

Volume 15, No. 2  December 2018

JOURNAL OF

Islam in Asia

A Refereed International Biannual Arabic – English Journal

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

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JOURNAL OF *Islam in Asia*

Volume 15, No. 2, December 2018

ISSN: 1823-0970 E-ISSN: 2289-8077

Journal of Islam in Asia

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**Creativity in Islamic Entertainment: A Case Study of
Malaysian *Nashid* Groups (Rabbani, Raihan and Hijjaz)**

**Kreativiti dalam Hiburan Islam: Kajian Kes
Kumpulan Nasyid Malaysia (Rabbani, Raihan And Hijjaz)**

Abdulhamid Mohamed Ali Zaroum,* Mohd. Abbas Abdul Razak** and
Abdul Latif Abd. Razak***

Abstract

This paper attempts to shed some light on Islamic Nashid (Nasyid) groups in Malaysia, in particular Rabbani, Raihan and Hijjaz. With the emergence of globalization and its entertainment aspect, and due to the huge influence of modernization on the society especially among the youth, there was a need for an alternative entertainment. And, as far as Muslims are concerned, the most effective way in this regard was, to a great extent, Islamic Nashid. Entertainment itself has been an area of great discussion and dispute among Muslim scholars throughout the ages all over the world. In Malaysia, the issue of allowing or disallowing entertainment specifically songs and music is no longer a big issue. As a matter of fact, entertainment is part of the traditions and culture of the Muslims in this part of the world. Nevertheless, the major concern here is what kind of songs and music do Nashid groups present? Could Islamic Nashid be an alternative to the conventional or non-Islamic songs? Is it possible for Nashid performance to be viewed as an act of worship? To what extent Nashid groups are contributing in the Islamization of entertainment and enhancement of Islamic awareness in Malaysian society?? The focus of this research is: (1) The historical background of Rabbani, Raihan and Hijjaz Nashid groups (2) The role these groups have been playing in creating Islamic awareness; (3) The Islamization of songs and music as promoted by these three groups; (4) The challenges these Nashid groups are facing in terms of publication and audience attendance etc.; and (5) The future of Islamic Nashid in Malaysia. This research is expected to provide important findings that will enhance Islamic awareness among the society members. Besides, it is hoped that this paper will highlight the effectiveness of Islamic Nashid in Malaysia especially in this borderless globalized village.

Keywords: Nasyid, Nashid, Islamic Entertainment, Creativity, virtues, Malaysia.

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Abstrak

Makalah ini cuba menerangkan beberapa kumpulan Nasyid Islam di Malaysia, khususnya RABBANI, RAIHAN DAN HIJJAZ. Dengan kemunculan globalisasi dan aspek hiburannya, dan disebabkan oleh pengaruh besar pemodenan terhadap masyarakat terutama kalangan belia, hiburan alternatif amatlah diperlukan. Cara yang paling berkesan dalam hal ini adalah, sebahagian besarnya, Nasyid Islam. Hiburan itu sendiri merupakan bidang perbincangan dan pertikaian hebat di kalangan para ulama Islam sepanjang zaman di seluruh dunia. Di Malaysia, isu membenarkan atau menolak hiburan khususnya lagu dan muzik tidak lagi menjadi masalah besar. Hakikatnya, hiburan adalah sebahagian daripada tradisi dan budaya umat Islam. Walau bagaimanapun, kebimbangan utama di sini, apakah jenis lagu dan muzik yang didendangkan oleh kumpulan Nasyid tersebut? Bolehkah Nasyid Islam menjadi alternatif kepada lagu konvensional atau yang bersifat tidak Islamik? Adakah mungkin Nasyid dilihat sebagai satu ibadah? Sejauh manakah kumpulan Nasyid menyumbang kepada Islamisasi hiburan dan meningkatkan kesedaran Islam dalam masyarakat Malaysia? Fokus penyelidikan ini adalah: (1) latar belakang kumpulan-kumpulan Nasyid RABBANI, RAIHAN DAN HIJJAZ (2) Peranan kumpulan-kumpulan ini dalam membentuk kesedaran Islam; (3) Islamisasi lagu dan muzik seperti yang diketengahkan oleh ketiga-tiga kumpulan ini; (4) Cabaran yang dihadapi kumpulan-kumpulan Nasyid ini dari segi penerbitan dan menarik minat pendengar; dan (5) Masa depan Nasyid Islam di Malaysia. Penyelidikan ini dijangka memberikan penemuan penting yang akan meningkatkan kesedaran Islam di kalangan masyarakat. Di samping itu, diharapkan makalah ini akan menonjolkan keberkesanan Nasyid Islam di Malaysia terutamanya dalam dunia globalisasi tanpa sempadan.

