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i-Thaharah

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ABSTRACT

Fiqh Thaharah is a topic about cleanliness consisting of extensive discussions on the subtopics *thaharah haqiqiyah* which discusses on cleanliness from excrement and *thaharah hukmiyyah* which discusses on cleanliness from *hadas*. [1] Observing *thaharah* or 'cleanliness' is an obligatory upon every Muslim, thus considered as one of the pillars of Islam. Only with clarity and great understanding on the subject would ensures a Muslim the validity of the acts of 'ibadah (worship). Nevertheless, confusions and obscurity within the matter of *hukum* or laws concerning *Fiqh Thaharah* are still exist among Muslims. Religious studies are usually delivered by teachers to students in classes with a traditional way of lecture and a least engaging manner whereby students lack active interaction of the topic during classes. This causes a lack of interest in a student's viewpoint as the passive interaction bores them and results in their difficulty of understanding the topics. Therefore, 'gamification' method needs to be integrated into the teaching and learning processes in order to help students and serves as an alternative to enhance understanding of the topic. This method could also assist in clarifying the topic to the public. Thus, i-Thaharah is an innovation on board games that concentrate on the understanding of *fiqh* knowledge based on *Fiqh Thaharah* in accordance to *as-Shafi'e* sect. A new product generated as a medium of education to heighten players' understanding in the topic of *Fiqh Thaharah*. The product objective is to provide public exposure about *Fiqh Thaharah* according to *as-Shafi'e* sect. Besides that, the product introduces an interactive way of teaching and learning the topic. Furthermore, it provides a way of evaluating a person's mastery on the topic in a more casual manner through educational games or also known as edutainment and becomes another alternative of preaching Islam to the public, in particular to Muslims. Hence, this product becomes an alternative medium in learning a particular issue of *thaharah* as it is produced in a form of a user friendly interactive game.

Keywords: Innovation; gamification; pendidikan islam; *fiqh thaharah*

1. INTRODUCTION

Understanding *Fiqh Thaharah* starts from the definition of its principle. *Thaharah* in terms of language translates to clean and free from various uncleanness either in tangible form (*hissi*) or in the form of a spiritual sense. While the term *thaharah* indicates an action that is required to be done in order to fulfill the obligation of worship. For instance, the action that becomes a requirement to perform *solah* or other

acts of worship with such requirement is to perform ablution (*wuduk*) to those without ablution, or to bathe and cleanse to those required to bathe and cleanse so that excrement from the clothes, body and place be cleansed before performing acts of worship [10].

The subject of *Fiqh Thaharah* or cleanliness is a compulsory topic to be learned and understood by Muslims. The clarity of a person's understanding about the principles of *thaharah* and issues within the topic ensures the validity of their acts of worship. An act of worship becomes unacceptable and impermissible without the correct requirement of *thaharah* according to its principles. However, schools and higher institutions only use books as a medium for learning which does not spark interest in students while they learn about the topic. This should be improvised in order to create a better approach for a more challenging sector of education with information and knowledge readily available in the 21st century besides ensuring that learners are able to master the subject well. A systematic approach that is compatible throughout the passage of time should be considered so that the future generation would not study and gain knowledge with an outdated manner.

'Gamification' is an effort to attract and stimulate the motivation of a student to master a difficult topic. Generally, the 'gamification' approach in education is concentrated around the theory of constructivism that is a theory which supports learning based on the student or also known as student-centralization. The theory encourages students to be actively involved and experience learning through hands-on activities. Student engagement in the learning processes indirectly helps to improve their memory and understanding of the subject for a long period of time [7].

Besides, a young student would generally feel excited and have a lot of fun learning while playing. If teaching processes could be combined with game activities then students are inclined to be learning more as games naturally consists of various components to motivate students such as an objective, a conflict, rules, a winner, interaction during game-play and obstacles made in the game [11].

