



Reflection on IIUM Philosophy of Education in a Historical Context

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Abstract

It is a basic psychological premise that human being acts the way he thinks; in other words, our acts explain the way we think. This premise emphasizes the assumption that problems of Muslim societies are mainly result of the prevailing thoughts which in turn are production of education philosophies. Whitehead emphasizes that the mentality of an epoch springs from the view of the world, which is in fact, dominant in the educated sections of the community in question. Hence, the contemporary global crises, especially in the Muslim world, have shifted the attention once again to the question of education and initiated many studies on this topic. The proper understanding of such problems, however, might not be possible without understanding the underlying philosophy of education, which deals with the major educational questions about the recipient, the content, and goals of education. The objective of this paper is to highlight the education philosophy of International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) as an example of new model of Islamic education of higher learning that integrates knowledge with values and modernity with classic. The paper is designed to provide the basic information on IIUM philosophy, aiming at creating awareness on significance of this topic. It does not review or evaluate the theory of '*Islamization and integration of knowledge*' (IOK); rather it presents the structure and the general framework of IIUM educational philosophy and its implications on practical challenges of modern Muslim societies in the globalizing world. This exposition would be in a historical context of Islamic education and development of its reformation thought.

Keywords: *educational philosophy, integration, worldview, discriminative mind, balanced personality.*

Abstrak

Psikologi asas premis menunjukkan bahawa manusia bertindak atas pemikiran; dalam erti kata lain, tindakan seseorang menerangkan cara berfikir. Premis ini menekankan masalah masyarakat Islam terutama mempunyai pemikiran yang lazim akan menghasilkan banyak falsafah pendidikan. Whitehead menekankan bahawa mentaliti zaman yang muncul dari pandangan dunia yang sebenar, dominan terhadap masyarakat berpendidikan merupakan satu persoalan. Oleh itu, krisis global kontemporari, terutamanya di dunia Islam, telah mengalih perhatian sekali lagi kepada persoalan pendidikan yang memulakan kajian berkaitan dengan topik ini. Pemahaman yang wajar terhadap sesuatu masalah itu, bagaimanapun, tidak mungkin dapat dilaksanakan tanpa memahami falsafah yang menjadi asas kepada pendidikan yang membincangkan persoalan pendidikan utama mengenai penerima, kandungan, dan matlamat pendidikan. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk menekankan falsafah pendidikan di Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIAM) sebagai contoh model baru pendidikan Islam pengajian tinggi yang mengintegrasikan pengetahuan dengan nilai-nilai dan kemodenan klasik. Dalam erti kata lain, kajian yang direka untuk menyediakan maklumat asas mengenai falsafah UIAM, bertujuan mewujudkan kesedaran; ia tidak mengulas atau menilai teori pengislaman dan integrasi pengetahuan (IOK); sebaliknya ia membentangkan struktur asas dan rangka kerja umum falsafah pendidikan UIAM dan implikasinya terhadap cabaran praktikal masyarakat Islam moden dalam dunia global. Penjelasan ini akan berada dalam konteks sejarah pendidikan Islam dan perubahan pembangunan pemikiran.

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Kata kunci: *falsafah pendidikan, penyepaduan, pandangan kehidupan, pemikiran diskriminatif, personality yang seimbang.*

Introduction

The term '*philosophy of education*' can be understood in various contexts; but for purposes of this paper, we may approach it through the basic components of education. The foundation of teaching and learning is actually established on four basic components, which are (1) the recipient, (2) education objectives (3) the content, and (4) the methodⁱ. These components constitute the basic subject matter of educational philosophy. To set up education objectives and policies, we must have clear view on all these points. We need to identify carefully the desired dispositions of the recipient that to be formed and nurtured. We also need to know the content of knowledge (curriculum) that necessary to produce such dispositions. Finally, we need to develop an effective method of communication to inculcate the desired dispositions for desired goals of education. *Philosophy of education* is, therefore, used for standards based on which the basic educational questions are answeredⁱⁱ. The principal task of educational philosophy, in this sense, is to investigate the necessary conditions for attaining educational goals.

Nations are different in their educational policies based on the manner of dealing with the above four basic components of education, especially the content and educational objectives. There are many factors involving in formulating the basic structure of these components, such as worldview, cultural values, the urgent needs of society, etc. The Islamic philosophy of education, however, depends on both reason and Divine revelation to deal with the education questions. In other words, the intellectual exercise of reason in Islam is guided by principles of Divine revelation. The Islamic philosophy of education, therefore, exposes man for two tasks: first, to answer the basic cosmic questions about being and meaning of life; second, it enables man to understand his own self and his role in this created world. Philosophy of IIUM aims to emphasize these two modes of learning, which constitute the foundations of knowledge and values, which are essential for a meaningful life. Thus, IIUM philosophy is strategically relevant to address many problems of Muslim societies as well the global community. This is the basic assumption of the paper. For examination of the above assumption, the conceptual and epistemological frameworks of IIUM philosophy are presented. Policies and practical steps to realizing this philosophy are also presented.

Historical background of IIUM philosophy

History of societies and civilizations shows that the educated mind throughout human history has been the basic mechanism for nation building and strategic plan for society development. Reformation of education systems is necessary to reactivate the intellectual stagnation and its subsequent implications on human society and life. Intentional Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) was established in 1983 to promote an integrated model of Islamic education of higher learning. The educational philosophy of this model is based on '*Islamization and integration of knowledge*' (IOK). This concept is used as philosophical framework and mechanism for two basic purposes: a) transformation of the classical approaches of learning in Islamic education system to face the intellectual challenges of modern life; and b) integration of Islamic values into modern secular sciences and technologies to serve principles of the Islamic worldview.