Kata Kunci: Nasyid, Hiburan yang bersifat Islamik, kreativiti, nilai-nilai murni, Malaysia

Introduction

To many scholars, any sort of entertainment, and most importantly singing, if accompanied by musical instruments is *haram* to do or to listen to, whether it is done by a man or a woman. The only exception that is made is singing that is accompanied by the *daff* (frame drum), done by women at weddings or on *Eid*, and when one who has been absent returns.¹ On the contrary, others look at it from a different angle stating that songs or Nasyids (Bahasa Malaysia spelling for the Arabic Nashid) are like poetry; its permissibility or otherwise lays in its lyrics; if it promotes goodness then it is halal and if it promotes vice then it is haram.²

¹Look at the Fatwa given by Shaykh Saalih Al-Munajjid. <https://islamqa.info/en/47996>

²<http://fatwa.islamweb.net/fatwa/index.php?page=showfatwa&Option=FatwaId&Id=245011>

Being a kind of entertainment, Islamic Nasyids have been playing explicitly or implicitly a vital role in educating all folks of societies about their religious duties and obligations. It contributed tremendously to the spread of Islamic teachings as well as in the inculcation of good *Akhlaq* or moral characters that are the backbone of Islamic personality.

Nasyid paints a beautiful image of Islam not only towards the young generations but also in the eyes of the whole world. Rabbani, Raihan and Hijjaz, with other Nasyid groups, have been contributing considerably in providing the youth with proper guidance on means and ways to spend their leisure time wisely by listening to the Nasyid that contain the advice to lead them to the right path.

In this short study, the researcher shall examine the establishment, impacts & challenges of these three groups. Thus, the first attempt is to look into the concept of entertainment in Islam particularly songs and music then the opinion of Muslim scholars pertaining to *Nasyid*. Secondly, there will be a summary of the history of Nasyid in Malaysia as well as highlighting issues related to Nasyid industry. However, the most crucial part of the research will be dedicated to the study of some selected lyrics of popular Nasyid of the groups under study and the values and virtues they promote.

The sources of data used in this research is based on the Malaysian experience, and the search for data was confined to the concerned country. Much data is in Bahasa Melayu due to the fact that Nasyid is very much a Muslim affair and that Malays are the predominant listeners of the genre. The English medium has less interest in reporting such news. There has not been much study on the subject to find established references such as books written on the specific issue. Much of the data can therefore be extracted from articles published in several mainstream newspapers, namely *Utusan Malaysia*, *Berita Harian*, and *Metro*. The news was mainly reported under the entertainment section of the newspapers. The data extracted can be categorized as follows:

1. Evolution of Nasyid in Malaysia,
2. the challenges of Nasyid genre,
3. and its survival,
4. and lastly the activities and the achievement of Nasyid groups.

The other source of data that has been looked into was from established semi academic magazines such as *Dewan Masyarakat* and *Dewan Budaya* published by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, a government

agency with authority to promote the language and culture in the country. The articles in the magazines are written by academicians. With respect to the study of the technicality of Nasyid itself, it can be viewed in several notes. The impact of Nasyid can be assessed in terms of the lyrics and the melody. What is the main contributor that makes a Nasyid song accepted and become popular? Is it the lyrics or the melody or both? There is a need perhaps for a source of information that offer insight into the role of melody in making a song popular so that the impact of a Nasyid can be established in the form that was intended.

