Challenges of Knowledge Integration in Muslim Yorubaland (Southwest of Nigeria) Mirroring Muhammad Iqbal's Philosophy of Education

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Abstract

The basic belief of Islam is that there is nothing worthy of servitude except Allah swt. This provides the One True God definite historical identity, not just a mere abstract idea. To adore Allah swt, one must follow the divine instructions, and to follow the divine instructions one must necessarily possess the knowledge. This paper analyzes challenges in knowledge integration in the Muslim Yorubaland in the mirror of Iqbal's Philosophy of education. In light of this, with strong conviction, the authors assert that Iqbal has made significant contributions and offered valuable insights into addressing the issue of education. Educational integration is the process of merging closely together two opposing themes to find a common ground. Unlike Muslim nations, Muslim Yorubas do not have their religious education totally integrated into the educational stream. One of those issues faced by those who do not profess Western education along with religious education is not being employable in the same society as others. This paper approaches the title through an individual mirror who has experienced the non-employability, through the lens of Iqbal's Philosophy of Education. The paper uses qualitative methods through available resources, such as books, journals, magazines, articles, and internet sources. The paper is directed at basic challenges, through occasional analysis. The objective is to approach the challenges objectively and conclude that several challenges facing Yoruba Muslims vis-à-vis knowledge integration could be easily solved through unity of action and purpose which is glaringly lacking amongst them, as mirrored in Iqbal's Philosophy of Education.

Keywords: Knowledge integration, Muslim Yorubas, Muhammad Iqbal, philosophy of education, challenges

The most basic belief of Islam is that there is nothing worthy of all servitude except Allah swt, and this belief is shared with Judaism and Christianity (Burke, 1996). This belief provides the One True God with a definite historical identity, not just a mere abstract idea. To

be able to adore the existence of Allah swt, one has to follow the divine instruction of *'fa a'lam annahu laa ilaa ha illa Allah'* (…know that there is no god except Allah) (surah Muhammad: 19). And as recorded in the prophetic hadith of *'fa a'rifuniy qabla an ta'buduniy, fa man lam ya'rifniy fa kaifa ya'budniy'* (Therefore seek ye knowledge about Me before worshiping Me, for he who knows Me not how would he worship Me), it is imperative to seek to know Allah swt to procure a divine communication with Him. And it is with this knowledge that Allah swt has made man His caretaker on the earth, thus endowed him with absolute guidance. This paper, 'Challenges of Knowledge Integration in Muslim Yorubaland (South-Western Nigeria) Mirroring Muhammad Iqbal's Philosophy of Education', aims to analyse the challenges of knowledge integration in the Yorubaland through studying and understanding Iqbal's philosophy of education. This paper wishes to approach the title through an individual mirror qualitatively through existing resources, such as books, journals, magazines, articles, and write-ups, as well as internet sources.

Muhammad Iqbal, a philosopher and religious scholar, deeply immersed himself in both Islamic and Western intellectual traditions (Chirzin, 1983). His profound grasp of modern ideas, coupled with his exploration of existentialism, led him to formulate a comprehensive philosophical system and advocate for the establishment of a new Islamic order in all aspects of life. Hence, contemporary Islamic society can draw significant lessons from Iqbal's rich intellectual legacy and his character as a scholar (Khuza'i, 2007).

Iqbal's perspective on religion and politics holds particular importance, especially considering his upbringing in India amidst tensions between Hinduism and Islam. Drawing from his political and religious upbringing, Iqbal developed distinct ideas about the relationship between religion and politics. As an Islamic philosopher, he regarded religion as a fundamental pillar of society, capable of addressing all human challenges. Iqbal emphasized that religion, far from being merely a set of beliefs, serves as a pathway to moral development rooted in objective principles. Consequently, religion occupies a central position in society, fostering the cultivation of morally upright individuals who form the bedrock of a harmonious community (Khan, 2002).

Muhammad Iqbal (1873-1938) made significant contributions to the understanding of education's transformative potential. In his influential publication, "The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam" (1930, 1988, 1998), Iqbal contended that any thorough theory of education should take into account the inherent characteristics of the individual undergoing education, their connection to the community, and their ultimate purpose (Iqbal, 1930; Iqbal, 1988; Saiyidain, 1992). He emphasized that education is a dynamic process, involving continuous interaction between the individual and the ever-evolving environment. Educators, akin to philosophers, must deeply probe into the nature of this interaction to address the multifaceted challenges they face (Saiyidain, 1992).