In most cases, the perplexity about the principles of *Fiqh Thaharah* still exists among the general public [12]. This is due to the traditional setting of religious education in various educational institutions that lacks interaction of the student to engage their interest in learning. According to Jasmi [9], teachers of Islamic Studies in national secondary schools throughout peninsular Malaysia discovered that teachers who lack in teaching skills, those with their teaching methods that lack of creativity, and those who prefer to approach students using the 'chalk-and-talk' method as well as being centered around textbooks proved to become the main issue to students' lack of engaging in studies provided reasons that the teaching method has become outdated in modern times [9].

Therefore, the innovation of i-Thaharah aims to introduce a new method that provides interactive learning and teaching process about the topic of *Fiqh Thaharah*. This approach is an alternative method to the traditional way of learning. Other than that, the approach would contribute to providing exposure and understanding of *Fiqh Thaharah* according to *as-Shafi'e* sect that becomes the main reference of Islam in Malaysia to the general public. i- Thaharah could also provide better apprehension of the topic in a

more casual manner through edutainment as well as becoming another way of preaching Islam to the society and thus providing basic knowledge of Islam to all.

2. INNOVATION DEVELOPMENT

Various methods of teaching and learning had been applied to various schools and higher education institutions. 'Gamification' methods in education had been vastly used to help students' understanding in topics. The 'gamification' of i-Thaharah is a new product that had been produced as a medium to aid in a better teaching method for educators in the leaning and teaching processes. 'Gamification' is a concept that introduces a topic in the form of games and it functions as a method that applies the elements of playing board games to learning a certain topic that creates a joyful ambiance for the learner. Researchers had provided various definitions to the method of 'gamification' and mostly implies it with the similar concept involving any form of game adaptations. 'Gamification' is defined as a process of adding games or any game-like elements to something (such as a task) so as to encourage participation (8). 'Gamification' can also be elaborated as the practice of making activities more like games in order to make them more interesting or enjoyable (6).

The idea to create such a product comes after an evaluation of general understanding of *Fiqh Thaharah* among students. Most problems that students frequently faced are issues of cleanliness from *hadass* and excrement, the allotment of blood, *tayammum* and *istinjak*. One of the factors contributing to the issue is the depth of understanding and consciousness of the students' obligation to take care of their self-cleanliness that comes from being the main requirement before implementing their prayers. Therefore, awareness and consciousness of the importance of compulsory cleanliness must be instilled among students. Hence, our team, the author and a few researchers have discussed about the creation of the new innovation in the form of a game that could be used in Malaysia's education system as the discussion of *thaharah* had been a subject taught in various levels of education either in primary schools, secondary schools and higher education institutions.

The development of a gamified i-Thaharah is a concept with similarities to a 'snakes and ladders' game is based on throwing dices to begin the game and play. The 'gamification' of i-Thaharah is equipped with a set of board game that has boxes printed on it with labels and meanings associated with the topic of *Fiqh Thaharah*. Moreover, four additional boxes are printed to serve as a placement for the cards labeled *nasib*, as well as question cards with varying difficulty in the game that are *mukhafafah*, *mutawassitah* and *mughallazah*. The cards *mukhafafah* refers to the cards containing the easiest level of questions, *mutawassitah* refers to the cards containing a medium level difficulty of questions while *mughallazah* refers to the cards containing the most difficult level of questions. Each card is provided with answers in accordance to the books written by honorable educators of *as-Shafi'e* sect such as Mukhtashar al-Muzani fi furu' al Syaafiiyah, Al-Fiqh Al-Manhaji 'Ala Madzhab Al-Syafie, Al-Majmu' Syarh Al-Muhadzdzab, and Raudhatul Tholibin, in order to provide accurate answers for the questions in the game.