It is also a matter of interest to find out whether the Nasyid become popular through tireless efforts by Islamic *da'wah* activities in promoting Islamic way of life. Their effectiveness of *da'wah* could perhaps produce individuals who tend to seek alternative entertainment through Nasyid. The *da'wah* efforts had been worked out slowly in the 70's through 90's. Organizations such as ABIM and other volunteers had carried out *da'wah* to students especially during that period. Their work may have formed a critical mass that forms a pool of fans of Nasyid and giving the genre prominence in the 90's. The fact that several Nasyid artists came out from such movement could be evidence that such scenario may had happened. Or is it the other way around, that is, the individuals are directly or indirectly affected by the Nasyid itself that he/she tend to observe Islamic teaching better in his/her life. The research can then be linked to such possible scenario by incorporating study on Islamic movement in the 70's and 80's.

Objectives

This paper attempts to achieve the following objectives: (1) To explore the role Rabbani, Raihan and Hijjaz Nasyid groups have been playing in creating Islamic awareness in Malaysian society. 2) To highlight the future of Islamic Nasyid in Malaysia and the chances that they can survive the tough competition in the market. 3) To examine the Islamizational inputs and outputs of Rabbani, Raihan and Hijjaz Nasyid groups in Malaysian society and the possibility of establishing an alternative entertainment. 4) To bring to light the effectiveness of Nasyid in enhancing Islamic ethics and moral values in Malaysia.

Methodology

The methodology used in this paper is a descriptive, analytical as well as Comparative methods. Firstly, there will be a description of the establishment of Rabbani, Raihan and Hijjaz. Nasyid groups and how

these groups have been affecting the society throughout the decades. Secondly, analytical method will be used to elaborate on the collected data related to this topic. Then, a comparative method will be used to see the essential differences between Islamic Nasyid and conventional songs and the influence of both on Malaysian society.

Entertainment from the Islamic Perspective

Islam sets for its followers and adherents a complete way of life. In the Islamic point of view, there is no harm in entertaining one's self as long as the Islamic principles and the Shariah guidelines have not been violated. Indeed, all daily routines and activities of a Muslim are considered as acts of worship, including entertainment, provided that they are accompanied by good intention to first please Allah and second to bring joy and happiness to his/her life. Thus, Muslims should not allow themselves to indulge with anything that might destruct them from the purpose of life. We should be aware of what forms of entertainment are permissible and which forms are impermissible. Pertaining to the use of musical instruments, Muslim scholars have been debating this issue since a long time.³ They are of two opinions:

Early Muslim scholars including the four prominent Imams of the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence were not in favor of permissibility of songs and musical instruments.

Views of the Sunni Legal Schools of jurisprudence

1. Imam Abu Hanifah detested singing and considered it sinful.
2. Imam Malik has said when asked about singing, "Infact that is done by the sinful ones."
3. Imam Shafi mentioned that: "Verily, song is loathsome (*makruh*); it resembles the false and vain thing (*al-batil*). The one who partakes of it frequently is an incompetent fool whose testimony is to be rejected."
4. Imam Ahmed Ibn Hanbal: said: "*I despise it, for it is a bid'ah (innovation). Don't sit down to listen to its reciters.*" He was also quoted as saying "*Singing sprouts hypocrisy in the heart; it doesn't please me.*"

The reason why the first generation Muslim scholars prohibited songs and music could be due to the fact that during their time the entertainment profession was solely dominated by bad people with no inten-

³ Zulkiple Bin Abd. Ghani (2006), Islamic Popular Culture: Emerging of Nasyid Groups in Malaysia. *Ulum Islamiyyah* V.5 NO. 1 (2006) p. 52

tion but to spread indecencies or to fulfil rulers' request or even to have a source of earning a living. Hence, the sense of promoting moral values was missing.

According to the ethnomusicologist Al-Faruqi, religious opinion makes a hierarchy of music and singing in forbidden, unflavored, indifferent, recommended and commendable forms. The recitation of the Quran stands at the peak of the hierarchy, immediately followed by the call to prayer and religious chants. Also legitimate are various types of songs connected to family celebrations, caravan chants, work songs and the music of military bands. At the bottom of the hierarchy, we find "sensual music that is performed in association with condemned activities, or that is thought to incite to such prohibited practices as consumption of drugs and alcohol, lust, prostitution etc."⁴ These genres are clearly forbidden, haram. Most forms of music and singing, though, fall between these clear categories and are controversial.⁵

Lamya al-Faruqi explained that 'The legitimacy of the non-musical genres was not questioned by the jurists, nor were all musical genres categorically condemned by them'⁶

Modern Scholars' Views

Scholars' opinions defer due to the interpretation of this verse:

“وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَيَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًا أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ”

“And of the people is he who buys the amusement of speech to mislead [others] from the way of Allah without knowledge and who takes it in ridicule. Those will have a humiliating punishment”.