Philosophy, as a discipline, encompasses various aspects of human life, offering insights into the fundamental questions of existence and human destiny. In this context, it also gives rise to a philosophy of education, as both disciplines grapple with issues related to human life, community, environment, and values (Al-Attas, 1979; Sharif, 1983). A consistent approach to ideas that guides in confronting societal challenges and critiques existing

institutions must form the foundation of educational theory and practice (Mohd Nor & Bahroni, 2011). In the grand scheme, education serves a crucial function by critically assessing and conveying cultural legacy, knowledge, and concepts to the youth, thereby ensuring the ongoing and innovative progression of communal existence and cultural identity.

Integration, conversely, refers to a strategy utilized within the educational domain to cultivate a comprehensive understanding of multidisciplinary knowledge at a local level. It involves the fusion of two or more elements, such as races, into a unified or consolidated entity. Muslims are under the obligation of mastering various forms of knowledge, starting with Islamic knowledge such as *aqeedah* (Creed), *shar'iah* (lit. Islamic law) and *akhlaq* (Ethics), and supported with material sciences such as biology, physics, and natural sciences. The fusion of Islamic sciences with material sciences has the potential to yield new modern knowledge, as Islam encourages Muslims to pursue earthly knowledge across various domains. This paper delves into the Islamic principle of integrating knowledge and the challenges that must be overcome to realize its benefits for Muslims and society at large. Over-reliance on Western knowledge alone has resulted in the encroachment of secular influences on educational systems and the steady erosion of Islamic-identity within society. Hence, any effort to integrate Islamic sciences with conventional Western knowledge should be seen as a viable option for Muslims to align their daily lives with the true teachings of Islam (Anas, 2013).

Throughout history, Islamic science has been a traditional body of knowledge within Islamic civilization, imparted through various educational avenues such as hut schools, madrasahs, and religious institutions. However, individuals from affluent backgrounds, including aristocrats and rulers and their heirs, typically received formal Islamic education within palace settings (Yaacob, 2003). Presently, there is a noticeable increase in students' interest in Islamic Sciences, evidenced by the growing demand for Islamic studies at all levels of education, from elementary to university institutions. This apparent enthusiasm from both students and parents stems from society's recognition of the importance and hopeful potential of this field of study. However, despite acknowledged significance for Islamic knowledge among employers and various sectors, there is a lack of substantial employment opportunities for graduates in Islamic Studies within Islamic institutions and organizations. Therefore, it is imperative for governments and stakeholders to implement policies that promote Islamic Studies programs, thereby positively impacting the integration of Islamic principles across diverse employment sectors (Marzuki, 2003).

Almost everything, if not anything, associated with conventional modernity is based on materiality. And because the country and its people, as common to most African indigenous people, were colonized by the British whose religious orientation is virtually Material-Christianity, all educational systems deployed on the land have been materially attributed. Modernization, Westernization, and Civilization are all used as tools for the spread of Material-Christianization agenda, and that is one of the main reasons why Muslims and their religious education would not matter in any polity of the nations. Islamic religion, on the other hand, is both Divine, material, and natural in its approach. This paper addresses and examines the integration of knowledge and its challenges from the Islamic point of view, mirroring Iqbal's Philosophy of education. It focuses on offering beneficial thoughts from various sources about

educational integration from the Islamic point of view, mirroring Iqbal's Philosophy of education. The paper uses a qualitative approach, a qualitative method. To gain a lot of resources that meet the scientific information, the literature review is used in describing and explaining integration from an Islamic point of view. The paper uses library and fieldwork research. It uses library research to gather the information regarding Iqbal philosophy of education, educational integration, and Muslim Yorubas from an Islamic point of view. The data are collected through articles, journals, theses, books, magazines, paper works and others. It uses fieldwork research to evaluate peoples' awareness of educational integration. The data are gathered through interviews. The interview structure focuses on people's understanding of knowledge integration. On Iqbal's philosophy and education, this paper is mainly influenced by the works of Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor and Imam Bahroni on the one hand, and Muhammad Saleh Tajuddin on the other hand, namely *Iqbal's Philosophy on Islamic Education: A Historical Perspective* (2011) and *Muhammad Iqbal's Philosophy of Religion and Politics: The Basic Concept of Religious Freedom* (2014).

