1st WORLD CONGRESS ON INTEGRATION & ISLAMICISATION OF ACQUIRED HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

FWCII 2013

Theme:

Constructing the Alternative Paradigm of TAWḤĪD

Dates:

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Venue:

Prince Hotel & Residence, Kuala Lumpur

الجامعة الاسلامية العالمية ماليزيا

Garden of Knowledge and Virtue

FWCII 2013: An Overview

The International Islamic University Malaysia was established by the Malaysian Government in 1983 to provide, for the younger generation of Muslims from all over the world, an Islamic alternative higher education in which knowledge would be pursued and developed on the basis of the worldview and epistemology of TAWHID, instead of the secular paradigm of human knowledge which divorces:

a) Human reason from DIVINE revelation, guidance and wisdom;
b) Professional disciplines from morality; and
c) Knowledge of physical, human or social realities from metaphysical, religious and spiritual TRUTHS.

The necessity to construct and disseminate the acquired human knowledge on the basis of the TAWHIDIC epistemology is anchored in the Divine commandment to seek knowledge in the name of Allah, God Most Gracious, and to use the God-given Intellect ('Aql) as well as all the God-given natural resources and bounties in accordance with the Divinely-prescribed purposes and ends.

In its thirty years history, IIUM has tried to fulfill this sacred mission, together with like-minded institutions, organizations and individual scholars from different parts of the world. Today, as the world is witnessing more and more symptoms of systemic collapse of conventional economic, political and moral structures – with planet earth itself facing unprecedented ecological crises – there is a real and pressing need to bring together Muslim scholars, scientists, intellectuals and professionals from all over the world, who share the commitment to the paradigm of TAWHID and the urgency to develop better or alternative solution approaches, theories, perspectives or ideas in the natural and physical sciences, social and human sciences, humanities, applied sciences and technology and medical sciences, based on the God-given paradigm.

A World Congress in this regard is being held for the first time by IIUM at this very critical juncture in the history of modern civilization, and we, at IIUM, fervently hope to be able to gather 300 Muslim scholars and experts in the five major branches of acquired human knowledge in this first-ever Congress.

Objectives of The Congress

- To gather Muslim scholars, scientist, academics, professionals and experts who are or have been involved in the project of integration or IOHK from all parts of the world, to mutually benefit from each other's works, findings or products.

- To forge new and transnational strategies to offer Tawhidic paradigm discourse and intellectual constructs as constituting complementary and/or alternative paradigms of human knowledge towards the reconstruction of Muslim society, culture and civilization, beset by its own internal malaise, as well as the reform of contemporary secular humanistic world disorder.

- To showcase IIUM's achievements in terms of teaching, research and publications, after three decades of its existence, in fulfilling the Mission of "Islamisation of Human Knowledge" (IOHK) as stated in the Constitution (Memorandum of Association) of the University.

- To position IIUM internationally and locally as the major Reference Centre for IOHK and related issues.

The Perceptions and Practices of the Integration of Knowledge amongst the Academics of International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).

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ABSTRACT

IIUM's vision and mission is its commitment to the integration of values with the modern fields of knowledge. Today, Islamization and integration have emerged as niche areas of the IIUM. There are various phases and orientations of the implementation of Islamization of knowledge (IOK) at the IIUM. Furthermore, the tolerant atmosphere in the IIUM has encouraged many scholars and staff to use their own approaches of Islamization. IIUM academic staff also integrates Islamic values into the University curriculum in different ways. However, the problem is in evaluating these various ways of integrating Islamic values into the University curriculum. The study is important as it helps IIUM to identify and monitor the areas of specialization that need to be improved with regards to the Islamic values integration. Thus, the aim of the paper is to investigate the perceptions and practices of IIUM academics in their efforts to do IOK. The study is exploratory in nature and involves focus group discussion (FGD) with six kulliyyahs namely Kulliyyah of Engineering, ICT, Laws (AIKOL), Economics (ENM), IRKHS, and Science. Each FGD lasted between one to two hours, and involved about five to six lecturers from each Kulliyyah. Two broad themes were generated from the data, which are perceptions and practices of IOK. The general findings of the study reveal that IIUM academics perceive and practice IOK differently according to their background and various specializations. IIUM academics generally perceive IOK as an important endeavour though challenging, yet differ in their views of its success. Meanwhile, the practices of IOK involve content, teaching and learning, materials, research and publication, assessment, and students. IIUM academics face many challenges in implementing IOK such as lack of resources, lack of academics involvement in IOK activities, and lack of Islamic knowledge to integrate technical, scientific and conventional knowledge. The study suggests that with proper and continuous support from the University, IOK could be implemented more effectively.