The views can be categorized into two groups. The first group said that the verse refers to the prohibition of songs which was interpreted by the companion Ibn Mas'ūd. While the other group disagrees since this *Ayah*⁷ was revealed in Makkah, and as it is known, *Makki* verses mainly focus on *aqidah*⁸ more than on Islamic rules which means that the said verse is not about the prohibition of songs. Moreover, Shaykh Yusuf

⁴ (1985: 12). Al-Faruqi

⁵ (Al-Faruqi 1985: 1-13).

⁶

Lois Lamia Al-Faruqi (1986), Islamization Through the Sound Arts. Vo. 3, NO. 2, 1986. The American Journal of Social Sciences.p. 175

al-Qaradawi is one of the contemporary scholars who permit listening to songs as long as the lyrics do not promote indecency or contain forbidden (*haram*) or indecent words that lead to arousing of lower desires. However, Ibn Uthaymeen advised to not listen to *Nasyids* because it takes one away from the Quran, melody is similar to disallowed songs, and it causes to awaken lower desires. Then, he said if one wants to listen to it sometimes when he or she feels weak, it is permissible to do so but with one condition that it does not contain instrumental music.

It can be concluded that the ruling (*hukum*) of the songs, whether the music is included or not, is controversy and both sides have evidences to support their arguments.

Reasons against *Nasyid*:

The argument of the scholars that prohibit could be presented as follows:

1. Involving more and more people, especially children, keeping them busy with what could be, least to say, of a lesser benefit.
2. *Anasyid* (sing. *Nasyid*) are accompanied with musical toning and chanting (Eastern and Western beats) in the name of "culture" and "tradition." This is becoming more and more apparent, with bands competing in their selection of words and beats.
3. Remembrances of Allah are introduced in these *Anasyid*⁹ in ways clearly resembling the intoning and chanting of the Christians in their churches.
4. The congregational chanting and singing that takes place resembles to a great extent that which goes on in the circles of the mystic Sufis in their singing circles. Former "stars" are being more involved with the mystic Sufi ways through so-called "Islamic *Nasyid*."
5. Luring the children to sing, especially the young girls, imitating the base of the infamous Muslim and Non-Muslim singers.
6. Replacing the Qur'an with the so-called *Nasyid* in the *Da'wah* to the young, claiming that they don't respond to the Qur'anic texts, therefore, legitimizing their use. The same is done with the Sunnah, eventually turning people away from what constitutes the true life of the believers.

⁹ أنشودة" أو نشيدة. "A singular form of the Arabic word"

7. In many of these singing circles, musical instruments and intoning are gradually taking hold, something known to be forbidden in Islam, except for the duff for women.

8. The emergence of so-called professional singing groups performing at weddings, parties, schools and the like.

9. Development of so called more advanced ways of video singing as a modern way of contemplating and reflecting on the creation of Allah.

10. Allowing capturing pictures of young girls during different presentations of songs in itself is a *fitnah* (affliction and trial) and an opposition to the Islamic teachings. Some make movies and records of these young girls singing on special occasions.

11. Many untrue issues are presented in these songs through acting, or through exaggeration in praise.

12. Assuming in some cases the movements and walks of some of the losers from the known male and female singers. Imagine when this is done while chanting the remembrances of Allah!

13. Calling these Nasyid Islamic itself is a transgression, especially when they call it an "art" and a means of education and nourishment for the *Da'wah!* "This is an innovation in *din*, and this is from the *din* of the innovators of the Sufis."³ The companions chanted poetry of wisdom, courage, generosity and of *maru'ah* (describing good character), and not in congregations. They chanted poetry sometimes while working or during night travel. None of them claimed this "Islamic." Rather, everything takes its own particular ruling, whether it is innovated, allowable, recommended, obligated, disliked or forbidden. Therefore, that which may be allowable of it we do not call "Islamic" because if it is called so, people would think it to be from the *Din*. And to label any matter as Islamic, requires textual proofs.

