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INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE: AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARTICIPATION AT THE FACULTY OF QURANIC AND SUNNAH STUDIES, USIM

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this research is to show how the many methodologies, approaches, notions, and contributions under the Faculty of Quranic and Sunnah Studies (FPQS), Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) have enormous potential for students, teachers, educators, academicians, and scholars in Islamic studies to illuminate the integration of knowledge. This paper provides an outline of FPQS's academic endeavours and focus on interests which signify the framework for Muslims' understanding of epistemology. Rather than being merely historical interest, the article argues that FPQS's coordination is a useful beginning for developing a contemporary discourse on Qurʾān and Sunnah studies in Malaysia and the Muslim world. The present paper takes it a step further, proposing that integration of knowledge in an academic ambiance can be achieved through the collective enterprise of the epistemology of scholastic traditions of Islam, university and national policies, as well as the aspirations and practices of faculties.

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Keywords: Al-Qurʾān, Sunnah, Integration of Knowledge, Islamic Education, Academic Programme, Malaysian Qualifications Agency, Outcome Based Education.

INTRODUCTION

At the British Association for Islamic Studies (BRAIS) Conference 2017, held in the University of Chester, the author received Ziauddin Sardar's latest book from him in person, entitled Rethinking Reform in Higher Education: from Islamization to Integration of Knowledge. This book is one of the International Institute of Islamic Thought's (IIIT) most recent publications, an endeavour by scholars affiliated with the organisation to map a new educational terrain for Muslims. Syed Naquib al-Attas, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Ismail Faruqi, and their fellow founders of the International Institute of Islamic Though (ISTAC), Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, IIIT and many others from their generation attempted to solve the education issue faced by Muslim societies in the 1970s and 1980s. Ziauddin Sardar and Jeremy Henzell-Thomas continued their work by updating their efforts; instead of the earlier legacy of Islamisation of knowledge, Sardar and Henzell-Thomas (2017) suggested a "departure" towards integration of knowledge. They cast aside the previous paradigm, while making only rudimentary remarks on the shortcomings that need such a shift, possibly to avoid unnecessary squabbles. Sardar has remained a critique of Faruqi's Islamization of Knowledge (IOK) project, the squabble has been pushed away after his death. IIIT seems to have abandoned IOK. In the foreword section, the integration of knowledge is characterised as "Revealed knowledge with human efforts in knowledge production" as well as fulfilling the call for "a new paradigm rooted in the Qurʾānic worldview and an epistemology based on the doctrine of *tawḥīd* (the Oneness of God) and one's responsibility to God, one's soul, humankind, all created beings, and the natural world." Surprisingly, the writing makes no intricate emphasis on

education in Muslim countries or Muslim institutions or schools in other countries, in other words, Islamic education. The account covers a wide range of topics, including the question of what education is for - training or intellectual formation - and the challenge that fast technological development has brought to universities in recent decades, culminating in demands to abandon traditional university institutions. Sardar places a premium on the global complexity that now pervades all human efforts, including learning, and leads to the rising concern that previous ideas about how to approach education may have become obsolete.

Substantially, a community, a country, or a civilisation passes on the accumulated skills, knowledge, and wisdom of the past to future generations through education. Education guarantees a society's perseverance as a separate entity by preserving its cultural identity and historical impetus. It provides a worldview through which a community attempts to solve issues, define social connections and economic activity, create meaning of itself, push the boundaries of knowledge, and continue to exist as a living organism. In the contemporary Muslim world, *tarbiyah* is the most commonly used term to denote "education." Other highly important terms are *taʿlīm* (teaching) and *taʿallum* (learning), *tadrīs* ('more advanced' instruction), and *taʾdīb* (tutoring or educating), which leads to *ādāb* (correct comportment, courtesy, culture, refined speech, literature, correct ethical attitudes, and many other concepts), whether it be a matter of doctrine, path of initiation, religious practice or of comportment towards any kind of being. Since modern educational stages are subdivided into at least 8 levels according to the International Standard Classification Education (ISCED) (UNESCO, 2012), the Muslim nations treat each of them accordingly through the formulation and integration of the essential Islamic elements and key concepts. The treatment of different levels of knowledge and various ways of integrating disciplines appear to be a recurring topic at the higher education level. Naturally, the core knowledge at the university level is formulated before any other level. Al-Attas asserts that "this core knowledge,

integrated and composed as a harmonious unity and designed at the university level as a model structure and content for the other levels, must invariably be reflected in successively simpler forms at the secondary and primary levels of the educational system" (Al-Attas, 1993).

SCOPE AND METHODS

This article will undertake an exploratory analysis of the integration of knowledge in the academic programmes offered by the Faculty of Quranic and Sunnah Studies (FPQS) of Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM). The present study builds on the general overview of FPQS on linking the philosophy of USIM to the formulation of an integrated curriculum as facilitated by the quality assurance body, the Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA). This is not however a comprehensive history of the FPQS, nor of the academic members of the faculty. The present paper seeks only to illuminate what is considered the most important facets of the integration of knowledge as they relate to Islamic intellectual tradition and the contemporary academic environment concerning the FPQS. The context and trajectories of religious and educational change are often different in other modern Muslim societies. Indeed, in Malaysia, the content, objectives, and operational mechanics of the study of Islam are especially major topics in current policy at both public and national levels. This paper searched for epistemological discourse by looking to the cross-cutting relations between the disciplines of knowledge and the position of the sacred foundation of the Holy Qurʾān, and the traditions of the Holy Prophet in the integrated curriculum of modern Muslim higher educational institutions.