Iqbal and His Philosophy of Islamic Education

The connection between an individual and their surroundings forms the basis for shaping the essence, significance, and philosophy of education at large. It is crucial, therefore, to expound upon the educational philosophy through Islamic lens (Al-Attas, 1980). In delving into the Islamic educational philosophy, Rosnani Hashim (2008) suggests ine *Education Dualism in Malaysia*, that education serves as a conduit by which specific societies convey then revitalizes their cultural norms and principles to successive generations (Hashim, 2008). Similarly, William K. Franken (1965) posits that education entails the transmission or attainment of brilliance through various methodologies such as instruction, training, study, practice, guidance, and discipline. Subsequently, inherently that principles and contents of education are derived from the cultural values prevalent in society. The aims and objectives of education are thus determined by the broader objectives and aspirations of society (Mohd Nor & Bahroni, 2011).

The primary aim of philosophical inquiry is to uncover the fundamental essence of reality, often referred to as the "Being of Existence," as it's challenging to precisely outline Reality despite it being underlying essence beneath all observable phenomena (Rizavi, 1986). Haq (1990) elaborates on this notion, suggesting that one can only truly understand the ultimate nature of reality by immersing oneself in the various manifestations that reality presents. Humans, inherently imbued with the God's breath or the rationalizing spirit, possess an innate inclination towards seeking unity amidst apparent complexities. However, individuals preoccupied with worldly affairs often delegate inquiries and responses to philosophers, who receive little recognition for their efforts. Nevertheless, throughout history, there have been exceptional minds endowed with remarkable insight and foresight, whose inspiration and guidance have navigated humanity through turbulent waters to the shores of safety (Tatlah, 2011).

In reality, all knowledge, rooted in the pursuit of wisdom, was initially unified. However, as knowledge expanded, a distinction arose between philosophy and science. Science now pertains to the practical application of knowledge in human life. Today,

knowledge has grown exponentially, making it impossible to encompass it all within a single framework. Philosophy, on the other hand, remains the foundational discipline from which all sciences originate. Unfortunately, due to divergent ideologies in Western thought and a materialistic approach to life's complexities, philosophy has somewhat diminished in significance (Tatlah, 2011). Nevertheless, it's crucial to acknowledge that philosophers, regardless of their correctness, satisfy an innate thirst for knowledge and are indispensable in shaping our understanding of the world.

Philosophical Function of Education

Education is the practical application of philosophy. Every individual engages in thinking, speaking, acting, and behaving as they undergo learning experiences facilitated by various educational entities. Education encompasses the holistic development of individuals, and true fulfillment is achieved when all aspects of life are equally nurtured. Each change in emphasis not only alters the educational objectives, subject matter, and teaching methods but also influences educational values (Mohd Nor & Bahroni, 2011). A competent teacher, beyond being a mere instructor, assumes the roles of a philosopher, friend, and mentor. They are expected to transcend barriers of caste, creed, color, and nationality, and embrace the universality humanity's brotherhood. From this perspective, philosophy and education are not separate fields but rather inseparable facets of the same pursuit.

Revelation offers the human intellect a solid groundwork and allows it the liberty to engage in further constructive theorizing. For instance, it informs individuals that the universe was not created arbitrarily or for mere amusement; rather, it serves a distinct purpose. Likewise, humans themselves are not devoid of purpose; they are tasked with gathering the beams of truth and dignity dispersed throughout the universe, and subsequently illuminating all other entities with which they are directly or indirectly connected, using the light they have gathered (Baloch, 2000; Mohd Nor & Bahroni, 2011).

The knowledge of Allah is infinite, while man possesses only a small fraction of knowledge: *"They said, "Be You glorified, we have no knowledge, except that which You have taught us. You are the Omniscient, Most Wise."* (Quran, 002:32). The knowledge of Allah transcends the limitations of time and space, unlike that of His creations, which are bound by these constraints. Our understanding aligns with reality when it conforms to Allah's will and design. The Qur'an underscores the inherent limitations of human knowledge across various domains. For instance, it states:

> "Verily, the knowledge of the hour is with Allah alone. It is He Who sends down Rain, and He Who knows what is in wombs. Nor does anyone know what it is that he will earn on the morrow; nor does anyone know in what land he is to die. Verily, with Allah is full knowledge and He is acquainted (with all things)" (Quran, 21:34).