History of Islamic Entertainment in Malaysia

As a matter of fact, this study solely focuses on one form of Islamic entertainment that is *Nasyid*. Hence, other forms of entertainment other than *Nasyid* are out of the scope of this study. However, a brief background about them could be useful if presented here.

The Emergence of Islamic *Nasyid* Groups in Malaysia

Historically, after the advent of Islam, this part of the Muslim world had made religion part and parcel of its identity. *Nasyid* prior to the 2nd World War was at first introduced as an activity during Quran, Islamic studies and Arabic language classes. During the post-World War II that is during the 1950s and 1960s *Nasyids* took another step where it was performed at Qu'ran reading competitions organized by the Religious Department at the state and national level. Islamic Resurgence or Islamic Movement in the Middle East had great influence on Malaysian Islamic *Nasyids* due to the fact that the Malaysian students who graduated from these countries upon returning home, with the hope to revitalize Islam, took many initiatives to develop *Nasyid* to what was resulted into a new era for *Nasyid* "*Nasyid Era Baru*."¹⁰

There is a claim that is hard to prove when an all-female *Nasyid* group from Singapore by the name of Al-Jawaher is believed to be the first to cut a record deal and record a full length album "Permata" or "Unggul." That was in 1979-1980.¹¹ But the serious initiative and real encouragement given to *nasyid* groups was the support provided by the then famous and later banned Islamic movement known as "Al-Arqam."

The emergence and the successful start of Raihan in 1997 have encouraged, according to Zulkiple, more groups to be formed soon such as Rabbani (1997), Hijjaz (1997), Brothers (1997), Saujana (1997), Diwani (1997), Al-Anwar Group (1997), In-Team (1998) Nowseeheart (1998), AlarmMe (1999), Jauhari (1999), Solehaah and Qatrunnada (date unknown).¹² However, there were few groups established earlier than Raihan such as The Zikr (1997), Ushrah al-soff (1994) and Suara Firdaus (1996), though not as strong as Raihan. Nevertheless, there is a different view that Nada Murni and The Zikr groups dominated the scene and

¹⁰ Tan Sool Beng, *Singing Islamic Modernity: Recreating Nasyid in Malaysia*
<http://kyotoreview.org/issue-8-9/singing-islamic-modernity-recreating-nasyid-in-malaysia/>

¹¹ <http://nasyidcafe.blogspot.my/2010/10/nasyid-cafe-history-of-contemporary.htm>

¹²Zulkiple, p. 54.

were the pioneering template for so many more new *Nasyid* groups that came immediately after them. Nada Murni released their debut titled *Kelahiran* whereas hot on Nada Murni's tail was The Zikr releasing their debut album called *Kenangan*. The songs were still mainly minimalistic and percussive.¹³

Currently, Nasyid groups are well known in Malaysia and their influential role has been appreciated and acknowledged to the extent that the government put them in its future plan when strategizing dimensions of holistic and comprehensive development. This development could be seen as a reflection of the new direction the Malaysian government pledged to take in light of its 2020 vision. In this regard, the government recognizes that rapid economic growth must be accompanied by social, cultural and psychological progress for a truly improved quality of life as announced by the Prime Minister's Department in 1996.¹⁴ The government clearly pointed out that Malaysia's path to modernization should be guided by spiritual, religious and moral consciousness. Islam was to play an essential role in realizing this vision.¹⁵

Rabbani

Rabbani is the famous and first organized Nasyid group known in modern history of Malaysia. This group was able to release its first album in 1997. They gained popularity when they were awarded many awards in appreciation of their marvelous performances and huge impact on the Malaysian society. The peak season of this group is believed to be in 2001-2003 not only for receiving several awards but also for being recognized as the largest in the Music Industry of Malaysia.