GLIMPSES FROM THE CONCEPT OF INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE IN MUSLIM HISTORY

The discourse of integration of knowledge in much of the Malaysian educational and cultural sphere focuses upon the advancement of the Islamisation legacy to adapt and further extend toward the worldview of Muslims. Islamisation is generally understood as an intellectual and methodological outlook or a process to Islamise in terms of faith, belief, or worldview, and accordingly, it is applied to human beings (For the different conceptions of Islamisation, see Al-Attas, 1993; al-Faruqi, 1982; Fazlur Rahman, 1988; Abu Sulayman, 1989; Sardar, 1989; al-Alwani, 1995). Speaking in more broad terms, 20th-century Muslim scholars or philosophers concur with the epistemic viewpoint that all scientific endeavours are conducted within a set of principles, ideas, and assumptions about the nature of scientific issues. These are not just methodological ideas, though they speak to the core nature of the scientific endeavour. The scientific descriptions of physical reality come after humans' basic assumptions about existence. As a result, a meaningful conception of the relationship between Islam and nature or science in general must begin with identifying these guiding ideas and assumptions.

According to Al-Attas (1979), the solution to this issue is to employ a holistic approach to education that recognises the human person as *al-insān al-kāmil* (the universal being or the "Perfect Human"). Al-Attas contends that knowledge should be imparted in any institution in a way that respects the integrity and universality of human beings. Likewise, in his view on the Islamisation of knowledge or the Islamisation of contemporary knowledge, the definition constitutes its methodology. Thus, the process may be broken down into its component parts, which are the verification process and the infusion process, respectively. Here, al-Attas (1993) postulates the philosophical basis for the purpose and aims of education when he asserts that "for the establishment of an integrated core-

knowledge in the educational system, it seems to me to recollect the essential character of the Islamic vision of Reality. In the same way that the Islamic vision of Reality is centred on Being, so is the Being viewed in Islām as a Hierarchy from the highest to the lowest." This inception is similar to that found in Nasr (1993), who states that "Only when the contour of the Islamic conception of the cosmos is clearly delineated will the Muslims be able to absorb and integrate those elements of foreign sciences that are in conformity with the spirit of their tradition into their own worldview."

Principally, these scholars commenced with the tendency to formulate the Islamisation of knowledge at a very exquisite level of abstraction. While there are points of disagreement between scholars of this generation, certainly there is also a common goal, which is made obvious from the sacred mission of Prophet Muhammad SAW in the realisation of one's ʿubudiyyah (servanthood) and istikhlāf (vicegerency). Furthermore, the Islamisation of knowledge projects has continuously emphasised the foundation of both the epistemological and methodological elements of reform and revival initiatives in Islamic civilisation. The epistemological dimension, which deals with the theoretical acumen of the human mind, is concerned with making correct distinctions between the different levels of thought, namely facts, ideas, principles, and theories when recognised from a wide-ranging Islamic viewpoint. Meanwhile, the methodological dimension is involved with the practical aspect of human thought: thinking styles, research methodologies, and motivations or external factors for action.

As such, modern educators and scholars paid taken great attention to their articulations of concepts and ideas, and in their quoting of relevant Quranic verses and Ḥadīth (prophetic tradition) to amplify the Muslim community by showing how Islam approaches natural phenomena and scientific concepts (Hassan, M. K., 2017). On the whole, it is challenging to draw a line dividing written revelation

from the constructed universe as a knowledge source. Quite clearly, the "two readings" of written revelation or the Qurʾān and cosmos are extensively discussed among classical and medieval Muslim scholars to obtain the wisdom and guidance that people need. The Islamic science and the intellectual perspectives cultivated in Islam have always been seen in a hierarchy, which ultimately leads to the knowledge of the One, *tawḥīd*, the Substance of all knowledge (Nasr, 1976). Needless to say, Muslim intellectual authorities sought to integrate a new discipline into the Islamic scheme of the hierarchy of knowledge whenever confronted with sciences initially developed by other civilisations. This is also why the greatest Muslim scholars, such as al-Shāfiʿī (Lowry, 2007), al-Fārābī (Bakar, 1998), Ibn Sīnā (Pormann, 2013), al-Ghazālī (Lumbard, 2019), Ibn al-ʿArabī (Arif, 2002), and many others were concerned with the question of the classification of the sciences. The fact that all disciplines stem from a single divine source, according to these scholars, is the foundation for the ultimate unity and integration of knowledge. To some extent, the question of epistemology is the product of the various orientations and opinions among scholars who addressed this topic.