Many works have been produced throughout the last three decades on the topic of (IOK)ⁱⁱⁱ. Some of these works have been concerned with the theoretical part of this philosophy, i.e. the nature, method, and objectives of Islamization and integration of knowledge. However, the curriculum and educational practices in IIUM are totally based on philosophy of integrated model^{iv}. The final objective of this model is to produce interdisciplinary intellectuals who are imbued with knowledge, morality and professionalism, at both local and global levels. The Qur'anic inspirations on knowledge inquiry, the general principle of Islamic worldview, the useful history of science and human civilization, the inspiring works and practices of early Muslim scholars, the great heritage of Islamic civilization; all these are the driving forces for realization of IIUM educational philosophy.

The reformation process

The proper understanding of educational philosophy of IIUM should be based on its historical background, i.e. history of Islamic education and its reformation thought. The question of intellectual and educational reformation has been an important agenda throughout the history of Islamic thought. It was asserted early by the Prophet (PBUH) who declared that there will be a reformer (*mujadid*) at every epoch^v. This prophecy has been taken seriously by all Muslim thinkers in theory and practice. Education is the key to the intellectual reformation and society development. Establishment of IIUM is regarded as a continuous process of Islamic formation thought. For purposes of this paper, the history of Islamic reformation can be

divided generally into three epochs: classical, modern and contemporary. The good examples of reformation thought in the classical history of Islamic civilization are such as efforts of al-Imam al-Shafie' who developed the general principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*Usul al-Fiqh*) and al-Imam al-Ghazali (d. 1111 ca) who exposed the question of reformation in his book "*Revival of Religious Sciences*". All such revival efforts are necessary when the Islamic thought is challenged by the problem of intellectual 'stagnation' and lack of scientific thinking. The reformation question came into focus again in the opening of the nineteenth century, when the entire Muslim world rediscovered its real position through confrontation with colonial powers. Lack of technology to protect Muslim lands against the enemy shifted the attention to thinking problems and in turn to problems in education systems. The reformation task was handled by Muslim modernists such al-Kawakibi, Jamaluddin al-Afghani, Muhammad Iqbal, Muhammad Abdu, and others^{vi}.

Muslim modernists expressed their dilemma in various ways and through various means, the best of which can be found in a letter sent by Shaikh Muhammad Bisyouny Umran from Java - Indonesia to Shaikh Muhammad Rashid Rida in 1928, which answered by Amir Shakib Arsalan in his book entitled "*OUR DECLINE: Its Causes and Remedies*". Shaikh Umran was referring to the holy Qur'an when he explained the deplorable conditions of the Muslim communities at the opening of twentieth century. He was indicating that Muslim societies were not interpreting this glorious Book in their practical lives. Quoting from Qur'anic verses such as: "*The honour, power and glory belong to God and His Apostle and the Believers*"^{vii}, and the verse: "*You are the best nation raised among nations*"^{viii}, Shaikh Bisyouny lamented: Where is the honour of the Muslims today, while all Muslim countries have become a subject of colonization, and a Muslim is degraded and possesses nothing that entitles him the honour and glory promised by God? What are the causes which have led to the weakness and decline of all Muslims in both religious and worldly affairs? What are the causes of the tremendous progress of the Europeans, Americans and Japanese? Is it possible for Muslims to be like them in term of material progress if they follow them in acquiring its means, while at the same time preserving their own religion of Islam? (*Muhammad Bisyouny Umran, Sanbesi, West Borneo, 21st Rabi al-Akhir 1348 H*)^{ix}

The proper answers to these central questions are yet to be given, but in fact new educational challenges

have emerged due to globalization process and free movement of ideas and values.

The first world conference on Muslim education

The reformation mission, then, passed through to the post-colonial and contemporary Muslim reformists^x. The *First World Conference on Muslim Education*, which held in *Makkah* in 1977, might be regarded as starting point and corner stone of the counterparty period of reformation in Islamic thought. The contemporary Muslim intellectuals have made considerable efforts to identify major causes of the problem. Of course, there are many historical and cultural factors behind the problem, but the major source of the dilemma, as seen by the contemporary Muslim thinkers, was an intellectual problem. The following statement of one of the modern Muslim reformists summarizes the nature of the problem:

The real challenge is intellectual in nature, and the positive resistance must be mounted from the fortification not merely of political power, but of power that is founded upon right knowledge. We are now again at the crossroads of history, and awareness of Islamic identity is beginning to dawn in the consciousness of emergent Muslims. Only when the sun of knowledge will there emerge from among us men and women of spiritual and intellectual maturity and integrity who will be able to play their role with wisdom and justice in upholding the truth. Such men and women will know that they must return to the early masters of the religious and intellectual tradition of Islam, which was established upon the sacred foundation of the Holy Qur'an and the Tradition of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), in order to learn from the past and be able to equip spiritually and intellectually for the future; they will realize that they must not simply appropriate and imitate what modern secular Western civilization has created, but must regain by exerting their own creative knowledge, will, and imagination what is lost of the Muslim's purpose of life, their history, their values and virtues embodied in their sciences, for what is lost can never be regained by blind imitation and the raving of slogans (Al-Attas 1993)^{xi}.