Raihan

The name from which this Nasyid group took its identity is purely Quranic. "Raihan" or "Fragrance of Heaven" is taken from Surah Al-Waqiah (فروح وريحان وجنة نعيم) perhaps the first organized Nasyid group in Modern history of Malaysia. When made its first appearance in October

¹³ Benign Nor Hafeez. <http://www.ummah.com/forum/showthread.php?275804-The-Malaysian-Nasyid-Cafe>

¹⁴ Minni Ang (2002), Introduction to Malaysian Music Musical Conservatoire Production. 3

¹⁵ Buliding 1

Malaysia.http://www.pmo.gov.my/GTP/documents/GTP%20Roadmap/GTP%20Roadmap_Chapter04.pdf

1996, the group had five members that took Malaysia by storm with the release of their debut album Puji-Pujian.

Raihan's original line-up comprised Nazrey Johani, Che Amran Idris, Abu Bakar Md Yatim, Amran Ibrahim, and Azhari Ahmad as the leader. Produced by Farihin Abdul Fattah, Puji-Pujian grossed sales of more than 750,000 units in Malaysia alone, with 200,000 units sold within the first two months after its launch, and 3,500,000 units have been sold worldwide, which makes them the most successful Malaysian artist in terms of album sales.

However, on 29 August 2001, one of the founding members, Azhari Ahmad, died of a myocardial infarction (heart attack) shortly after attending the Era Awards ceremony in Genting Highlands, Pahang. The remaining four members, Nazrey Johani, Che Amran Idris, Abu Bakar Md Yatim and Amran Ibrahim, have continued releasing album after album. So far, Raihan has released a total of 11 albums and has won many awards in Malaysia. To date, Raihan has won AIM Anugerah Kembara three times for their extensive international tours.

Nazrey Johani resigned from Raihan and was replaced by Nordin Jaafar. However, in early January 2007, Nordin Jaafar himself resigned from Raihan. He was replaced by Zulfadli Bin Mustaza.

Hijjaz

The establishment of Hijjaz goes back to the 1st of Ramadhan 1417 Hijrah (10th of January 1997). Four years later, on 15th February 2001, Salleh bin Ramli one of the group members had passed away. When their Pelita Hidup 3 album was produced, the demised was replaced by Muhammad Ariffin bin Ahmad Rahim. Hijjaz has produced a quality *nasyid* song with a deeper meaning that illustrates various Islamic values and virtues in propagating the teachings of Islam in their songs. They also encouraged Islamic morals and practices in their songs. They have made *nasyid* not only as a medium of *da'wah* but also as a means to promote Islam in a balance and moderate way. With this, people especially the young ones became interested in Islam and deepening the faith of Muslims. Before that they had joined a group named Nada Murni for over 10 years.

Challenges and Apostils

As a matter of fact, relevantization and marketability have not been easy task for these Islamic Nasyid groups specially in this contem-

porary world of high competition with the existence of well-established and obviously high profile artists, musicians and singers thus, they have encountered many challenges These challenges and obstacles faced by Rabbani, Raihan and Hijaz could be summarized as follows:

1. Copyrights
2. Plagiarism
3. Lack of facilities such as instrument and studio to record their song.
4. Publicity. Their Nasyids are hardly heard on the radio or even the television. It is because the radio and television company want to gain audiences more and more.
5. Lack of Audience
6. Lyrics no longer interesting & attractive
7. Financial constraints,
8. No new ideas
9. Competition with conventional or traditional singers.
10. Pressure of marketing strategy, there is an urgent need for these Nasyid groups to strategize the market demands so as to remain intact and relevant specially in these era of Western Music domination to fulfill the interest of society
11. It must be parallel with the Islamic Shariah
12. Old Style
13. The loss of their leaders like Asri for Rabbani
14. Strong competition from other Nasyid group like Maher Zain, Sami Youssef, Harris J., Mesut Kurtis, Yusuf Islam and many more
15. Public misconception about Nasyid that it is considered as an entertainment for religious people only, whereas, secular and traditional music are for all folks of societies. In events, such as wedding ceremony, people often do not prefer to be entertained by being given a lesson on values and moralities as they always get when attending religious talk or “ceramah” in Malay language.
16. People nowadays, are quite westernized, being materialistic and evaluate artists based on the attire they wear and the unique and expensive gadget they possess. The kind of attire wore does not look appealing for people to watch. Appealing in this context means to have nice and contemporary outfit
17. No real efforts have been done to commercialize Nasyid band.