On the other hand, by going through a brief overview of contemporary epistemic or educational thought in Islam, major methodological matters, and the objectives of education are explained amidst Muslim scholars or educators. Following Stefano Bigliardi's (2014) and Leif Steinberg's (1996) classifications, Usamah Hasan (Muslim World Science Initiative, 2016) modified a 5-part taxonomy that sought to reconcile Islam with modern science since the twentieth century. In his conclusive writing Muslim Responses to Science's Big Questions: Summary Report, Usama highlights (1) the "Sacred Science" school of Seyyed Hossein Nasr, (2) the "Islamic" science school (Islamisation of Knowledge) of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi, (3) the "Universal Science" school of Abdus Salam, (4) the "Miraculous Scientific Content of the Qurʾān" of Maurice Bucaille, Abdul Majeed al-Zindani, Zaghloul el-Naggar, (5) the "New

Generation's Reconciliast" school of Mehdi Golshani, Basil Altaie, Bruno Guiderdoni, Nidhal Guessoum, and many others to provide a historical perspective on the Islam-Science discourse of this era. Usama ascribes himself to the "New Generation's Reconciliast" school, which has sympathised with both Islam and science, and hence seems to find reconciliation between the two rather than simply a capitulation of one to the other through the scientific method. Although the recognition of this "New Generation's Reconciliast" school is distinct from the "Universal Science" school of Abdus Salam, it is not outlandish to see them most of the time as a transcultural endeavour that is neither "Islamic" nor "Western," especially on the question of evolution (Muslim World Science Initiative, 2016; Bakar, 2020). Accordingly, the taxonomy would have been more consistent if the author had addressed "Islamic science" of al-Attas and "Sacred Science" of Nasr schools in a similar vein, because both schools provided a more comprehensive critique of the secular-materialist orientation of natural sciences and the philosophical claims of scientism, as well as their proposal of science based on sacred Islam teachings on nature and the cosmos.

By and large, to avoid the dangerous dichotomy that results from a superficial "harmony" between the Islamic perspective and the modern sciences, which can be seen so often in the writings of contemporary apologists, Muslims must bring to light the Islamic conception of scientific nature. In his *Methodology of Epistemological Integration: Essentials of Islamic Methodology*, Fathi Hasan Malkawi (2014) aspired to provide an intellectual framework for Islamic methodology with the intention of realising experiential instruction in the deliberate research pertaining to knowledge in a range of disciplines. He argued that, since it is difficult to distinguish (1) a realm that is natural and material, (2) social and human, and still another that, is spiritual, psychic, and emotional, linking the concept of methodology with the evolution of the various sciences is fundamental in the sphere of human endeavours. Malkawi points out that the

concept of methodology mostly parallels what has been recognised in the history of science and philosophy, in both ancient Greek civilisation and Arab-Islamic civilisation, as the "science of logic". Basically, the primary thesis of Malkawi is that a genuinely Islamic approach to the study of any phenomena, whether anthropological, social, physical, or biological, is defined by its intrinsic capacity to embrace both scientific theory and applied science advancements constructed by any individual. There is one exception, however; these advancements cannot be based on any fundamental concepts that contradict the solitary sources of knowledge: divine revelation and psychological, physical, and social reality. Malkawi's work, which comes within the areas of epistemology that deal with education theory and the study of knowledge, aims to go beyond academic debate to practical application in all main disciplines of scientific investigation. It is particularly aimed at Muslim scientists and educators of all disciplines who are looking for a unified set of principles and a clearly defined fundamental worldview, inspired by the Qurʾān and Sunnah, from which to ignite intellectual and material growth in modern Muslim society.

Meanwhile, over the past decade, the work of Osman Bakar (2019) on "knowledge synthesis" has done much to evoke concern among higher education institutions regarding Islamic science, modern science, and postmodern science. It is important to note here that Bakar defined Islamic science as the entire body of scientific knowledge that was produced and cultivated in Islamic civilisation since its foundation in the first century of Hijrah or seventh century CE. Meanwhile, modern science means "the science that originated in the West in the early seventeenth century CE and that is based on Newtonian mechanistic philosophy of nature and epistemological principles of rationalism and empiricism." Bakar echoed theological, philosophical, and scientific reasons why there is an urgent need for a synthesis between these sciences. Islamic science, which was founded on its teachings, became synthetic as a result of the religion's synthesising spirit.

According to Bakar, from the entire process of knowledge synthesis in question, from sifting through the heritage in both Islamic science and modern science right up to reinterpretation of the selected ideas, and further on to integration of these reinterpreted ideas into the *tawḥīdic* epistemological framework until the synthesis is completed, the sifting phase appears to be the most physically and mentally demanding. Therefore, as he asserts in his "Postmodern Synthesis of Islamic Science and Modern Science" project, it is necessary to prioritise several areas of study such as Islamic and modern biomedicine since the domain of knowledge synthesis is so broad.