Following are the major causes of education problem, which subsequently lead to the intellectual crises, as they found:

1. Secularization of sciences and dualistic education system;
2. Lack of awareness on the glorious history of Islamic civilization;
3. The problem of methodology and lack of creative thinking^{xii}.

The First World Conference on Islamic Education was held to deal with these problems. The three major objectives of the conference were:

1. Islamic concept of education: definition, aims and objectives;
2. Means of realizing these concepts in practice;
3. Mutual cooperation and understanding to realize education objectives^{xiii}

This conference was one of the most important events in the contemporary history of Islamic education, which addressed various theoretical and practical questions on education. Many activities, such as seminars, conference and workshops, were conducted to realize outcomes of Makkah Conference. The most important of these follow-up conferences on Islamic education are that which held in Islamabad 1981, in Dhaka 1982, in Jakarta 1983, and in Cairo 1985^{xiv}. However, one of the major outcomes of makkah conference was establishment of IIUM in 1983 to provide a new integrated model of higher learning and as strategic plan for intellectual reformation.

The conceptual framework of IIUM philosophy

The key concepts that have been used to reflect the general framework of IIUM educational philosophy are such as Islamization, integration, worldview, philosophy, epistemology and education. Highlighting these basic concepts may contribute in proper understanding of IIUM philosophy and remove any misconception.

Philosophy

Unlike the conventional thoughts, the term '*philosophy*' in Islamic context is generally used for reflective thinking and reasoning that guided by principles of Divine revelation. The intellectual contemplation of the world in order to put things in their proper places, especially in relation to the Creator, is known in Islamic thought as '*hikmah*' which means (wisdom). The holy Qur'an has used this term in many verses and emphasized that the Prophet (peace and blessing upon him) is sent with both revealed knowledge and wisdom (*al-kitab & al-hikmah*) as guidance to entire human community^{xv}. Therefore, the Islamic educational philosophy is generally guided by divine revelation. The advantage of this Divine guidance in learning process is to introduce human intellect to both physical and metaphysical worlds^{xvi}. In this context, (IIUM) philosophy is considered as a continuous process of Islamic thought and integral part of Islamic education philosophy.

The worldview

Philosophy of education must be based on a sublime worldview, which provides the proper educational objectives and meaningful ends for learning. In other words, knowledge must grow and flourish in a content of certain worldview or paradigm, which provides the value system and the epistemological framework of inquiry^{xvii}. The worldview explains the overall perspective of the world that enables thinkers of certain time to examine their basic assumptions. It provides the framework of ideas and thoughts through by which man interprets the world and interacts with it. The worldview, also, provides the framework for generating new ideas and applying the knowledge. Some philosophers define worldview as "*a system of answers given by an individual to question he/she counters in life*"^{xviii}. Of course, these answers can be affected by many factors, such as education, religion, and culture. The study of a worldview, in this sense, is the study of answers to the basic questions in human life, such as purpose of life and the final destination of the universe; therefore, all human activities can be traced back ultimately to the worldview. The human conduct is ultimately reducible to a worldview, because it is the only framework within which the human mind can operate in order to attain knowledge^{xix}.

The sublime worldview, in Islamic perspective, can be developed only by Divine revelation; but process of reflective thinking, which guided by principles of revelation is necessary. The systematic intellectual exercise is essential to maintain the original worldview as propagated by the Prophets. To develop a progressive and knowledge oriented society we need to redevelop a systematic / scientific worldview. According to Alparslan, the reflective thinking is necessary to maintain the worldview because human societies are not static or stable, as there is always some social change that results in the change of individuals. The worldview of a society must renew itself in parallel with social change; otherwise it will no longer satisfy the intellectual needs of individual members of that society^{xx}.

Alparslan Acikgenc, his article "*A Concept of Philosophy in the Qur'anic Context*", has raised very important questions with regard to the crucial role of worldview on the development of human society. Following statement may summarize his idea in this point: "Systematic research is always necessary in scientific discovery, especially in the natural phenomenon, because system turns to give both standards of true knowledge and dynamism of inquiry. The worldview plays this crucial role in development of human society. If the process of

learning (answering the basic questions) has taken place properly, the worldview of individuals in society develop systematically or scientifically rather than naturally, i.e. unintentionally. This scientific worldview will provide society with necessary dynamism, which allows it to flourish. But as individuals of society are always changing, the worldview of society will change accordingly. This means the society will lose its dynamism, therefore intellectual reflection 'philosophy' is essential to reactivate the worldview and to create dynamism in the society. When individuals of society regain their clear and distinct concepts and ideas within a systematic unity, they become morally and intellectually dynamic. This in turn yields a progressive and knowledge oriented society, as well as the case with early Islamic civilization" (Alparslan 1994, p 178). The educational philosophy of IIUM is aiming at reactivation of this dynamic role of Islamic worldview.