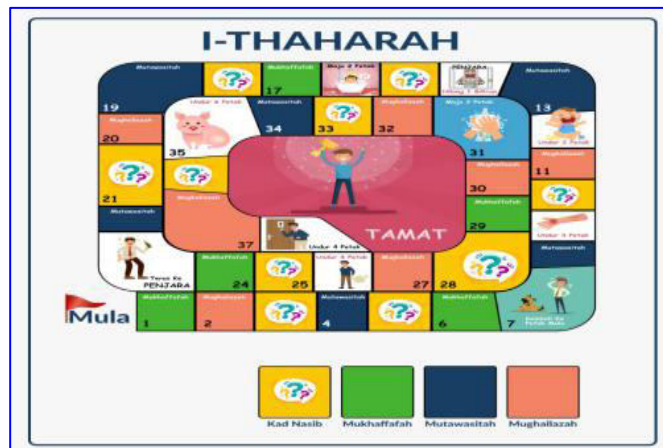


Figure 1: i-Thaharah board game set

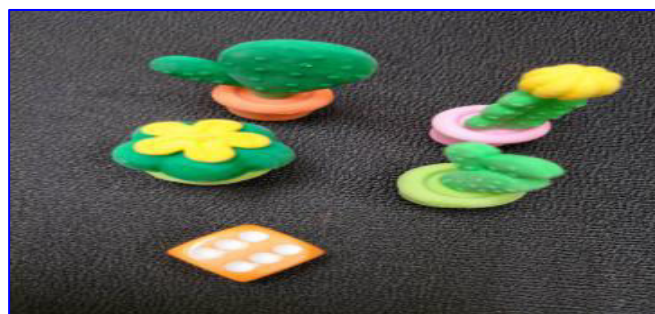


Figure 2: Colorful pieces along with the game



Figure 3: Questions cards

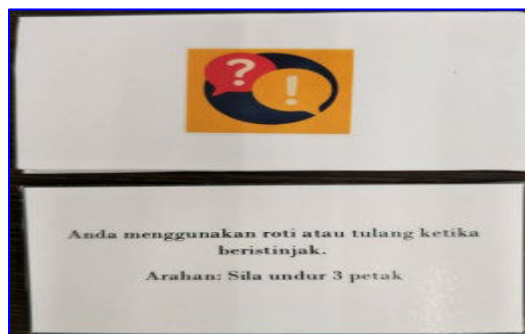


Figure 4: Nasib cards

The game recommends at least two to four players. Each player is represented by the colorful pieces or tokens. Players should throw the dices beforehand to determine each of their positions. The player of dices with the highest number of throws starts first, then the second player and the rest of the players follow through in a descending number of throws. A player or another individual is assigned to read the question cards and the answers provided in the game. Players should answer the questions provided in the cards in accordance to the level of difficulty in the mind test box of the board game set. If the player fails to answer each question, they have to move three boxes backwards. If a player fails to answer three consecutive questions, they have to move to the 'jail' box. A player in the 'jail' box is prohibited from their turn to play until all players have finished their turn. A player who landed on the *nasib* box must obey the orders written on the *nasib* card. Each player who finishes the game has succeeded in mastering the topic and has a deeper understanding of the topics in *Fiqh Thaharah*.



Figure 5: The awards won for i-Thaharah in innovation competitions

3. COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL

The ‘gamification’ of i-Thaharah has a high commercial value especially in the sector of *Pendidikan Islam* education as the contents in the game is based on books written by honorable educators in *as-Shafi’e* sect such as Mukhtashar al-Muzani fi furu’ al Syaafiiyah, Al-Fiqh Al-Manhaji 'Ala Madzhab Al-Syafie, Al-Majmu' Syarh Al-Muhadzdzab, and Raudhatul Tholibin. Besides, the game is based upon the basic but most important knowledge in establishing whether an act of worship is valid or null according to Islamic principles. As an illustration, an act of worship like *solah* done without the correct requirements of *thaharah* according to the necessity of Islamic principles becomes null and is not considered as an act of worship.