LINKING THE EDUCATIONAL ETHOS OF UNIVERSITI SAINS ISLAM MALAYSIA TO PLANNED IMPLEMENTATION

This paper proceeds from the overview of epistemological discussion to the practice of higher education institutions which arises from the same worldview that formed the basis of the development of Muslim contemporary education. As mentioned earlier, the splendid intellectual culture of knowledge enhancement evolved in respect to the impact of many highly inspiring Quranic verses or prophetic traditions upon the hearts and souls of Muslims who were counselled to engage themselves in practical design, reflective thinking, and deep contemplation about the many aspects of the natural order and Muslim affairs. The style in which a Muslim tertiary educational institution or university is designed is a deliberate attempt to dedicate and sustain the pursuit, integration, and advancement of all branches of knowledge. Before discussing how the Faculty of Quranic and Sunnah Studies (FPQS) as an academic establishment engages with knowledge integration, it is important to orientate the FPQS under the umbrella of Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM). Through the philosophy, "The integration of *Naqlī* (revealed) and ʿ*Aqlī* (rational) knowledge - INAQ - and virtues are the bedrock of an outstanding generation and knowledgeable society," USIM outlines its vision to

achieve "a distinguished Islamic Science Higher Education Institution" and the mission "to produce competent intellectuals, leaders and professionals based on the Muslim intellectual traditions, noble values of religion and culture for the universal good." The objectives of USIM as proclaimed on its website comprise the following: (1) To advocate and channel Islamic Education into the mainstream of National Education; (2) To acculturate the cohesion between theory and practice within every graduate; (3) To produce Muslim scholars with integrated education, capable of leading a multicultural society, and have high potential to spearhead national development; (4) To explore and revive outstanding Islamic scholarship tradition appropriate to the environment and current technologies; (5) To supply a human resource that firmly embraces Islamic values and is capable of interacting and communicating effectively in society.

In realising this philosophy, USIM has also tailored several initiatives, including a university policy, to accomplish the integration of knowledge. These initiatives include several recent policy document references such as *Polisi Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran berteraskan Integrasi Ilmu Naqlī dan ʿAqlī USIM* ("Teaching and Learning Based on the Integration of Naqlī and ʿAqlī Knowledge Policy") (2018), *Kaedah Penerapan dan Pengiraan Integrasi Ilmu Naqlī dan ʿAqlī dalam Program Akademik USIM* (The Method of Implementation and Evaluation of the INAQ in USIM Academic Programme) (2020), *INAQ di USIM* (INAQ in USIM) (2021), and others. Given USIM's emphasis on INAQ, for example concerning teaching and learning, a section under the Centre of Excellence for Teaching and Learning (CETL) called *Bahagian Dasar Integrasi Ilmu Naqlī dan ʿAqlī* (INAQ policy section) manages all related matters. The 2018 policy document places strong emphasis on the process of executing the foundational USIM philosophy, underlining the definition of the Integration of Naqlī and ʿAqlī Knowledge (INAQ), which encompasses six different higher education qualifications, i.e., doctoral degree, master's degree, postgraduate diploma, bachelor's degree,

diploma, and *tamhidi* (foundation). This policy document is rich in underlying principles, visionary ideas, and practical suggestions for the integration of knowledge. About its implementation ecosystem into an academic programme, the policy committee outlines four *mustawā* (levels) of approaches; *al-taʾṣīl* (reformulation), *al-muqāranah* (comparison), *al-takyīf* (adaptation), and *al-takāmul* (integration). Furthermore, the implementation ecosystem of INAQ aims: (1) to create a new corpus of knowledge based on academic discipline; (2) to produce experts who will be able to master both *naqlī* and *ʿaqlī* knowledge conjointly in unifying conceptual and translational aspects of knowledge; (3) to publish high-impact academic writing as a textual and referential source of academic programmes; (4) to produce integrative graduates and Future Muslim Laureates in line with Graduan Integrasi Ilmu Naqlī dan ʿAqlī (GIINA – Naqlī and ʿAqlī Knowledge Integration Graduate); (5) to establish USIM as a reference centre of INAQ.

This 2018 policy document only discusses specific core philosophy on the integration of knowledge. Hence, all academic programmes offered by faculties must also abide by existing codes of practice and other policies put in place by the university level, the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA), and professional bodies involved in the recognition of programmes. Mainly on account of its national authority, it goes without saying that the academic programmes at USIM need to observe certain standards governed by the MQA. The entity is responsible for being the reference point for the criteria and standards for national qualifications along with the vision to put in place a system of quality assurance that is recognised internationally. Likewise, the repercussion of MQA's position towards Malaysia's higher education essentially aims to advocate Outcome Based Education (OBE) as the basis for all national Higher Education Providers (HEP). Concurrently, in the context of Islamic studies or theologically driven educational institutions, OBE has attracted growing

criticism, especially on the close connection between OBE and Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, which is perceived as a 'foreign' educational framework and worldview. For instance, an experience shared by the Department of Quran and Sunnah Studies, Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) in formulating its Programme Learning Outcome (PLO) revealed that the department vocalised an extreme challenge to integrate the principles of *maqāṣid al-Qurʾān wa al-Sunnah* (objectives of the Qurʾān and Sunnah) and the operational mechanics of Outcome Based Education since OBE "does not appear to be in total harmony with the ethos of the field" (Bin Jamil, K. H., 2020). As an important point for the distinct philosophical foundation, Bin Jamil asserted that "Bloom's Taxonomy was not constructed with consideration and instrumentalisation of religious ideals such as spiritual goals, scriptural memorisation, interfaith commitment, etc."