Education

The term 'Education' is generally conceived with consideration of two types of objectives in the process of learning: the individual and society or the personal and the public interest. With consideration to the first part (individual), we conceive 'education' as 'a process of knowledge transmission'; but based on the objectives of second part (society) we conceive it as 'a process of transmission of values'^{xxi}. Terms used for these two considerations in Islamic educational tradition are: '*Ta`lim*' and '*Ta`dib*' respectively. The term '*Trabiyyah*' as used by the holy Qur`an emphasizes the comprehensive care and nurturing that provided for physical, intellectual, and emotional growth of a living things^{xxii}. According to the modern studies, the first type of learning is called the person-centered education, which primarily stresses on needs and capacities of the recipient; while the second is known as society-centered, whereby education is conceived primarily as a vehicle to produce good citizens for community purposes (Wan Daud 1998, p 121)^{xxiii}. From the Islamic view point, knowledge must be associated with values; therefore, the major objective of education is not only to transmit the knowledge but to produce a balanced personality (*insan saleh*) and balanced society (*ummatan wasata*)^{xxiv}. Seyyed Hossein Nasr summaries the general characteristics of Islamic education as following:

In Islam, knowledge was never divorced from the sacred and both the whole educational system and the sciences that it made possible breathed in a universe of sacred presence. Whatever known possesses a profound religious character, not only because the subject of every type of knowledge is created by God but most of all because the intelligence by which man knows is itself a Divine gift. Being related to holiness and hence wholeness, Islamic education has to be concerned with whole being of the man whom it sought to educate. Its goal is not only the training of mind but that of the whole being of the person. The Islamic education system never divorced the training of the mind from that of the soul and the whole being of the person. It never considered the transmission of knowledge or its possession to be legitimate without the possession of appropriate moral and spiritual qualities. In fact, possession of knowledge without these qualities is considered dangerous in Islamic educational philosophy (Nasr1994, pp122-124).

The major objective of education in Islam is to create a balanced personality and balanced nation, but how we can achieve this noble goal is the basic challenge.

The epistemological framework of IIUM philosophy

'Islamization and integration of knowledge' is the educational philosophy of IIUM which inspired by the holy Qur`an. The following statement has outlined this educational philosophy:

"The establishment of the international Islamic university in Malaysia, like the Islamic Bank, is undoubtedly one of the outstanding achievements in the Muslim world today that we can all feel proud of. It is a fulfillment of a long-left need of the Muslim community in Malaysia for a model of Islamic university education that can serve as an alternative to the existing conventional education based on the Western and secular model. This model is based on classical Islamic philosophy of knowledge and education which is grounded in the worldview of the Qur`an and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him). This unique philosophy of knowledge and education as expounded in the First Conference on Islamic Education in Mecca in 1977 stresses, among other things:

- a. The unity of knowledge in which the ‘revealed knowledge’ becomes the most important component and the centre of Islamic education.
- b. The purpose of acquiring knowledge as a means of assisting the seeker to play the fundamental role as Allah’s servant (*‘Abd*) and vicegerent (*Khalifah*) on earth.
- c. The all-embracing scope of Islamic education as the process of nurturing the cognitive, affective, spiritual and behavioral aspects of the human personality in the light of Islamic *‘Aqidah’* (creed), *Shariah* (law) and *Akhlaq* (ethics). The end results of this process of education are personalities who are not only properly equipped with useful knowledge and specialized skills but also highly committed to Islamic values, injunctions and practices, and at the same time imbued with the manners (*Adab*) and morality (*Akhlaq*) consistent with the principle of God-consciousness (*Taqwa*).
- d. The quest for knowledge is regarded as an act of worship (*Ibadah*)^{xxvi}.

The above principals have outlined the educational philosophy of IIUM, and decide its objective, mission and vision. The Islamic theory of knowledge is, actually, based on these principals which extracted from the holy Qur’an and Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH).

Vision

Inspired by the worldview of *Tawhid* and Islamic philosophy of the unity of knowledge, as well as its concepts of holistic education, the University aims at becoming *a leading international centre of excellence* in education, research and innovation^{xxvii}; which seeks to restore the dynamic and progressive role of the *Ummah* in all branches of knowledge. (The *Memorandum*, p3)

Mission

Towards actualizing the University’s vision, the IIUM endeavors:

It is hoped that the Muslim graduates of the university will function as professionals in the service of Allah in whatever profession they will eventually serve. Indeed, the whole university set-up is to be viewed as a trust (*Amanah*) from Allah (s.w.t), which specially designed to serve the cause of Islam and to work towards ‘the restoration of the primacy of Islam in all fields of knowledge’.^{xxv}

Islamization and integration of knowledge

The major aim of Islamization and Integration philosophy is to produce balanced intellectuals of knowledge and morality in Muslim communities. The third article of IIUM constitution, known as “*Memorandum and Article of Association* (MOA)” is read as following:

- (i) The philosophy of the university shall be based on, but not confined to, the meaning and spirit of Surah Al-‘Alaq verses 1-5 of the Holy Qur’an.
- (ii) This can be explained, among others, as following:
 - a. Knowledge shall be propagated in the spirit of *Tawhid*, leading towards the recognition of Allah as the Absolute Creator and Master of mankind.
 - b. Knowledge is a trust “*Amanah*” from Allah and its development shall be in conformity with the purpose behind Allah’s creation of the universe.
 - c. Knowledge should be utilized by man as the servant (*‘Abd*) of Allah and vicegerent (*Khalifah*) on earth, in accordance with the will of Allah.
 - (a) To undertake the special and greatly needed task of reforming contemporary Muslim mentality and integrating Islamic revealed knowledge and human sciences in a positive manner;
 - (b) To produce better quality intellectuals, professionals and scholars of distinction by integrating quality of faith (*Iman*), knowledge (*‘Ilm*) and good character (*Akhlaq*) to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in the Muslim world;
 - (c) To promote the concept of Islamization of human knowledge in teaching, research, consultancy, dissemination of knowledge and the development of academic excellence in the University;
 - (d) To nurture the quality of holistic excellence imbued with Islamic moral-spiritual values, in learning, teaching, research, consultancy, publication, administration and student life;
 - (e) To exemplify an international community of dedicated intellectuals, scholars, professionals, officers and staff motivated by the Islamic worldview and code of ethics as an integral part of their work culture;
 - (f) To enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilizational dialogues in Malaysia as well as across communities and nations;
 - (g) To develop an environment which instills commitment for life-long learning and a deep sense of social responsibility among staff and students.