Keywords: Islamization, Integration, Curriculum, Qualitative study.

Introduction.

The western colonization of many Muslim countries has resulted in the secularization of the Islamic education system prevalent in these Muslim countries. To date, these Muslim countries have inherited a system of education that is alien to their belief, principles, values, culture and tradition. The educational institutions in these countries were dualistic in nature, where the traditional Islamic education is divorced from secular sciences, while the modern secular education is equally divorced from the Islamic principles and values. As a result, the most fundamental problem facing the Ummah today is the problem of "confusion and error of knowledge" (al-Attas, 1993; Wan Mohd Nor, 1998). Being estranged from the intellectual and cultural legacy of Islam, today's Muslims lack the capability of making any significant contributions to human knowledge in the physical as well as in the human sciences. Unable to create and innovate solutions to contemporary human problems in a way that is compatible with the Islamic worldview, Muslims have ended up as passive consumers, rather than critical of ideas coming from the dominant Western civilization and becoming innovative creators and producers of Islamic knowledge. However, Muslims have realized that Western knowledge is not neutral as it is infused with secular of "religious and cultural presuppositions, reflecting the consciousness and experience of Western individuals" (Wan Mohd Nor, 1998, p. 291). This realization has led to the idea of Islamization, activated in the Muslim conference in Makkah.

The First World Conference on Muslim Education held in Makkah in 1977 was a significant event as it gathered more than three hundred Muslim scholars from all over the world to discuss issues concerning the Muslim Ummah. It was in this event that the issue of secularization of the Islamic education system was highlighted and discussed. Prominent Muslim scholars like al-Faruqi and al-Attas participated in the discussion and conceptualized the idea of Islamization, a term coined by al-Faruqi, or also known as de-westernization, which was propounded by al-Attas. Despite of the different terms used, the aims and objectives of these concepts are similar, particularly as a solution to resolve the onslaught of secularization on Muslim institutions in general, and the Islamic education system in particular. The idea of Islamization of knowledge (IOK) has grown and become a project of several Muslim institutions of education.

The International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) is one of the institutions that is committed to the idea of IOK to the extent that it has been made one of IIUM's important vision and mission. According to Ssekamanya, Suhailah, and Nik (2011, p. 92), IIUM is now the 'world leader in Islamization and integration of knowledge since IOK is the niche of IIUM that distinguishes it from other universities', whether locally or internationally. They further assert that IIUM has been successful in IOK in a number of areas, such as the 'vision and mission of IIUM, producing highly qualified individual academicians', developing 'Islamized curriculum' in different programmes and specializations, alumni who remain committed to the agenda of IOK, and research and publications in areas like 'Islamic economics, finance, banking, and insurance' (Ssekamanya *et. al*., 2011, pp. 97-100). Another success of IIUM is its 'scholars who have been recognized worldwide and are sought as experts and consultants in areas where they have made breakthrough innovations such as in the legal field, especially in the areas of shari'ah, family, criminal and commercial laws' (Ssekamanya *et. al*., 2011, p. 100). Nevertheless, in spite of these successes, Ssekamanya *et. al.* (2011) have also identified several weaknesses in the implementation of IOK in IIUM. These are related to 'the preparedness, understanding, and commitment of the general IIUM academic staff' towards IOK, students who 'lack Islamic characters and knowledge', and 'lack of IOK textbooks' in different areas (Ssekamanya *et. al*., 2011, pp. 100-102).

Considering the successes and weaknesses of IIUM in fulfilling its mission in IOK, a research study was conducted with the purpose of assisting the IIUM management in developing indicators that can be used to evaluate the IOK work among IIUM academics. To achieve this purpose, the empirical study seeks out to identify the constructs and dimensions that represent the works of integration of Islamic values in the curriculum at the different Kulliyyahs of IIUM, with the hope that eventually, indicators can be developed so that the IIUM management can measure the IOK works among its academic staff. However, there is a need to first understand what and how IIUM academic staff engages in IOK work. This is a primary aim, since limited study has been done to understand the general IIUM academics' endeavour in IOK. Hence, this paper discusses the primary aim that underlies the first part of the empirical study, which is, to

investigate the perceptions and practices of IIUM academics (in different kulliyahs) in their efforts to do IOK.