Islam transcends the concept of mere religion; it embodies a complete way of life, known as Din. Its teachings, including those regarding education as outlined in the Quran, are straightforward, practical, and free from ambiguity. Through rational discourse, Islam addresses all queries that may arise in the minds of skeptics. The message of Allah is

communicated to humanity in their vernacular languages, and the Quran follows suit. While employing common vocabulary, it imbues these words with a unique significance.

Qur'an and the Philosophy of Education

In Quranic terminology, philosophy is referred to as *Hikmah*, often translated as wisdom. A *Hakeem*, or philosopher, is characterized by their ability to establish order and balance, delivering decisions confidently and with conviction. According to the Quran, the divine messengers sent by Allah were endowed with four essential attributes within their Prophethoods: the law (*Kitab*), wisdom (*Hikmah*), authority (*Hukm*), and knowledge ('*ilm*) (Mohd Nor & Bahroni, 2011).

Education should aim to cultivate man into a real man. Knowledge enhances intelligence, enabling individuals to benefit more from their studies and observations. However, one must be aware that personal observations can be influenced by individual biases and perspectives. A cultured and intelligent person is better equipped to rise above personal interests compared to someone who is less cultivated. However, without education in moral values, an intelligent and educated individual can surely misuse their capabilities relatively more, causing harm instead of good (Tatlah, 2011). Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1930) explains this as "vision without power does bring moral elevation but cannot give a lasting culture. Power without vision tends to become destructive and inhuman. Both must combine for the spiritual expansion of humanity" (p. 91). The knowledge that lacks Divine Light cannot instill in man a genuine respect for others. Simply professing Islam is different from truly believing in its principles. Mere profession entails accepting principles, but true belief involves internalizing these principles to the extent that they become guiding faiths, worth living and dying for. An educated person is one who fulfills his duties toward himself, his family, his neighbors, and humanity, while also possessing basic knowledge on earning a livelihood honestly and leading a respectable life. Specialization in a particular field is not a prerequisite for being recognized as a good individual; what matters is one's integrity and adherence to moral values. A good person may not be complete, as human personality continually evolves and grows, with no definitive endpoint (Al-Attas, 1979, 1980; Daud, 1998). Human beings exist both as individuals and as members of communities. The separation of one from the other would result in significant harm to both aspects of human life. Extreme individualism, advocating for absolute freedom from social constraints, is impractical and detrimental as it leads to societal disintegration and allows individuals unchecked power to manipulate social structures and values according to their whims. Conversely, excessive social control that stifles individual creativity and critical thinking cripples individuals and can lead to societal decay or sudden upheaval. Education plays a crucial role in fostering personal growth and facilitating the preservation and transmission of culture, thereby enhancing the quality of life for both individuals and society as a whole. Education imparts a sense of objective quality to students, which goes beyond subjective interpretations but requires individual cognition for individuals to mature into fully developed individuals.

The Understanding of Knowledge Integration

Integration is the arrangement of ideas, responses, personality traits etc., into a