The above Mission statements are summarized as consisting of the following major goals:

- (i) Integration;
- (ii) Internationalization;
- (iii) Islamization; and
- (iv) Comprehensive Excellence.

(*The Memorandum*, pp3-5)

Objectives of IIUM

The emphasis on *Islamization* and *integration* is reflected again explicitly in the objectives of the University, in article (6) of IIUM constitution; following are examples:

- (a) To provide foundational, undergraduate, postgraduate and other programmes with Islam as the guiding principle in their formulation and implementation;
- (b) To establish University Authority, other bodies or committees for the University and to make Rules and Regulations thereto and to do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the management, administration and the attainment of the objects of the University;
- (c) To establish the primacy of Islam in all fields of knowledge; to continue with the mission of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him); and to promote the tradition of Islam to seek knowledge and truth as reflected in pioneering works of early Islamic scholars and thinkers;
- (d) To widen the options in higher education and to achieve academic excellence;
- (e) To carry out all activities through teaching and learning, research, consultancy, advisory, technical services, publications, conferences and extension activities to promote the advancement and unification of knowledge and theology in arts and humanities, sciences and technology by infusing Islamic values and principles in their broadest sense. (*Memorandum*, pp5-13)

IIUM policies and guidelines on Islamization

After three decades from the establishment of the University, the IIUM Policies and Guidelines on Islamization was published in 2013, as an expansion of IIUM Constitution on Islamization matter, to provide the conceptual and practical guidelines for realization of Islamization mission of the University. Four basic reasons are given for necessity of producing such a written policies and guidelines on this matter:

- a. Clarifying meaning of Islamization of knowledge and its implications in the University's context;

- b. Underscoring its centrality and supreme importance as endorsed in the University's Constitution;
- c. Providing an authoritative official document to assist the University's community as a whole in implementing and fulfilling the mission as the University moves forward to greater heights; and
- d. Reminding the academic and administrative leaders and managers to give due attention to the actualization of IIUM's *raison d'être* and justification for its establishment in 1983, under whatever circumstances the University would find itself in the future^{xxviii}.

In fact the University's Constitution, i.e. "*Memorandum and Articles of Association*", is the first official document which provides the basis and legal justification for Islamization policies and guidelines^{xxix}. The document of policies consists of two main parts: the first part contains eight (8) main policy statements, regarding Islamization in IIUM; while the second part contains general guiding principles for the University's community in implementing the Islamization mission through various initiatives in academic and non-academic areas^{xxx}. Guidelines are designed to facilitate implementation of the Islamization mission of the University to IIUM community. The guidelines are categorized in four major groups as following:

- a. Guidelines in terms of definition and connotation;
- b. Guidelines in terms of scope and framework;
- c. Guidelines in terms of ways to implement Islamization of knowledge; and
- d. Guidelines in terms of models of integration and Islamization of knowledge^{xxxi}.

For example, the document provides the operational definition of '*Islamization*' as following:

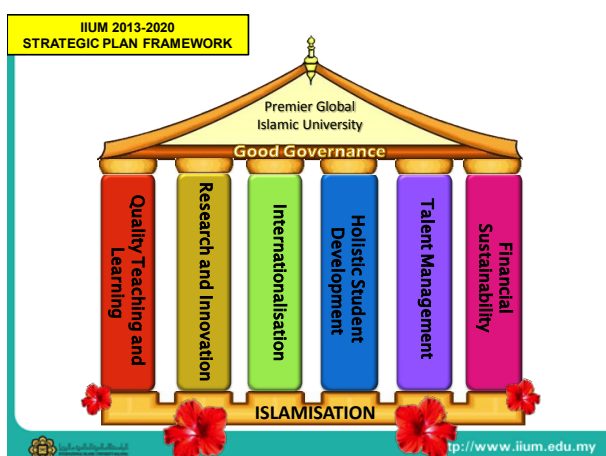
In general, Islamization refers to a process or any kind of initiative, which is meant to make the academic and non-academic aspects of the University in consonance with the worldview, the fundamental principles, ethical values and norms of Islam (IIUM Policies, p17)^{xxxii}.

In fact, one of the major objectives of Islamization of knowledge (IOK) as mission of IIUM is to remove the unnecessary dichotomy between knowledge and values, which has been dominant in modern secular education, which might be mainly responsible from the contemporary global crises.

The operational framework of IIUM philosophy

The distinguishing feature of the operational framework of IIUM philosophy is found in its practical dimension where the theoretical ideas are developed further into practice. Education programmes, curriculums, and course outlines have been developed to teach integrated knowledge to produce interdisciplinary scholars. Many conferences, seminars, and workshops were conducted. Many textbooks and articles have written on various topics to clarify the concepts and to put the ideas into realization. It might be hard to make a comprehensive assessment for IOK process in the current context, but no doubt there are encouraging results in the practical dimension as well as challenges.