Islamization of Knowledge: The IIUM Story

The inception of the 'Islamization of Knowledge' (IOK) project actually began in 1972 when the Association of Muslim Social Scientists was established to address 'the intellectual problems facing Islamic thought' (IIIT, 1989, p. xii). The idea of the IOK project was disseminated and formalized in the First World Conference on Muslim Education in Makkah. In consequence of this conference, the Association established the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT). The purpose of IIIT is to revive and reform Islamic thought and its methodology of *ijtihad* so that Muslims would be able to deal with present challenges, and contribute to the development of Islamic scholarship in contemporary social sciences. This is the primary aim of the 'Islamization of Knowledge' project.

The IIIT was responsible for a series of international conferences on IOK that discussed strategies to resolve the crisis and provided a work plan for Islamizing knowledge. The IIIT also proposes that the educational system for Muslims needs to be revamped and reformed by uniting and integrating the Islamic and secular education systems. In order to achieve this, the IIIT draws a plan of its aims for the IOK as follows:

i. To create awareness in the *Ummah* of the crisis of ideas. This involves enlightening the *Ummah* about the place and methodology of the crisis of Islamic thought in the perspective of its cultural and civilizational existence.

ii. To foster deepen understanding of the nature of the crisis of ideas in contemporary Islamic thought, its causes, and its solutions.

iii. To define the critical relationship between the failure of Islamic thought and its methodology; the current absence of the *Ummah* as a civilization; and its failure to succeed as a free, progressive, and prosperous nation.

iv. To work toward reviving the ideologies of the *Ummah*, reinvigorating and gradually redeveloping its methodology, and elucidating its viewpoints and its intimate relationship with original Islamic goals.

v. To work for adopting and incorporating comprehensive Islamic methodology in fields of social sciences and the humanities, as well as to foster and fund scientific studies in actual individual and social life conditions.

vi. To implement the requisite steps to allow the developing contemporary Islamic culture and methodology to avail themselves of the fountains of Islamic principles and legacy, as well as modern sciences and knowledge, by making them accessible and digestible to Muslim students.

vii. To provide help in researching, studying, and working on the methodology and its presentation, with a view toward elucidating Islamic concepts and intellectual outlook and toward laying the foundation for the evolution of Islamic social sciences and humanities.

viii. To prepare the requisite intellectual cadres to broaden the field of Islamization of knowledge through providing stipends for studies, providing academic supervision, and establishing academic programs of Islamic studies in all fields of contemporary social sciences and humanities.' (IIIT. 1989: p. 57-58).

The IIIT has also been the agency that promotes IOK through the works of various scholars, namely al-Faruqi, AbuSulayman, and al-Alwani. Apart from these scholars, al-Attas and Kamal Hassan are also well known for their Islamization work. The former promotes his idea through the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), while the latter's idea is disseminated at IIUM. These scholars' views of IOK are different and are discussed in the subsequent section.

Concepts and Approaches of Islamization of Knowledge (IOK)

A number of Muslim scholars has played a crucial role in the conceptualization and development of methods of IOK, such as al-Faruqi, al-Attas, AbuSulayman, al-Alwani, and Kamal Hassan. In general, these scholars have differing views of IOK (al-Faruqi, 1982; al-Attas, 1978; 1980). Yet their different views and the IIIT's plans have been instrumental in the development, and realization of IOK at IIUM. For instance, some of the scholars at IIUM followed the approach of al-Attas, which focused on liberating the Muslims from secularization. His conception of IOK

draws from the rich tradition of Muslim scholarship, mostly using the works of al-Ghazzali and other philosophers, theologians, sufis, as well as the jurists. Al-Attas idea of IOK gained importance because it was propagated by the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), as he headed ISTAC from its inception in 1989 until it became a part of IIUM in 2002 (Ssekamanya *et. al.*, 2011).