Impacts of Rabbani, Raihan and Hijjaz

Entertainment is undeniably part of our lives. In the Islamic perspective, entertainment is permissible as far as the following elements are avoided:

1. Elements of Haram and harmful.
2. Consume too much of our time.
3. Consume resources.

A Muslim's worldly life is inseparable from the Hereafter. Thus, the spiritualism is not independent from the temporal. By virtue of its objectives that are to promote good morals and combat indecencies, Islamic *Nasyid* should be permissible and given whatever assistance.

It is undeniable that in this globalized village the youth and children are in dire need of entertainment and thus there must be something that can fulfill their demands.

People listen to music for different proposes and reasons. The youth particularly, listen to music for seeking inner peace, relaxation and escapism. Some *Nasyid* are in the form of story which facilitate the memorization of names, event and historical facts, the places in which the events took place as well as lessons to be drawn.

Early Muslim scholars including the leaders of the prominent four Islamic school of Jurisprudence were not in favor of musical instrument based on some Prophetic Hadith such as “التصفيق للنساء، والتسبيح للرجال” which is translated as “clapping is for women and *tasbih* (glorifying Allah by saying *subhan Allah*) is for men.” Nevertheless, Contemporary scholars like Shaykh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, have permitted it putting in mind the rapid change in today's world and that there must be an alternative to the conventional songs that have extraordinarily occupied Muslims' minds and souls. According to Qaradawi, Islamic *Nasyids* are like poetry, if it is sound then it is sound and acceptable. If there is anything objectionable in it then it is objectionable.¹⁶

With regard to the Islamic *Nasyid* in general and Rabbani, Raihan and Hijjaz in particular, though they have tremendously contributed in the past, there is an urgent appeal if these groups are willing to remain relevant, to come out with more attractive *Nasyid* which are up to date for it is boring if the listeners listen to the same *Nasyid* or song which were released ten or twenty years ago.

¹⁶ Shaykh Qaradawi

Despite facing many sorts of challenges be it internal or external, Rabbani, Raihan and Hijjaz succeeded to some extent in providing the alternative for the conventional and the so called-secular or Western songs. The lyrics of the *nasyids* they have set to music carry the message of Islam implicitly or explicitly.

**Components and Elements of their *Nasyid* or Areas Covered
Include the following**

The following wide ranges of topics and numerous aspects of life, included in the Islamic songs (*nasyid*) performed and presented by these *Nasyid* groups, is an indication of how creative were they.

1. Inclusion of three components of Islam; Aqidah (creeds), Ibadah (worship) and Ahklaq (morality)
2. Importance of Religion
3. Remembrance of Allah, The Almighty, The creator of the Universe
4. Instilling the love of Allah and Appreciation of His love to His servants
5. Knowledge about Pillars of Islam and Articles of Faith
6. Ability to easily memorize dua's (supplications)
7. Knowledge about Allah, His Essence, and Attributes.
8. Knowing and memorizing 99 beautiful names of Allah
9. Knowing and memorizing 25 names of Prophets
10. Knowing and memorizing 10 names of Angels
11. Knowledge about our Prophet and his Sirah (Biography)
12. Knowledge about the companions of the apostle of Allah and many other pious people.
13. Acceptance of the Sunnah as a source of knowledge
14. Love of Allah
15. Love of the Prophet
16. Calmness of the heart
17. The gear towards security and peace.
18. Sincerity in worshiping Allah
19. Love and mutual respect
20. Unity of the *Ummah* and Brotherhood/*Ukhuwwah*.
21. Promotion of peace and criminalize wars
22. Sincerity in loving others and in exciting one's tasks.
23. Tolerance towards all human including non-Muslims
24. Personality development
25. Strive for excellence