Various practical steps have made recently by top authorities of IIUM to promote the Islamization and Integration mission of the University. It was declared that 'Islamization' agenda was not one of the six strategic pillars of IIUM but constitute the 'foundation' for all the other pillars of Strategic Plan 2013-2020. It also declared that IIUM is working to be a premier global Islamic university.



These practical steps were emphasized by organizing *The First World Congress on Integration and Islamisation of Acquired Human Knowledge* (FWCII 2013), which considered as culmination and new milestone of three decade of development as well the beginning of a more systematic, concerted and globalised intellectual transformation agenda for the further development of Islamic epistemology and *Tawhīdic* paradigm^{xxxiii}. Based on 'Islamization' philosophy, IIUM is considered, not only as institution of higher learning but, most importantly, as commitment for revival of Islamic thought and restoring the dynamic role of the Islamic worldview as inspiring source of knowledge, values and civilization.

The integrated knowledge

The Islamic philosophy of education is, generally, based on Qur'anic classification of the world into two basic parts: visible and invisible worlds. Human being needs to learn both worlds for meaningful life. One of these worlds is accessible through faculties of knowledge, while the other is understandable only by assistant of Divine revelation. Therefore, the area of knowledge (content learning), must includes both realms of physics and metaphysics or seen and unseen. Since the unseen world cannot be known in the same manner of seen world, it cannot be a subject matter of the natural or experimental sciences^{xxxiv}.

Beside the various classifications of knowledge, the two modes of classification, which might be more useful to IIUM philosophy in my view are as following: First, division entire human knowledge into theoretical and practical sciences, which adopted by early Muslim theologian and philosophers. The major objective of the practical science, known as virtue ethics, is knowledge of human character for purification of soul and moral development. This classification is useful with 'Islamization agenda' at personal level for individual development, or what is known as 'Islamization of the Islamizer'. The second division of sciences that might be useful to IIUM philosophy is classification according to Harvard Committee Report, which divides all science based in their method of inquiry. This approach is useful for Islamization of curriculum (the content) and development of effective research methodology.

The area of learning, according to Harvard Committee Report, was classified into three basic disciplines according their method of investigation: natural science, social studies, and the humanities. The study of the natural sciences aims at understanding the physical environment, so that human may have a suitable relation to it. The study of the social sciences is intended to produce an understanding of social environment and of human institutions in general, so that we may develop a proper relation to society. Finally, the purpose of the humanities is to enable man to understand his own self, so that he can understand his inner aspirations and ideals^{xxxv}. Actually, this classification is relevant to IIUM philosophy because it aiming at introducing human being to the three major phenomena of the created world: the natural, human and social. Methods of investigating these phenomena are established on different degrees of certainty; therefore, they constitute the three principal areas of learning, beside revealed knowledge.

Balanced personality

Religious extremism is emerging again as a global phenomenon in the contemporary societies. Its symptoms are obviously seen in many of Muslim communities. The most strategic objective of education in such situation, in the era of free movement of ideas and cultures, is to build a mature and discriminative mind that capable of making the right choice for meaningful life. Discriminative mind is a result of right mental and moral habitudes, which called “balance/ justice” by philosophers^{xxxvi}. Creating a balanced personality is essential to face all challenges of globalization. The major question of modern educational philosophy is therefore, how to achieve this noble goal. Actually, this is the major question of the Islamic philosophy of education. A careful study of Qur`anic verses and Sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) on this matter reveals that the final objective of Islamic education system is to create a balanced personality and balanced society as well. Unlike the material objects, creating a balance in a human and social phenomenon always depends on various factors. In fact, this might be the major problem that has been associated with the contemporary Islamic education systems. This assumption can be established on two bases: firstly, the idea of balanced personality and balanced nation that emphasized by the original sources of Islam has not given its due consideration in education systems, and has been neglected in many cases^{xxxvii}. The second factor is that, actually, the centre of the ‘balance’ itself is not static; it is changeable over the time based on changing circumstances of the community; therefore, it needs a continuous review and rebalance.

For these two points, the modern Muslim education should investigate more on how to create a balanced personality and balanced society. The basic questions in this regard are: what do we mean by ‘balanced personally’, what are the characteristics and the necessary means to develop such personally? To create balanced personality, of course we must consider all major aspect of humanity in education process: intellectual, physical, spiritual, and emotional. The necessary content of knowledge, which satisfies all these aspect cannot be found in science alone or in religious teaching alone, but in both. In other words, the experimental and experiential knowledge must work together for right mental and moral habitudes (knowledge and values). Relevant data to develop an answer for questions of balanced personality can be found in views of early Muslim theologians and philosophers^{xxxviii}. But current situation in Muslim world, with regard to science and technology, suggests focusing on intellectual

characters of discriminative mind. To provide some guidelines for this, we refer to the Report of Harvard Committee on general education, which has identified traits of mind that should be fostered by education for modern society, as following:

1. Ability to think effectively;
2. Ability to communicate effectively;
3. Ability to make relevant judgements to discriminate among values.

These intellectual traits are not separable in practice and are not to be developed in isolation^{xxxix}.

