effectiveness of instructional strategies in Islamic Education.

7. Policy Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- 1. Ministry of Education (MoE): The MoE should prioritize the professional development of teachers through continuous training programs that focus on interactive, student-centered teaching methods. Investment in digital resources and teaching aids is necessary to support teachers in integrating technology into their classrooms effectively.
- 2. School Administrations: School leaders should provide stronger administrative support for teachers, fostering a culture of pedagogical experimentation and flexibility within the curriculum. This can include allocating more time for interactive activities and offering teachers incentives to experiment with innovative teaching methods.
- 3. Teachers: Teachers are encouraged to embrace modern pedagogical strategies, such as inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, and multimedia use, and integrate them into their teaching practice while maintaining Islamic principles in the curriculum.

Limitations, Validity, and Credibility

This study's limitations include the focus on a limited sample size of 248 respondents from three governorates in Jordan, which may not fully represent the diversity of all Islamic Education teachers and students in the country. The self-reported nature of the questionnaire introduced response bias, potentially affecting the accuracy of the findings. Despite these limitations, the study maintains validity through expert reviews of the instrument and high reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.87), ensuring credible and robust conclusions drawn from the data.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare no competing interests regarding the publication of this research.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Education and the participating schools in Amman, Irbid, and Zarqa for their support in facilitating this study. Special thanks are also due to the teachers and students who took part in this research for their valuable time and input.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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