26. Equality and equity among Muslims even by standing in lines (*sufuf*) during the prayers.
27. Humbleness, humility and politeness
28. Obedience to parents
29. The love to practice noble deeds
30. Keeping promises
31. Taking care of children
32. Being a pious child
33. Repentance and admittance of sins
34. Care for the environment
35. Smile and giving Salam
36. Generosity and kindness
37. Preparation for the Day of Resurrection
38. Taking care of the orphans
39. Forgiveness
40. Divine light
41. Happiness
42. Light of life
43. Glad tidings and good promises for the adherents of Islam
44. Vicegerent of Allah
45. *Laylat al-Qadr* (Night of the power)
46. Warning against being so attached to *Dunya*
47. *Hijrah* (Migration from Makkah to Madinah)
48. Death of Prophet Mohamed
49. Life with and without revelation
50. The departure from this *Dunya*
51. Leadership qualities
52. Warning against hatred and envy
53. Fulfillment of promise
54. Support for Palestine
55. Warning against taking revenge
56. Respect for wives and taking care of them
57. Glorifying Allah
58. Appreciation of the bounties of Allah on Human being
59. Purpose of creation
60. Warning against the whispering of *Shaytan*
61. The blessing of an obedient child
62. The significance of knowledge
63. Regret for sins and wrong doing committed

64. The importance of sending Salam to the Prophet (*Salawat*)
65. Life on earth as only temporary
66. *Da'wah* (enjoying the good and forbidding the evil)
67. Being disciplined
68. *Istiqamah* (perseverance) Jihad (struggle) for the sake of Allah and Plan for a better life
69. Strengthen our mental, physical and spiritual capabilities
70. Appreciation of Islamic history and civilization
71. Encouragement to perform voluntary prayers (*Nawafil*) particularly *Tahajjud* (Late Night prayer)
72. Promoting *Du'a* contained in surah Al-Falaq
73. Wise time management
74. The five daily prayers
75. The five pillars of Islam
76. Enjoying life with some restriction
77. Story of *Ashab al-Kahf* (Companions of the Cave)
78. Advice for travelers
79. The significance of saying *Bismillah* before commencing any actions
80. Women should protect their honor, dignity and chastity
81. The diseases of the heart
82. Prophet Muhammad's Birth Day
83. The true nature of our existence; no one is ever lasting except Allah
84. Advice of lowering the gaze and looking only at permissible things
85. Nothing can help from the torment of the hell fire on the Day of Judgement except our good deeds
86. Advice for newly married couples: Seek Allah's pleasure and build a happy family life
87. Husband and wife's house is their paradise *بیتي جنتي*
88. Advice to seize FIVE before FIVE as stated in a Hadith
89. The significance of mothers and the love they carry for their children
90. The importance of *Tadabbur al-Qur'an* (Reflection upon the Qur'an)
91. Warning against the practices of favoritism by leaders
92. The significance of Hajj and its ritual acts
93. The advice to abandon the attitude of laziness
94. Leaders should defend their religion

95. The youth are the hope for the religion
96. Life is like a journey and each and every one of us is like a traveler
97. Do not judge others by their appearance
98. See in the nature the beauty of Allah
99. Give charity and do not forget the unfortunate
100. Advice to collect one's good deeds before DEATH so that he/she can answer the questions asked in the grave.

Conclusion

This paper has arrived at the conclusion that *nasyids* inspire the listeners particularly the children and the youth to many noble actions and inculcate into them many good ideas. As a matter of fact, the first idea advocated by the true religion of Islam is absolutely the idea of *Tawhid*,¹⁷ oneness of Allah and the child by virtue of his social belonging might reach this idea to supply his innate sense of it. It is awesome when the *nasyids* the child listens to and sings commend this idea because it is the building block in the foundation of the spiritual composition of the child

Rabbani, Raihan and Hijjaz noticeably were very creative in addressing various issues pertaining wider aspects of Muslims' life and they contributed a lot in the spread of Islamic values and virtues as well as in the formation and reshaping of young Muslim's personality. These groups have remarkably enlightened the Malaysian society and through their tireless efforts were able to produce more than 49 albums with more than 340 *nasyids*. These *nasyid* groups have been facing various types of challenges and have passed through difficulties to produce *nasyids* of high quality of *nasyids* that have real impact on their fan and listeners.

¹⁷ http://www.alukah.net/literature_language/0/4167/#ixzz3vhKe258X

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**Creativity In Islamic Entertainment: A Case Study of Malaysian
Nasyid Groups (Rabbani, Raihan And Hijjaz)**

519

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