Effective thinking

The Report explains effective thinking as following: By effective thinking we mean, in the first place, logical thinking: the ability to draw sound conclusions from premises. Logical thinking is the capacity to extract universal truths from particular cases and, in turn, to infer particulars from general laws. Yet by logical thinking we do not mean the equipment of the specialist or what a student would learn by taking a course in formal logic. We are concerned with the student who is going to be a worker, or a businessman, or a professional man, and who does not necessarily look forward to a career in scholarship or in pure science; as a plain citizen he will practice his logical skills in practical situations: in choosing a career, in deciding whom to vote for, or what house to buy, or even in choosing a wife (spouse)^{xl}.

Communicative mind

The ability to express yourself obviously and transmit your views and ideas efficiently, through all means of communication so that can be understood by others clearly without confusing. Conversely, it also means the ability to listen to others to understand their views, without confusing. This characteristic is actually inseparable from effective thinking, because to speak clearly we must have clear ideas. You cannot say something unless you have something to say; but in order to express your ideas properly you also need some skill in communication (Conant, p 67).

Relevant judgement

Making a relevant judgment means to make a right choice among many that available, such as the flying ideas and values of the globalizing world. Of course this is definitely not an easy task, but Islamic philosophy of education can play in important role in this situation because its major aim is to develop a balanced personality. Relevant judgement is every important, because it influence our way of life. It involves the ability to bring the whole range of ideas

upon the area of experience to make the right choice, which leads to meaningful life. Recognizing the balance in all human aspects might be a reasonable standard for choice. The essential thing is that relevant judgment thinkers are constantly be aware of the ultimate objectives; they never let means to obscure and hide the ends, and be persistent in directing their attentions to the ends not means, or in philosophical term, from the symbols to the things they symbolize (Ibid, p 69).

Conclusion

International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) is among few institutions of higher learning that has been promoting the integrated model of higher education throughout the last three decades. Aiming at total growth of personality, IIUM has been working for intellectual reformation to reactivate the dynamic role of Islamic civilization. The integration process in IIUM has both theoretical and practical aspects. No doubt that there are considerable achievements in both aspects, but their quality and value are yet to be identified. Also, there are challenges and possible shortcomings along the way. Beside integrated curriculums designed for academic purposes, there are many concrete factors which indicate the progress in IIUM mission, such as establishing Centre of Islamization; Halal Institute, Ibadah camps for spiritual enhancement of IIUM staff, and many other activities and programs, which promote the University philosophy. On the other hand, there are challenges such as lack of awareness on IIUM philosophy and mission among the staff; the immeasurable nature of Islamization and integration mission according to the international ranking measurements; and lack of research grants and incentives for this area. Careful and selective application of resolutions of *The First World Congress* (FWC 2013) might be useful to overcome some of these challenges.

One of the basic challenges, however, is lack of integrated textbooks which capable of producing the interdisciplinary professionals and spiritually balanced intellectuals. The steering committee of the *First World Conference on Muslim Education*, which held in Makkah in 1977, emphasized on this point as follows:

It is strongly felt that it is necessary for the Muslims to have a truly Islamic education. And education can be truly Islamic only if Muslim scholars can produce Islamic concepts for all branches of human knowledge and Muslim countries disseminate these concepts among Muslim intellectuals and students by getting their mind purified of all non-Islamic ideas

and by making them more and more conscious of the significance and utility of these concepts through research projects, textbooks and teacher training programs (Proceedings of Makkah Conference, p 10).

More than four decades have passed since this statement was made, but our higher learning candidate, especially in science and technology, are still depending on textbooks produced by others. Being aware of this problem, IIUM initiated a textbook project in academic year 2013, but I think the outcome is still humble; therefore the project must continue along the IIUM Strategic Plan. For promotion and further development of IIUM philosophy and mission, there should be evaluation periods to assess achievements and challenges of integration process. This might be the major theme of The Second World Congress on Islamization and Integration of Knowledge.

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ⁱ Detailed presentation of these components are found in, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas (1978). *Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education* (Jeddah: King Abdul Aziz University), p 1

ⁱⁱ These standards can be purely rational or can be derived from revealed knowledge as the case in Islamic philosophy of education.

ⁱⁱⁱ The idea of "Islamization" as a reformation project in the Muslim world has been the objective of Muslim intellectuals for centuries. But, the concept of 'Islamization of knowledge' in the sense of integrating modern sciences and technologies with Islamic values 'de-westernization of knowledge', was proposed by the eminent philosopher Syed M. Naquib Al-Attas in his paper to the "First World Conference on Muslim Education" held in 1977. However, the idea, was promoted by late professor Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, and practically introduced as general principals and work plan by International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT).

^{iv} Study more about Islamization in theory and practice, Shogar, Ibrahim (2014). *Integration of Islamic Principles in Modern Sciences: Its Philosophy and Method*, chapter in 'Cell and Tissue Culture: Research and Technology from Islamic Perspective'. Edited by Muhammad Syaiful Bahari Abdul Rasad (IIUM Press). pp 1-20.

^v This is a well known *Hadith* in Islamic thought, narrated by Abu Dawud through Abu Hurairah (Hadith No.4291); also reported by other narrators.

^{vi} According to Fazlur Rahman, the five prominent Muslim modernists who worked in the latter half of the nineteenth century to formulate and expound the positive attitude of Islam toward science and investigation of nature, were: Sayyid Ahmed Khan and Sayyid Amir 'Ali of India, Jamaluddin al-Afghani, Namik Kemal of Turkey, and Shaykh Muhammad 'Abuh. Study more on this: Fazlur

Rahman (1984). *Islam and Modernity* (the University of Chicago Press) pp 49-50.