harmonious whole. Mechanically, it is the coordination of the functions of the receptor, connector, and effector or motor cells. Thus, an integrationist is one who believes in and works on racial integration (Clarence, 1966). Integration entails merging two or more entities to create unions or consolidations. In this context, integration denotes to the amalgamation of knowledge and Islam into some cohesive form (Dewan, 2005; Solikin, 2008; Muda, 2008). Previously, studies on Islamic integration predominantly concentrated on themes including historical perspectives, the establishment and evolution of Islamic-centered higher education institutions, and the present-day position of Islamic Studies amidst globalization. However, recent research on Islamic Studies and modern studies has expanded to include disciplines like management, computer science, and economics. For instance, The Faculty of Islamic Studies at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) provides a comprehensive range of programs encompassing Islamic Studies, while also incorporating interdisciplinary fields such as economics and information and communication technology (ICT) (Muda, 2008), and this gives the students of knowledge the privilege of conciliating both Islamic sciences and the conventional sciences. By initiating the integration process at the foundational level, the Academy of Islamic Studies at the university has successfully developed a fusion of Islamic Studies with a Bachelor's degree in Applied Science, resulting in the creation of nine distinct study programs. These programs offer majors in areas such as Science and Environmental Management, Information Technology, Biochemistry, Biotechnology, Ecology & Biodiversity, Genetic & Molecular Biology, Microbiology, Biohealth Science, and Bioinformatics (Abdullah & Hamat, 2008). The program, which led to the graduation of 39 students of Universiti Malaya as the first batch in 2007 (UM, 2007), further depicts the commitment of the university towards producing high-caliber graduates proficient in diverse fields of knowledge. This integration process is not limited to the above-mentioned universities alone, most Malaysian public universities are rightly equipped with this spirit of integration. For instance, the University Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA), previously Kolej Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (KUSZA), has offered since its establishment. It continues to provide a Diploma in Islamic Studies and Information Technology, as well as bachelor's degrees in social science (Anthropology and Da'wah) and Islamic Studies (Usuluddin and Counselling) (Mohamad & Salleh, 2008). The Center of Islamic Studies and Social Development at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) is dedicated to producing professionals well-versed in Islam across diverse sectors including education, science management, and technology. This aligns with the university's overarching philosophy and objective of 'education for the nation' (Safar & Awang, 2008). Ultimately, this will result in the development of individuals who are competent in Islamic Studies and the teaching profession. They will be adept at utilizing information technology and possess versatile skills to enhance their role as educators, demonstrating exemplary morals, creativity, innovation, and effectiveness in their careers. Additionally, the center aims to nurture professionals who can effectively disseminate and integrate Islamic knowledge, catalyzing positive transformations in the field of education. Furthermore, it endeavours to empower individuals to engage in independent studies, thereby enriching their understanding and acquiring additional skills in Islamic Studies (see ibid).

According to Husin (2008) and Marzuki (2003), there is a consensus that Islamic Studies should embrace new and contemporary fields of knowledge, including biotechnology,

space exploration, economics, legal contracts (*muamalat*), finance, social sciences, leadership and management, science and technology, information technology, architecture, engineering, and more. Muslims require proficiency in these areas to advance society and enhance socioeconomic standards, aligning with those of non-Muslim societies.

On the contrary, Nigeria does not fare much in this aspect, the only notable institutions fairly known for that purpose are Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Bayero University Kano (BUK), and University of Ilorin (Unilorin), all in the northern section of the country. The universities in the Eastern and Southern parts of the country are predominantly loaded with conventional sets of programs, not in line with or related to any religious affiliation, and the Western and South-Western parts do not treat Muslims fairer. Even in the northern part where the population is predominantly in favour of Muslims, it has shown much effect on the societies in which these universities are based talk less of influencing any decision of the government and/or the stakeholders. The programs seem to exist on paper only, and not in practice.

Huzni Thoyyar (n.d) and Mohamad Solikin (2008) are other foreign researchers who have carried out related studies and researches on the integration of Islamic knowledge with its conventional counterpart. They provide a general discussion on the concept of integrating knowledge and its pertinence to Islamic Sciences specifically.

Huzni Thoyyar, for instance, suggests the creation of models for integrating knowledge and the ability to advance Islamic knowledge in that direction. He identifies several factors contributing to the integration of knowledge overall and specifically in Islamic Sciences. These factors include: firstly, the historical interaction between science and religion; secondly, the significant resistance from scholars and adversaries against the freedom of scientific inquiry; thirdly, the challenges arising from scientific and technological advancements; and fourthly, the comparative lag of Muslims in the realm of science and technology. This led to the development of various models for integrating knowledge, including the IFIAS Model, ASASI Model, Islamic Worldview Model, Structure of Islamic Knowledge Model, Bucaillisme Model, Knowledge Integration based on the Classical Philosophy Model, Knowledge Integration based on Tasawuf Model, Knowledge Integration based on Fiqh Model, Ijmali Group Model, and Aligargh Group Model. This makes it a ten-model proposal proposed by Huzni Thoyyar for a knowledge integration that matches with Islamic and general sciences (Huzni, n.d).