Nonetheless, all Islamic studies departments, faculties, colleges, and universities in Malaysian higher education have considered these matters in their endeavour to design the curriculum framework and formulate its programme objectives. By using this standard curriculum design and terminologies of the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF), the *Kaedah Penerapan dan Pengiraan Integrasi Ilmu Naqlī dan ʿAqlī dalam Program Akademik USIM* (2020) (The Method of Implementation and Evaluation of the INAQ in USIM Academic Programme) document proposes to all faculties in USIM how to apply and evaluate INAQ in the curriculum design of an academic programme, as well as to develop new activities in teaching and learning together by reviewing the current curriculum. The document essentially offers a step further in the INAQ direction, corresponding with the MQA's framework. The method that was developed is expected to play a guiding role, especially for USIM academics to apply and evaluate INAQ in the curriculum structure of an academic program in line with the vision, mission, and philosophy of USIM.

PROSPECT DIRECTION OF THE INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE

The above segment has demonstrated the extent to which USIM's philosophy on the integration of knowledge in the academic programme can be perceived. Apart from the university authority, i.e., the CETL, the Faculty of Quranic and Sunnah Studies (FPQS) represent another juncture at which academic discipline – interestingly, within the circles of the contemporary academic programme – established the philosophy. Indeed, the integration of knowledge is the recurrent theme of this paper, and although we indicated in the earlier section that we are concerned not so much with an epistemological and philosophical discussion of knowledge, but more with the contemporary academic endeavours designed to be applied to a structure of order that depicts the Islamic educational system, it nevertheless is essential to know what the Islamic epistemological context involves and implies. Also, since Muslims believe that all knowledge comes from Allah and the vision of FPQS is to "Uphold the Qurʾān and Sunnah as the spirit of excellence in knowledge and humanity," the engagement with the centre of fundamental knowledge is certainly a clear depiction encompassing epistemological and philosophical discourse.

The Qurʾān and Sunnah studies or Islamic sciences in general vary widely in Muslim societies, and do not necessarily correlate with general literacy and educational achievement. If in the previous section the aim was to examine the link between USIM's philosophy on the integration of knowledge of Islamic intellectual tradition, in this section and beyond, the goal is rather to turn to the aspect of FPQS's academic discipline of the subject at hand. It is to present the traditional teachings of FPQS as it encounters various entities within a higher education setting in disciplines such as educational theory, specifically OBE, as well as the integrative academic programmes offered by the FPQS. Being a

comprehensive framework, the MQA's Programme Standards: Islamic Studies (2013) does not provide detailed guidance on how to integrate distinct academic disciplines. As far as the Programme Standards: Islamic Studies is concerned, the MQA has set three approaches to the programmes as follows: (i) Stand-alone approach; (ii) Combination approach, in which Islamic studies features as Major; and (iii) Combination approach in which Islamic studies features as Minor. If any of these approaches to the programme standards are selected, it is to offer the necessary closely related discipline to be integrated. For instance, in the case of two FPQS bachelor's degrees, the Bachelor of Quranic Studies with Multimedia with Honours and the Bachelor of Sunnah Studies with Information Management with Honours, both offer Quranic studies and Sunnah studies, which are featured as major. Both bachelor's degrees are among two of four undergraduate academic programmes at FPQS's disposal, while the remaining two are the Bachelor of Quranic and Sunnah Studies with Honours and the Bachelor of *Qiraat* Studies with Honours, a stand-alone Islamic studies course. The FPQS introduces the general information and aspirations for the Bachelor of Quranic Studies with Multimedia with Honours (QM) on its webpage as follows:

> The Qurʾān is the main source of knowledge in Islam. It covers various aspects of knowledge such as theology, law, history, science, and others. However, it is believed that the main area of Quranic studies is only related to the Qurʾān itself and issues related to the laws and Islamic understanding. Thus, most graduates in this field are not able to interact with the current development of science and technology. This has led to the stagnation of new ideas, which are essential in understanding and practicing Islam based on current technologies. Hence, this programme has been specifically designed to focus on Quranic studies such as *Qiraat* and *Tarannum* that are rarely offered at a professional level. The application of science and technology is also given emphasis to produce a dynamic programme which can benefit the society. For this purpose, selected

> Multimedia courses are combined with Quranic studies courses such as *Qira'at* and *Tarannum*. With the combination of both fields, a paradigm shift in the learning of Qurʾān is expected to take place towards upholding the Qurʾān in terms of its appreciation and practice at both academic and professional levels.

The Bachelor of Sunnah Studies with Information Management with Honours (SPM) on the other hand is introduced as follows:

> Sunnah studies are closely related to the study of information management and have never been exploited by other higher education institutions in Malaysia, even though the demand for such a combination is high. This is because Sunnah studies relate to the main sources of Islamic studies such as the study of Ḥadīth, Sirah, history, etc, which are rich in historical information and related data (bibliography, biography, geography, judiciary, etc.). These sources are needed in understanding and learning about Islam and the Islamic civilization. On the other hand, the study of information management focuses on data and information management in general. Thus, a special program that combines these two aspects is seen as essential to produce graduates who are well-versed in Islamic information and library management that can be benefited by various knowledge-based agencies and institutions.