^{vii} The Qur'an, Chapter 63:8 (*Surat Al-Munafiqun*)

^{viii} The Qur'an, Chapter 3:101 (*Surat Al-Imran*)

^{ix} Arsalan, Amir Shakib (2004). *Our Decline: Its Causes and Remedies*. Islamic Book Trust, Kuala Lumpur. P xxiii.

^x The most prominent contemporary Muslim intellectuals who addressed this matter in English are such as Ismail al-Faruqi, M. Naquib al-Attas, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Fazlur Raman, and others.

^{xi} Al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Naquib (1993). *Islam and Secularism*. International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization. PP xvi-xvii.

^{xii} Study more about these causes, for example: *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principals and Work Plan*, International Institute of Islamic Thought (Herndon, Virginia- USA) PP: 1-30.

^{xiii} *Conference Book of the First World Conference on Muslim Education*. P 10

^{xiv} These follow-up conferences were wonderfully reported by Prof. Dr. Ghulam Nabi Sadeq in his review on *The Six International Conference on Islamic Education*, entitled "Islamization of Education". The Six International conference was held in 20-25 September 1996 at Islamia College, Cape Town- South Africa. The review of Prof. Sadeq was published by *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* (14:4).

^{xv} The holy Qur'an has used the term 'hikmah' comparatively with (*kitab*) around ten times and in separate more than twenty times. See for example: (Qur'an, 2:129, 151; 3:146; 4:113; 33:34; 62:2).

^{xvi} Study more on Islamic concept of philosophy: Alparslan Acikgenc (1994). A Concept of Philosophy in the Qur'anic Context. *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* (V.11:2).

^{xvii} The Islamic philosophy of education is based on Unity of God (*Tawhid*), which holds that the entire universe is created by Almighty Allah with precise measures and for definite purposes; therefore, mankind should study the created world to attain knowledge about the Creator. Islamic education, in this sense, provides wider scope of learning which includes both physical and metaphysical worlds (*Ghayib & Shahadah*), and creates a sense of sanctity in pursuing of knowledge. A Muslim acquires knowledge not only to satisfy his personal needs, but also to appreciate the Creator. Read more on characteristics of the Islamic worldview: Mutahhari, Ayatullah Murtaza (1985), *Fundamentals of Islamic thought* (Mizan Press, Berkeley). pp 65-127.

^{xviii} Alparslan Acikgenc (1994). *A Concept of Philosophy in the Qur'anic Context*, *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* (V.11:2). p 176.

^{xix} Alparslan, *ibid* p 176.

^{xx} *Ibid*, p 178.

^{xxi} Knowledge and values are the two methods of how human conceive the world.

^{xxii} The holy Qur'an emphasizes that Allah (S.W.T) as sole Creator of all creature provides this comprehensive care. In the opening of Srat al-Fatihah (Chapter ,1:2)

^{xxiii} Wan Daud, Wan Mohammad Nor (1998). *The Educational Philosophy and Practice of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas*. International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISATC), Kuala Lumpur). P 121.

^{xxiv} See the holy Qur'an, 2:143).

^{xxv} This statement, as being reported by *IIUM Policies and Guidelines on Islamization*, pp 9-10, was mentioned in a prospectus entitled "*International Islamic University Malaysia: the Philosophy and Objectives of the International Islamic University and their Implications for the Islamic Discipline of the University Community* n.d. (1983)".

^{xxvi} These principles are according to IIUM constitution, known as "*Memorandum and Articles of Association*" version published in 12th December 2002, pp 1-2.

^{xxvii} This aim has been developed in IIUM Strategic Plan (2013-2020) to be "*Premier Global Islamic University*".

^{xxviii} *IIUM Policies and Guidelines on Islamization* (2013). Published by Character Communications Sdn. Bhd. (Selangor- Malaysia) p 5.

^{xxix} *IIUM Policies and Guidelines*, p 17.

^{xxx} *Policies and Guidelines* p 13.

^{xxxi} *Policies and Guidelines* p 29.

^{xxxii} *Policies and Guidelines* p 30.

^{xxxiii} See Report of *The First World Congress on Integration and Islamisation of Acquired Human Knowledge* (FWCII 2013)

^{xxxiv} See detailed presentation of these two types classifications, Alparslan Acikgenc, Ibid, pp 162-163

^{xxxv} Conant, James Bryant (1952). *General Education in a Free Society: Report of the Harvard Committee* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge) pp 58-59

^{xxxvi} Wisdom, according to the classical thought, i.e. ancient and medieval philosophies, is found in the religion and human intellect while according modern philosophy it found in scientific knowledge which based on observation and empirical means. Islamic philosophy of education harmoniously integrates these two sources of wisdom.

^{xxxvii} Study about this: Fazlur Rahman (1984), *Islam and Modernity* (the University of Chicago Press); Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1994). *Traditional Islam in the Modern World* (Kegan Paul International- London and New York).

^{xxxviii} These views are summarized by Seyyed Hossein Nasr "*Traditional Islam in the Modern world*", chapter 8 & 9.

^{xxxix} Conant, James Bryant (1952). *General Education in a Free Society: Report of the Harvard Committee* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge) p 64-65.

^{xl} Conant, J. B. (1952). p 65.