Hence, it is true that an absolute clarity of understanding *Fiqh Thaharah* is compulsory to each worshipper of Islam in order to be ensured of the validity of his worship. It is in line with this *Hadith* : “The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “Purity is half of faith, and the praise of Allah fills the scale. Glorification and praise fill up what is between the heavens and the earth. Prayer is a light, charity is proof, and patience is illumination. The Koran is a proof for you or against you. All people go out early in the morning and sell themselves, either setting themselves free or ruining themselves.” [5]

Based on researchers studies, the method of ‘gamification’ within the scope of Islamic studies has reaped many results and provides a market for sales nowadays. However, most ‘gamification’ of Islamic studies in the market specifies more towards topics such as *tajwid*, *sirah*, *zakat*, *faraid*, *halal*, *munakahat*, Arabic Language, *umrah*, *hajj* and *wakaf*. Meanwhile, the ‘gamification’ of *Fiqh* topics specifically in *Fiqh Thaharah* is not found in the market yet although this knowledge is the most basic essential of all requirements for acts of worshipping.

Therefore, based on a sense of responsibility and a concern towards the necessity of understanding *Fiqh Thaharah*, the ‘gamification’ of i-Thaharah was created to assist in easing the process of teaching and learning on all levels of educational institutions. This is because most teaching and learning processes in the field of Religious studies especially *Fiqh Thaharah* is conducted in a traditional setting that needs to be improvised with flexible, innovative and efficient features in order to help students to adapt with the content of the information and receive it well.

Hence, the gamified i-Thaharah focuses the product to various levels of educational institutions for example, kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools and universities and colleges in Malaysia. The gamified i-Thaharah produced is corresponding to the learning and teaching processes of the 21st century which produces exemplary students with elements in accordance to the National Education Philosophy or *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan*.

4. CONCLUSION

Corresponding with technological advancements in the digital era, the implementation of ‘gamification’ is greatly encouraged. This is due to the current generation preferring a more casual and solid approach with educational methods. ‘Gamification’ had greatly helped many educators and students in education.

It is even implemented in accordance to students' interests as well as the demands of an education sector that is well developing. Moreover, the elements of 'gamification' is simple and flexible to be integrated in education.

In regards with that, the approach to gamify i-Thaharah brings positive results in a student's cognitive development. It could improve their logical skills and help them to think out of the box while playing the game. i-Thaharah is not solely a board game as it is packed with knowledge about *Fiqh Thaharah*. Discussions about *Fiqh Thaharah* is of utmost importance to be understood by every Muslim. This is because a clear understanding of the topic provides a sense of confidence for those performing their worship duties without doubt and skepticism. So, knowledge relating to *thaharah* is applied in the game.

This 'gamification' of i-Thaharah not only helps students and educators but could also provide understanding of the topic to all Muslims as this game can be played by all ages. In order to further develop the game in the future, efforts had been made to improvise the concept of this game made by the researchers, such as dividing various levels of difficulty for the questions in the game like beginner, intermediate and advance with easy, medium and difficult questions each. Besides, the production of a manuscript or a questions and answers book about all of the topics for discussion regarding *Fiqh Thaharah* that is the divisions of excrement, divisions of *hadas*, divisions of water, *istinjak*, ablution (*wuduk*), bathe and *tayammum*. This can aid the general public to learn more about *thaharah*. The gamified i-Thaharah can also be developed in a form of online application or (Apps). online users who are interested in the game are able to download the app into their smart phones and can play the game online with their friends and family. In conclusion, it is clear that the 'gamification' development approach could provide interest to Muslims so that everyone emphasizes the need to acknowledge *Fiqh Thaharah*.

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The idea of developing a gamified i-Thaharah starts from the team of researchers' observations on the need to provide a new medium of teaching *fiqh* subjects especially *Fiqh Thaharah* which is a crucial element in providing validity of an act of worship. However, efforts would not have produced results without a platform to further work and test on the idea.

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