The most prominent and influential approach at IIUM during its formative years was conceptualized by al-Faruqi, AbuSulayman, and al-Alwani. This approach has been improved throughout the years and has continued to exist at IIUM. AbuSulayman, the Rector of IIUM (1988-1998), promoted his concept of Islamization during his rectorship. He was more concerned about the practical aspects of Islamization (on how to make Muslims involved and committed) rather than with the formulation of a theoretical framework. He seeks the foundations of sciences in the Qur'an and Sunnah, and was critical of traditional Muslim scholarship. AbuSulayman focused on Islamizing all knowledge, including traditional Islamic sciences, and emphasized on tajdid (renewal) of traditional Islamic sciences (Ssekamanya, *et. al.*, 2011).

It is clear that AbuSulayman's approach differs from al-Attas in terms of their treatment of previous Muslim scholars' knowledge. While al-Attas continues to adopt and propagate previous Muslim scholars' knowledge, AbuSulayman calls for the renewal of it. Meanwhile, Kamal Hassan, who was AbuSulayman's successor as Rector of IIUM, changed the term, 'Islamization' to 'Islamicization'. Kamal Hassan views Islamicization as a process of producing Muslim professionals who live in accordance to the Islamic worldview, belief, principles, and values. He does not merely focus on the process of Islamizing knowledge, rather he emphasizes on the process of developing and shaping young Muslims to acquire knowledge that leads to moral action and good behavior (Ssekamanya, *et. al.*, 2011). These differing concepts and terms of Islamization have also led to differences in the understanding and implementation of IOK amongst IIUM academics.

Development of IOK at IIUM

IIUM as one of the pioneer universities that declare its commitment to the process of Islamization of knowledge (IOK) holds it as a central element in its philosophy. In line with this philosophy, IIUM's vision is stated as follows:

i. Revitalizes the intellectual dynamism of Islam and the Muslim Ummah;

ii. Integrates Islamic revealed knowledge and values in all academic disciplines and educational activities;

iii. Seeks to restore a leading and progressive role of the Muslim Ummah in all branches of knowledge for the benefit of all mankind; thereby,

iv. Contributing to the improvement and upgrading of the qualities of human life and civilization

IIUM's vision of IOK has evolved and has been presented in various ways during different times. Considering the experience of Islamization at IIUM, one can conveniently divide it into three distinct phases. The first phase was during the early days of the university under the first Rector, the late Muhammad Abdul Rauf. The second phase was during the long rectorship of Abu Sulayman that lasted for ten years (Ssekamanya, *et. al.*, 2011). The third phase was under the leadership of Kamal Hassan. Although IIUM leadership has changed, the third phase of Islamization still continues until today.

The first and third phases are similar because both focused on efforts to 'produce competent Muslim professionals who excel in their fields and at the same time possess good Muslim characters' (Ssekamanya, *et. al.*, 2011, p. 95). The core of Islamization efforts at IIUM can be seen from the establishment of the departments and the planning of the University curriculum. A good case in point is the establishment of the Center for Fundamental Knowledge, which serves other faculties. This Center is responsible for imparting knowledge of languages and the various disciplines of Islamic revealed knowledge as well as for organizing character development programs (Ssekamanya, *et. al.*, 2011, pp. 95-96).

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The next phase was under the leadership of Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman (1988-1998). Abu Sulayman's focus was not on the students and their character, rather on their knowledge, particularly the humanities and the social sciences. Thus, AbuSulayman (1989) proposed that the Islamization of educational institutions should undertake the following important tasks:

i. To classify and index the texts of wahy, the Qur'an and the Sunnah; to access and facilitate the understanding of these texts and their purposes.

ii. To edit, classify, and index the specialized, encyclopedic texts of the intellectual heritage.

iii. To recruit qualified scholars who combine specializations in the social sciences with sound backgrounds in the Islamic intellectual heritage.

iv. To increase awareness among leaders and educated Muslims in general of the issue of Islamization, its priorities, and the place of those priorities on the agenda of the Ummah as a whole, for example by conducting and sponsoring seminars or conferences

v. To direct graduate research and programs toward the subjects and issues of Islamization (AbuSulayman, 1989, p.108-109).

AbuSulayman (1989) is more concerned in rectifying the system of education, which he believes can be made possible if educational institutions would undertake the preceding tasks. Thus, among his first projects at the university was the 'establishment of the Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, which was designed to spearhead the process of IOK in IIUM' (Ssekamanya *et. al.* 2011, pp. 94-95). Abu Sulayman was succeeded by Kamal Hassan, but the latter maintains the structure and systems that had been set up by AbuSulayman. During the three phases of Islamization much has been achieved in several disciplines, making IIUM among the most progressive Muslim institutions of higher education in doing IOK. An important exercise in the Islamization process is the Islamization of curriculum, because an Islamized curriculum is the basis that helps any educational institution to realize IOK.