The QM and SPM obviously manifest the FPQS master plan to offer an integrative paradigm of academic discipline towards the integration of knowledge. Both programmes are offered or implemented in collaboration with the Faculty of Science and Technology (FST), USIM. Apart from the Qurʾān and Sunnah studies courses, the QM and SPM programmes feature a highly interdisciplinary approach to the study of multimedia and information management, intending to develop strong integrationists in both fields. The fact that these two disciplines are housed

under one roof unlike the curriculum structure of other local universities, is a reflection of USIM's philosophy. Indeed, designing curriculum integration accords a challenge since there is little current practice of what interdisciplinary or curriculum integration is. Therefore, to create an integrated academic programme that will enhance students' understanding of information management or multimedia, a core group of experts from FST teaches courses such as Introduction to Graphic Design, Database Management System, Knowledge Management, and many others. The teaching and learning of Compulsory University Courses (WU) such as Introduction to Islamic Science, Ethics and Civilisation, Creative Thinking and Problem Solving, and others by the Centre for Core Studies (PPT) also give an excellent bird's-eye view of the method of integration in these academic programmes. Inevitably, it is a synthetic window for post-secondary education students of the religious stream in Malaysia, who can extend and explore their learning opportunities of applied studies of the Qurʾān and Sunnah.

Likewise, concerning the integration of knowledge between the Qurʾān and Sunnah and these modern sciences, particularly in the academic setting, it is not required from the perspective of Islam that all aspects of contemporary science and technology – its concepts, theories, methodological principles, schemes of data interpretation, and many others – be presumed for integration (USIM, 2018; Bakar, 2019). The task at hand is to evaluate the rejected from the acceptable, or the false from the truth. One will immediately recognise the vision of scholars of Ḥadīth to establish a scientific discipline of Ḥadīth evaluation for identifying true or authentic Ḥadīth (Bin Muhammad Yusoff, 2020). Hence, a similar evaluation through Islamic science demands to be achieved. In fact, this evaluation process notion that can be learned from the science of Ḥadīth transmission course for bachelor's degree students (both QM and SPM) is the first stage that requires to be carried out in integration of knowledge. Later, the students will delve into the contemporary science of multimedia and information management to develop the

skills to make information work together with Islamic science in the current digital world. The students and lecturers or an integrationist need to equip themselves with an abundance of knowledge in the area of studies in which the integration is to commence. The task of designing academic programmes through courses or curriculum that experts of FPQS and FST have set out becomes intelligible when the integration to be completed involves two closely related academic disciplines. Essentially, the integration of knowledge mission must be pursued as a mutual and united organisation.

NAQLĪ AND *ʿAQLĪ* KNOWLEDGE IN AN INTEGRATIVE PARADIGM

As the FPQS approaches the silver jubilee of its continuance in Malaysia, it is presented with various intellectual difficulties, the most important of which is educational philosophy. Furthermore, the issue of contemporary educational theory and practise can never be handled by ignoring it or believing that without an intellectual effort on the side of a tertiary educational institution, modern educational philosophies such as OBE or Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives may coexist peacefully and harmoniously with Islamic studies disciplines, as they did compatibly with modern sciences nurtured within academic programmes (Bin Jamil, K. H., 2020). Having shown the countenance of FPQS's academic programmes, we may now look forward to the cross-cutting relations between the disciplines of knowledge and the integrated curriculum. How does *naqlī* knowledge look in the context of the integrated curriculum of OBE? What happens to the disciplines of *naqlī* knowledge? How are they used? As mentioned earlier, in practice, the integration of knowledge in an academic programme begins with the identification of highly interdisciplinary learning experiences. The discipline is drawn from the classification of knowledge such as *farḍ ʿayn* (individual/legal obligation) - *farḍ kifāyah* (communion obligation), al-*ʿulum al-naqliyyah* (transmitted sciences) – *al-ʿulum al-ʿaqliyyah* (intellectual sciences), *al-*

ʿilm al-ḥuṣūli (acquired knowledge) – *al-ʿilm al-ḥuḍūri* (presential knowledge), Islamic science – modern science and several others.

Nowadays, in nearly all cases the classifications are developed by academicians; in the most sophisticated instances, they emerge from collaborative and integrated design with several disciplines' experts. Master planning or designing then proceed to outline the course or teaching and learning activities to address the weekly topics, subjects, themes, or related issues. There is no halfway phase in which attempts are made to identify which subject areas might contribute to the course. This is a very fundamental distinction, since the integration of *naqlī* and *ʿaqlī* knowledge in an academic programme, in theory and practice, exceeds focus-area and disciplinary identifications; the goal is unifying understanding that uses the central theophany i.e., the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth as a "point of departure" or basis of knowledge. Primarily, throughout the history of Islamic civilisation, the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth have created an atmosphere for the cultivation of the sciences by emphasising the virtue of pursuing all knowledge that is in one way or another confirmation of *tawḥīd* (Divine Unity) (Bin Muhammad Yusoff, 2023). Furthermore, all the principles, and not the branches, theories, or details of all science is considered by Muslims to be contained in the sacred sources, and there is a conceptuality and universality of interpretation of the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth. Thus, it is possible to freshly interpret all the principles of all the sciences.