Mohamad Solikin also advocates for the integration of knowledge with religion, drawing inspiration from the perspectives of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and Kuntowijoyo. Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi is a renowned Muslim figure and Kuntowijoyo is an Indonesian intellectual. In comparison, he argues that the process of integration has resulted in either perceived integration or secularism. The former, integration, is characterised by reuniting the conventional knowledge of Islam, and the latter embarks on the separation and or neutralization of the two (Solikin, 2008). The integration option suits this purpose, while secularization poses danger and disaster to Islamic civilization. Thus, the fundamental concept of integration as supported by Solikin is the amalgamation of conventional, advanced, general knowledge and religious knowledge leading to a reunion of conventional science and that of Islam that are never again separated.

The Assimilation of Islamic and Conventional Modern Knowledge

As discussed in the main project, Islam has always been at the giving end and not at receiving end, when it comes to the give and take relations. Islam has always been at the influencing end and not at the influenced end of any form of knowledge and or science. What we regard as conventional today was once an idea propagated and promoted by previous Muslim scholars and sages, and if not for an intellectual stoppage of Muslim scientific progress, Islam is supposed to be at the leading front in producing all technological know-how now. This falls in line with the view of Rasid Muhamad (2010) who asserts that Islam constitutes a comprehensive way of life, encompassing three distinct patterns of relationships, and to actualize the three patterns of relationships, three basic and core of Islam, namely faith, worship and morality, must be formed. Hence, faith specifically pertains to the Divine faith, prophetic, and apostolic work, which are to be believed in and accepted as true. Faith in Divinity usually contains issues on the nature of Allah s.w.t. and His attributes, while prophetic and apostolic aspects are related to tasks, characteristics and revelation of the scriptures revealed to the prophets and the apostles, and they all are belief-related systems that must be trusted and believed as true (Jasmi & Tamuri, 2011). These are the foundational basis of faith and beliefs in our dealings with one another (Radhi, 2006; Rasid, 2010). This also covers four distinct areas, namely *uluhiyyah* (Divinity), *nubuwwah* (prophethood), *sam'iyyat* (hearsays) and *mumkinat* (possibilities) (Teh, 2008). Thus, when talking and discussing integration from the Islamic perspective, faith becomes the generic centric of all Muslims.

One other facet of the tenets of Islam is *shar'iah*, the regulatory knowledge of all Allah's commandments in the form of laws, rules, and regulations (Mohd Asri, 2009). And it is through *shar'iah* knowledge that we come about the knowledge of *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *qanun* (law) and *maqasid al-Shari'ah* (purposes of *shari'ah*). *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* is of three main components; *daruriyyat*, (necessities), *hajiyat* (needs) and *tahsiniyat* (recommended deeds) (Wahab, 2011), and Their purpose is to uphold justice, organize human existence, educate individuals, regulate the objectives and aims of the community, all to ensure the protection of the moral rights, establishment of rules, and the welfare of humanity (Latif, 2003). Morality mainly concerns praiseworthy (*mahmudah*) and blameworthy (*mazmumah*) behaviours and conducts, and thus human daily conduct can be conveniently categorised under two; good and bad (Rasid, 2010, Haron, 2010; Mohd Asri, 2009). By this, the knowledge of *Shari'ah* encompasses both positivities and negativities, and this further illustrates that Islamic Sciences encompass a broad array of subject areas and serve as the cornerstone of human life. Qur'anic and *sunnah*-based knowledge should be explored to strengthen faith, worship, and morality, to acquire and achieve perfection.

On the other hand, the several invasions of the West have resulted in Muslims losing directions, because the modern western sciences forced on them are devoid of divine and spiritual directions. Muslims are a faith-believing people while the western-modern ideas are materialistic in nature (Haslina, 2004). The Western-modern scientific revolution was perpetrated through Jewish monopoly, be it individual or organisation, and it went on for two centuries. Although this has led to positive developments in science, its negative impact is greater due to the influence of secularism on the revolution and on Islam in particular. Hence,

seasoned Muslim scholars advocate approaching science through an Islamic lens as the most effective strategy, aiming to reconnect individuals with their *fitrah* (innate nature) (Abdul Rahman, 2003). It's incumbent upon every Muslim to approach science with caution and to firmly believe that ultimate truth and reality originate solely from Allah s.w.t (Razak, 2005).