Islamization of Curriculum

The work of Islamization in an educational institution should begin with the Islamization of curriculum because curriculum is the most important aspect in education and educational system. Curriculum acts like the process that guides one toward achieving its educational goal. Taba (1962) defines curriculum as "a plan for learning" (p.11). It consists of four components, which are, aims, subject matter (content), methods, and evaluation. In principle, when designing and developing a curriculum, one needs to consider the social, economic, political, cultural, spiritual, and moral context of the society. So in Islamizing curriculum, Islam should be the point of reference. Islam is not a mere religion, but a way or system of life. Thus, Muslim countries must redesign and restructure their education system, particularly the curriculum by integrating the worldly needs with the Hereafter. Saqeb (2004) stresses that to achieve this aim, the curriculum has to be designed in an integrated manner, and to consider the balance growth of the Muslim total personality. Muslim scholars have agreed that an Islamic curriculum does not only teach Islamic subjects, but allows Muslim learners to internalize the knowledge, skills and values.

Different kulliyyahs in IIUM may have a different practice to Islamize the curriculum. According to Ssekamanya *et. al.* (2011), there are three approaches of Islamizing the curriculum, through comparison, integrative and inculcation of values. The comparative approach identifies courses in the same programme that focuses on western and Islamic knowledge. The integrative approach teaches the Islamic and western perspectives in the same course. Meanwhile the approach of inculcation of values or ethics deals with technical or professional courses that do not have 'philosophical presuppositions' like mathematics (Ssekamanya, *et. al.*, 2011, p. 98). In such courses, the focus would be on the development of students' ethical and moral character.

Methodology of the Study

If IIUM is committed to the work of IOK, then it requires its academic staff to be actively involved in IOK to help achieve its vision and mission. In fact, IIUM management place equal emphasis on the work of IOK and its achievement from each individual as it does on research and publication. IIUM academic staff integrates Islamic values into the University curriculum in different ways. However, the problem is in evaluating these various ways of integration and

Islamization. IIUM needs to evaluate its staff performance in IOK, so that it would also know to what extent it has been successful in achieving its vision and mission. Hence, the empirical study aims to address this problem.

Methods and Participants

The study is exploratory in nature and involved group interviews from different kulliyyahs. The interviews seek to understand the academics perceptions of IOK and how they integrate Islamic values in the curriculum. The focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted in six kulliyyahs namely Kulliyyah of Engineering, ICT, Laws (AIKOL), Economics (ENM), IRKHS, and Sciences. Each FGD lasted between an hour to an hour and a half, and involved about five to six lecturers. Results of the focus group interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis guided by the objectives of the study.

Development of Interview Protocol.

Developed interview questions in the protocol centered around participants' perceptions of IOK, and the components of curriculum such as AGO (aims, goals, objective), content & learning experiences, teaching and learning strategies, materials and activities, evaluation techniques and the dimensions of curriculum design (scope, sequence, continuity, integration and balance) that are involved in IOK. The FGDs were transcribed and a total of two broad themes were generated, which are perceptions and practices of IOK.

IIUM Academics' Perceptions and Practices of IOK

The first theme that is generated, which is, perceptions of academics toward IOK reveal that they agreed that IOK is important, especially to the students, but they also felt that it is a long, gradual, and continuous process. Their views on the success of IOK differed in terms of what the kulliyyahs have achieved and need to achieve, such as the graduates that have been produced or the types of graduates that *need* to be produced.

The second theme, practices of IOK is further divided into six subthemes, content, materials, assessment, research, publication, and students. IIUM academics shared their practices, which have contributed to the success of IOK as they perceived it. The final theme comes in the form of

the challenges that academics faced when doing IOK. The challenges discussed include the perceptions and practices

Perceptions of IOK.