In addressing its inspiration for the spirit of excellence in knowledge and humanity, the FPQS is principally interested in research that engages with the natural, technological, social, and human sciences substantively and critically, including robust interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary collaborations in which Islamic philosophical or theological knowledge influences and is informed by scientific results and techniques. It is critical to establish the framework for an Islamic paradigm of contemporary research with indirect input from Islamic scholars,

Islamic scientists, and philosophers, as well as source materials, in order to successfully construct a religiously suitable framework that grounds major features of the Islamic tradition. The FPQS works across traditional disciplines, animated by constantly evolving research interests. Since this collaborative effort also required the preservation of the unity of the research, the FPQS work individually and together (as well as with faculty from other departments across the USIM, public and private universities in Malaysia, and the Muslim world) on topics, theoretical approaches, and methodological problems. There exists, therefore, a unity of intellectual vision, spiritual perspective, and scholarly attitude among collaborators that has made it possible to produce a unified effort. This effort included a research centre established under the FPQS, namely the Ibnu Ummi Maktum Research Centre (UMMI), focusing on Qurʾān and Sunnah for special needs, and a Special Interest Group (SIG), i.e., Qurʾān and Natural Science, a contemporary approach to Ḥadīth studies, Islamic psychospiritual studies, Malay, and Islamic manuscripts, Tahfiz education, and many others. The effort is an attempt to address long-term and short-term issues in the Muslim world, and particularly in Malaysia.

Turning research into scholastic bonds, FPQS Quranic experts draw attention to the role of context (Toure, A. K., et al., 2019) and the suitability of *khawāṣṣ al-Qurʾān* (particularities of the Qurʾān) (Adnan et al., 2022) in expounding the meanings and interpretations of the Qurʾān across generations of Muslims. To take this notion a bit further, the context can include historical, cultural, linguistic, and religious factors, as well as the context in which specific verses were revealed. It is understood that Quranic and Sunnah studies' grounding in Islamic studies' heritage can be seen as a discipline with its methodologies, core subjects, and key texts. In other words, to ensure the successful implementation of these studies, the courses in FPQS focus primarily on recitation (Muhammad et al., 2021), memorisation, and *tadabbur* (contemplation), particularly the study of key Quranic

exegeses, including the canonical Ḥadīth compendia and other classical works of literature, as well as the acquisition of the Arabic language. There are, nonetheless, courses contributing to Quranic and Sunnah studies located outside the in-depth textual model. For instance, these courses may approach the subject of the Qurʾān and Sunnah from a sociological and educational perspective, like al-Qurʾān and Tahfiz teaching methodologies, the study of the Qurʾān and Sunnah in Malaysian education, etc.

One relevant observation worth mentioning here is that the basic thrust of FPQS academic programmes, the study of the Qurʾān and Sunnah, covers a variety of scientific methods, applications, and areas of study that, despite their differences, are linked by the principles that underpin their forms of thought, teaching, learning, research, and behaviour. They appeal to these shared principles in their endeavour to attain their goals, and they are reflected in their different phrases and formulations. Although the incorporation of *naqlī* and *ʿaqlī* knowledge into these approaches, such as "interdisciplinary" or "multidisciplinary," does not follow a meticulous subject-centred format, integrationists do preserve subject-area, topic content, references, and disciplinary characteristics around an approximately unifying theme. For example, in designing a course outline (CO), one would need to draw heavily from the Qurʾān and Sunnah or Islamic worldview for weekly topical or thematic coverage to be regarded as an integrated course (kursus integrasi) in the "*Kaedah Penerapan dan Pengiraan Integrasi Ilmu Naqlī dan ʿAqlī dalam Program Akademik USIM* (2020)" document mentioned earlier. This outline is typically demonstrated by the fact that the *naqlī* and *ʿaqlī* knowledge integration revolves around topics and teaching and learning activities rather than subjects. In a course, lecturers and students might create simulations of different themes and be able to integrate information and knowledge from several sources, i.e., the Qurʾān, the Ḥadīth, human knowledge, and the sciences. As an important note for the educational objectives of MQA's OBE, specifically the latest Malaysia

Qualification Framework (MQF 2.0), a student able to integrate sources of information may be classified under Personal & Entrepreneurial Skills—Lifelong Learning Skill. In this case, even though the lifelong learning skill of the affective domain might correspond to the concept of *adab* in Islamic education, there remain significant differences between the two worldviews (Bin Jamil, K. H., 2020).

Nevertheless, the formulation and integration of the essential Islamic elements and key concepts to produce an integrated course for deployment in the academic programme are designed to conform to the Qurʾān and Sunnah studies of higher education. Furthermore, by merging the educational objectives of MQA's OBE into learning the *adab* of Quranic pedagogists and approaching Ḥadīth as a reference for theology, ethics, and law, they provide a revealed reference or an illustrative application of the revelation. In this integrative paradigm, new courses have been introduced, such as Qurʾān and Ḥadīth Studies in the Era of ICT (Kawaid, A. I. S. D., et al., 2018), Application of Braille in Quranic and Sunnah Studies (Zarif, M. M. M., et al, 2013), *al-Tafsīr al-ʿIlmī* ("Scientific Exegesis"), Science and Medicine in the Qurʾān and Sunnah (Bin Muhammad Yusoff., et al, 2020), and several others. Emphasis was placed on the integration of knowledge, i.e., the implementation of sacred scripture reading across the course. For instance, the chief aim of "Qurʾān and Ḥadīth Studies in the Era of ICT" and "Science and Medicine in the Qurʾān and Sunnah" courses is to combine the traditional tools of Quranic and Sunnah Studies with computational tools to discover, depict, and develop new insights into the scientific, cultural, and educational exegesis and commentaries of the Qurʾān and Sunnah. Thus, to contextualise the basic perspective of practice, performance, experience, and appreciation for the Qurʾān and Sunnah, the courses also attempt to shed light on how the various methods and approaches emerging under the umbrella of digital Islamic studies hold great promise for other Muslim graduate students, faculty, and independent researchers in an academic atmosphere.