Challenges of Knowledge Integration

To make Islam relevant to global issues, Muslim education must go through various challenges. Various challenges, whether personal or societal, have influenced many Muslims to be influenced by Western propaganda, gradually leading them away from the teachings of Islam. Presently, four significant challenges and realities confront Muslim education (Muda, 2008).

The initial challenge stems from the government's reluctance and ineffectiveness, particularly within the Ministry of Education, to harmonize the existing school curriculum with Islamic religious prerequisites. Students with an Islamic orientation often encounter limited or non-existent options for university programs due to the disparity between subjects studied at the school level and those offered at the university level. This has resulted in students not having the advantage of enrolling into disciplines such as Science and Technology, they are strategically positioned to take only courses pertaining to Islamic. The government, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, should thoroughly examine this issue and implement proactive measures and initiatives to revise the school curriculum. It's imperative that the curriculum aligns with the requirements of university programs. This adjustment is crucial because the pursuit of knowledge should extend beyond religious studies to include a significant focus on modern sciences and technology (Shukor, 2008).

The second challenge entails competition in the job market for graduates, who are now expected to have a diverse range of disciplines and skills. While Muslim graduates possess fundamental ethics, values, and integrity rooted in Islamic knowledge, contemporary trends necessitate additional competencies. These include interpersonal skills and proficiency in information and communication technology, which are increasingly important when seeking employment. It is imperative for the students to have expertise in the skills at higher levels to be eligible for employment after graduation. To overcome this challenge, several points need to be taken into consideration. One, professional subjects should be incorporated into the existing curriculum. Two, there is a need to increase the number of graduates who are well-trained in both religious and professional skills. Three, encouragement should be awarded to those seeking improvement in religious studies. And four, the government must render adequate concern to improving the religious studies curriculum. Only through these measures can we expect to make a tangible positive impact on graduates who face job challenges after completing their education.

The third challenge lies in developing a comprehensive integrated system that encompasses both Islamic studies and contemporary knowledge domains. Muslims must not only excel in Islamic education but also acquire proficiency in modern disciplines. This dual proficiency is essential for success and for fortifying the Muslim community, paving the way for a new generation of knowledgeable and skilled individuals. It entails integrating Islamic

courses into professional fields like artificial intelligence, engineering, medicine, accounting, counselling, and various others (Shukor, 2008)). This plan should align with the national higher education strategic planning, aiming to cultivate individuals' potential comprehensively and holistically. The goal is to nurture a well-rounded populace that is intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically stable, grounded in trust and devotion to Allah s.w.t (Ujang, 2009).

The fourth and last challenge is to make Islamic education parallel with the industry. Islamic education should be used as an element to foster national educational visions, one of which is to have knowledgeable, skilful, high morals and ethical individual standards. Daily work practices should integrate religious considerations. Additionally, food production, especially within Muslim communities, holds significant importance in addressing malnutrition and hunger issues. This is so true because, without adequate nutrition, people cannot live healthily and comfortably. When employing technological solutions like bio-food technology to address food shortages, it's essential to ensure that they are used responsibly to avoid harm to users. Therefore, integrating Islamic principles into industrial sectors can facilitate the careful application of technology.

Conclusion

Iqbal advocated for a harmonious balance between the material and spiritual aspects of human nature, a consideration that educational theory should prioritize. While he esteemed intellect, Iqbal criticized contemporary thought for excessively emphasizing it at the expense of intuition or love. According to Iqbal, the ideal individual is both creative and original, as creativity represents the most valuable and distinctive human attribute. Such an individual should harness their intelligence to utilize natural forces for personal advancement and to deepen their understanding and capabilities. Furthermore, the ideal individual lives their life in alignment with Divine principles, dedicating their abilities and knowledge to fulfilling their purpose and deserving the role of God's vicegerent on earth. Regarding the aims of education, Iqbal stressed the importance of fostering the individuality of each person and advocated for exposure to diverse and challenging experiences. He emphasized the significance of freedom, which allows individuals to experiment with their environment, exercise discernment in choosing methods and content, and learn through direct, hands-on experiences. Despite his focus on the individual, Iqbal recognized the role of the community and its culture in shaping the dynamic interaction with individuals. It is through the integration of conventional knowledge with Divine-Religious knowledge that individuals can achieve a holistic understanding and fulfillment of their potential, as bestowed by Allah swt.

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