The general view held by all participants is that IOK is a very important mission of IIUM. IOK is viewed as important (DU542), particularly for the benefit of the students, when the knowledge that is being taught involves western perspective. For instance, a lecturer teaching psychology explained that IOK is important and her Department integrated IOK in all courses as this is visible in the course outlines (DU490). She explained that, *'students enjoyed and are interested in learning about the Islamic perspective of psychology. It becomes an added knowledge that they will get only from IIUM, and not from other local universities'* (DU547). A lecturer from the Department of General Studies asserted that IOK is important for the students. She said, students are *'in need of it'* (DU543) and for every *'theoretical concept that students learn, they need to relate it to themselves as Muslims'* (DU556).

The academics' perceptions toward the success of IOK vary. Some academics viewed that IOK has been successful to some extent. For example a lecturer from ICT opined that *'the Kulliyyah has been successful in carrying out its plan of IOK'* (DU250), which includes organizing conferences to disseminate the idea of IOK in ICT, and organizing workshops as a platform to guide the new lecturers in integrating the Islamic values to very technical courses. In agreement to these points, a lecturer from the Kulliyyah of Engineering explained,

'I think what I can say concerning the success of Islamization is that, in a place such as Engineering, there is no Islamic courses but Islamic information is spread through the courses that they have in the program. This is the Islamization result, this is the way I will say that they are successful.' (DU 415)

Many academics felt that IOK is a gradual and long process if IIUM wants to achieve its aim in producing individuals who are well versed in the western and Islamic legacies. A few lecturers from KIRKHS think that it will take about ten to fifteen years for IIUM to achieve its IOK mission (DU757, DU772, DU780). An Engineering lecturer likens IOK to 'the Prophet SAW

da'wah in Makkah, which took him more than ten years to change his people' (DU409). A lecturer from the Kulliyyah of Science also mentioned that, *'this mission might take hundreds of years. I am not worried about that 27 or 37 or even 50 years. This might take time…Let us make our objective for the coming 20 years. In 20 years, IIUM has to produce a lecturer who is good in sciences and at the same time good in Islamic Studies'.* (DU310)

However, few lecturers claimed that such individuals have been produced at IIUM. For instance, a lecturer from the Department of General Studies felt that IIUM has done well in producing individuals who understand and is committed to the idea of IOK. She mentioned herself as the illustration to support her view, *'Ok, I am a product of this University. Of course, the University has done a good job….'* (DU751). To further strengthen her view, the explanation of how she does IOK will be presented in the discussion on practices of IOK.

On this matter too, a lecturer opined that in order for IIUM to achieve its mission, there is a need for kulliyyah other than KIRKHS to strategize on how to produce students who would be good in secular and Islamic sciences. He said, *'I think IRK relatively succeeded to produce students who are good in Human Sciences and Islamic Studies. So it is time for other kulliyyah, the science based kulliyyah, to produce ….students who are good in sciences and Islamic studies…Let us strategize in UIA..It is time to plan now, from now on to produce someone who is good in science and Islamic studies as well'*

Some lecturers from certain kulliyyah explained that they use a different term than Islamization or integration because of the nature of their area. A case in point is lecturers from kulliyyah of Laws (AIKOL) said, *'..in the university level they use Islamization….harmonization is only confined to our kulliyyah..'* (DU72). While another AIKOL lecturer added, *'It is actually developing a methodology on how to make law and harmonize between civil law and shari'ah…'* (DU73). They explained that it is impossible to Islamize civil law, but they can make the effort to 'harmonize' between civil law and shari'ah law, hence their choice of the term 'harmonization'.

Some lecturers also explained that in reality, they faced difficulty to do IOK because of the nature of the course, which is technical, and due to lack of knowledge in Islamic legacy. For instance, a lecturer teaching a technical course explained that he emphasized on the value ethics in Islam as his strategy to do IOK (DU586).

Practices of IOK.
Interviewed IIUM academics shared their practices on IOK and the analysis shows that there are six types of practices (sub themes), namely content, materials, assessment, research, publication, and students. All six tyoes of practices are The Islamization of the content is done based on the programmes. For programmes that are non technical, integration of Islamic and western perspectives is done throughout the courses. For non technical programmes and courses, Islamization is done by providing *'Islamic values or ethical perspective'* (DU586), highlighting the *'Islamic and Muslim scholars contribution to the course'* (DU157), or *'examples from Islamic perspective'* (DU154). For technical programme, specific courses on Islamic perspective of the technical programme are also offered as an effort to Islamize the curriculum.