In addition to the content of the curriculum, one also needs to understand the fundamental aspects that underlie the teaching and learning activities (TLA) methods or pedagogy. Pedagogy, in its complete understanding, is rooted in big questions in education such as why teach (purpose), whom to teach, what to teach them, when, and where. Yet, the content of every subject requires a pedagogical approach to make it comprehensible to students (Shulman, 1986). Regardless of the various possibilities pertaining to andragogy, heutagogy, critical pedagogy, dialogic pedagogy, etc. of the contemporary framework, the teaching and learning of Qurʾān and Sunnah studies traditionally presupposed a venerable "master-disciple" rapport involving essential prerequisites of needs, special qualities of vision, and many others. In sustaining this tradition, FPQS introduces one of the most fundamental courses, i.e., *ḥifẓ al-Qurʾān* course (memorisation of the Qurʾān). More importantly, the role of *ḥifẓ* in the Islamic didactic ethos presupposes the concept of knowledge as "fixed, memorisable truth." Internalising this account, one can assume that the memorisation of the Qurʾān was done with the aim of attaining both significant visual piety and oral piety. The two modes of learning, namely "learning by listening" and "learning by reciting," symbolise the relationship stemming from *ādāb al-ṣuḥbah* (etiquettes of companionship), which provides an oral model of teaching and learning between students and teachers. From another perspective, didactical affirmation in these subjects was perceived as requiring that a potential integrationist have direct experience with the existential integrationist. Perhaps this teacher-centred pedagogy implicitly integrates and balances the paradigm shift of contemporary education towards student-centred learning.

In a two-for-one approach, the majority of individuals engaged in academic work are both educators and members of larger communities. Depending on the audience, each role has a specific objective in conveying the Quranic and Sunnah comportment, which includes not only thought, speech, and actions but also bodily

postures and physical faculties. While the precise difference that might make is irrelevant at the moment, it should serve as a reminder that academic scholarship of the Qurʾān and Sunnah is not what one reads in the newspaper or popular magazines, nor is it what one might hear in a public forum such as an open talk at a *masjid* (mosque), and so forth. Such distinction is, of course, one of the key issues confronting Islamic studies in higher education, as it attempts to strike a balance between exclusivity and inclusivity in an environment where publicly supported institutions must meet increased responsibility and access requirements. Hence the development of Quranic and Sunnah studies continues to be influenced by the social context within which it finds itself. Disciplinary approaches to Quranic and Sunnah studies are evolving and expanding within the backdrop of established faculties at USIM. While the teaching of Islamic studies remains within the legacy of Islamic intellectual heritage, the study of the Qurʾān and Sunnah also takes place on interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary levels.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the overall aim of this article is to fill a significant lacuna within Muslim higher education discourse on the integration of knowledge, academic disciplines, and curriculum design. The foregoing reflects a few broad "brush strokes" or examples of the concept of integration of knowledge in university rather than paint a complete picture. In general, the participation of FPQS in the subject focuses upon the advancement of academic programmes synchronously with the MQA's adoption of the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) theory to adapt and further extend towards the worldview of Muslims. By bringing together scholars from different faculties, i.e., Qurʾān and Ḥadīth experts, Islamic philosophers, social and intellectual historians, physicians, technologists, computer scientists, and many others, the collective enterprise seeks to offer a synthetic window for a new generation of the Muslim world. While this is intellectually challenging for a

theologically driven educational institution like FPQS, ultimately it reiterates that integration of knowledge in a higher education ambiance between Islamic science and modern science can be achieved. It is feasible to design an account of the integrated discipline of the field of academic programmes, particularly if the epistemology of scholastic traditions of Islam, university and national policies, faculties' aspiration, and practice are substantially contemplated. The consideration of advancing the integration of *naqlī* and *ʿaqlī* knowledge as a learning outcome domain in parallel to the five clusters of MQF 2.0 (knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills, functional work skills, personal and entrepreneurial skills, ethics, and professionalism) should also be within the faculties' sight. A great starting point is not only developing educational policy but also realigning the learning outcome domain of the faculty. From here, the missing paradigm of today can be seen, despite the fact that Islamic education has a rich and long tradition of classification and hierarchy of knowledge, the concepts of *ʿilm*, *ʿamal*, and *ādāb*, and so on, for constructing a curriculum. Certainly, the triumphant exemplar in the integration of knowledge in Islamic civilisation may serve as a source of inspiration for contemporary integrationists. For Muslims, all matters of life are about integration, in which every single unique creation is harmonised with each other and integrated within an entirety which manifests the majesty of the One and leads to the actualisation of unity or *tawḥīd*.

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