Lecturers identify and select materials that can help them to do Islamization in each course (DU633). Some kulliyyahs have good practices that may be emulated such as housing a collection on Islamization in the resource centre. A lecturer explained, *'...some lecturers have the book and search for the article in the resource centre, while some inherit from previous lecturer that had worked on it earlier...we don't have difficulty in getting books on Islamic topic but most of the articles, lecturers are able to search from the web, at the library. Then the coordinator of research centre has a collection list on Islamization...any lecturer that found any article on Islamization...he or she must submit to the resource centre...that means anybody can go there and search for books'* (DU288).

For lecturers who have difficulty in getting references for the course, they identify and ask for assistance from the referent person that could help them with the IOK (DU137, DU138, DU629).

For student assessment, many lecturers admitted that they integrate Islamic perspective in the assessment, whether examination or course work, such as assignment, presentation, and project. For instance, a lecturer explained, *'...so we look at the exam questions, sometimes on the other hand, something might not come out in the examination, but it will be handled with assignment, either both will be right'* (DU18).

There have been efforts to do research work in the area of Islamization. For instance, a research cluster was set up based on Islamic creed with the hope of propelling research in IOK (DU187). Lecturers are also publicizing their IOK work through their publications (DU388, DU421). Another way of doing IOK is through the students. As one of the lecturers mentioned, *'I think because the student they don't really understand, 'why we need to Islamize', they don't really understand the concept of secularism. I said 'go back to Islamic worldview'. They haven't got it yet. After facing problem with their own life, then he realized 'oh, I need to understand this!'* (DU571). In this sense, Islamization in the courses helps students to have a better understanding of Islam, and a better understanding of western and Islamic perspectives of knowledge. A good illustration to show how Islamization has helped students was highlighted by a lecturer. He said, 'I remembered one of the students comes to me and told me, *'Ustaz, before I attend your classes, I was not very much convinced with the tudung, hijab. After finishing your class, now I have very much confidence that hijab is part of mine''* (DU359). Indeed, Islamization work in the courses and classes would eventually benefit students. When this happens, a lecturer could say that IOK has been successful.

Challenges of IOK

In understanding the academics perceptions and practices of IOK, the third theme, that is, the challenges that academics faced in IOK emerged. The challenge that some lecturers felt was that the IOK is difficult to be done in technical course, and even when they do it, they view it as superficial and not in depth. One lecturer admitted, 'technical topic is difficult to do IOK' (DU580). Another said, *'...because I think the material is very hard for me to understand....With respect to how much I have done, very superficial. I thought it's very minimal...'* (DU747).

The difficulty to do IOK amongst the academics could also be due to academics' lack of knowledge in Islamic studies or Arabic. A lecturer explained, *'this is quite challenging, much have we tried through the effort suggested by Islamization and integration process still a lot of things still has to be done because most of us are western in our educational background and some of us have little or no knowledge of Islam and Arabic. With all these challenges we are trying to contribute to material input. However, more challenges we have in developing people and developing materials because there is no time, few are actually educated in Islamic science, but majority of us are educated in western aspect' (DU43).*

Academics with the lack of knowledge in Islamic studies or science would also lead to the lack of materials for Islamizing the courses since not many academics are able to publish their IOK work. DU43 also mentioned about academics' lack of time, which may be due to many reasons, such as holding administrative post, academic workload versus supervision workload, and being involved in research, publication and consultancy. All these are challenges that academics have to face in their efforts of doing IOK. As a result, academics involvement in IOK activities is minimal, for example organizing workshop on IOK. This could be resolved if IIUM management acknowledges IOK work and considers it as a requirement for promotion.

Conclusion

It is clear that IIUM remains committed to IOK and there has been continuous process of IOK amongst its academics. However, limited studies have been done to evaluate the work of IOK at IIUM. Hence, the study is timely as it tries to understand how IIUM academics view and do IOK. Findings of the study discussed the different perceptions that academics hold towards IOK and their practices. The academics' perceptions vary around the extent of IOK success. Meanwhile, the practices primarily concern the components of curriculum, in particular the content, materials, assessment, research, publication, and students. Several challenges have also been identified, rising from the academics' perceptions and practices of IOK. The challenges are inter related and seem to be spiraling from the unsuccessful practices of IOK. However, these challenges can be resolved with the support from IIUM management in considering the work of IOK in its promotion exercise.

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