

Abstracts of Ph.D. Dissertation

Dissertation-1

Environmental Protection in Peninsular Malaysia : An Evaluation of Water Pollution Policies, 1981-2003 Ph D thesis done by Abdul Raufu Ambali, department of Political Science, Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia in the year 2005 under the supervision of Garoot Eissa Suleiman

Abstract

The thesis examines the environmental pressure caused by developmental goals using water pollution in peninsular Malaysia as its unit of analysis. In doing so, it explores the trend and magnitude of economic development indicators such as urbanization, population and industrial growth with special reference to manufacturing industry in the country. The study argues that development activity is a public policy demand towards which a government must strive to achieve at all costs. However, the price of developmental goals is always an environmental degradation of natural resources such as water. In the light of this, the study examines the various policy measures, actions and mechanisms put forward by the government to overcome the problem of water pollution in Peninsular Malaysia. The study also identifies issues associated with some policy mechanisms or instruments used by the government, and administrative constraints are likely to hinder the implementation of such policies and their effectiveness. Methodologically, the study uses a quantitative method of analysis such statistical regression to examine the correlation and magnitude of relationship between the chosen development indicators and water pollution. It equally used the outcome model of analysis and statistical time series method to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented policies in respect to the level of water pollution over the period under review. The findings of the study show that more than 90% of water pollution is caused by development indicators. This contradicts the view of economists who often claim in different Earth Summits that ignorance and habits of people are the main causes of water pollution. With respect to the level of reduction in river pollution, in some years, the policy enforcement actions were very effective by compelling the identified sources of water pollution complied with policy requirements. However, there were many periods where the level of pollution in rivers became worse. This seems to suggest some weaknesses in the policy instruments used. Another issue includes financial constraints of the small scale industries to install appropriate treatment technologies required of them by the regulatory policies. Specifically, the findings of the study show that the organic pollutants (measured by BOD) from Palm Oil and Rubber industries have been reduced to a certain extent due to vigorous policy enforcement actions and invention of appropriate technologies by research programmes of the government to support these industries. However, the policy enforcements against river pollutants such as organic effluents from domestic sewage (NH₃N) discharging into water catchments remained problematic due to two reasons: rapid urbanisation of the cities with housing congestion and

lack of sufficient sewerage systems, especially in some urban areas. The findings also show that the policy enforcement actions have not been able to overcome excessive land clearing activities that lead to river pollutants such as suspended solid (SS). As such, it remains as one of the problematic sources of water pollution in Peninsular Malaysia today. This deserves a proper attention of the government through the refining of policy measures against the land clearing activities and cooperation of Federal Agency (DOE) with Local and State Authorities. More importantly, the findings of the study reveal the likely hidden interactive effects between the pollutants on river catchments. The implication of such interactive effect for policy-makers, according to the study, is that policy efforts and administrative enforcement actions might be ineffective in achieving the objectives of water pollution abatement programmes if the policy instruments are stringent only in controlling the pollutant from one single source. Therefore, the findings suggest a holistic and simultaneous control and measures against all the identified sources of water pollution. This can only be done through a proper coordination among Local, State and Federal Government Authorities and total awareness of the people to give their initiation and support to the government agencies. Generally, the findings of the study show that the Malaysian government has achieved some success in controlling the water pollution problem in Peninsular Malaysia. The facts and figures of the study suggest that the water pollution problems would have been worse in Peninsular Malaysia due to rapid economic development via rapid industrial growth, urbanisation, population and other economic activities if there were no policy control measures. However, there is an urgent need to pay adequate attention to the various identified issues and recommendations are given by the study for future success of government policies in achieving water pollution abatement objectives.

Dissertation-2

Historicist Approach to the Qur'an: Impact of Nineteenth-Century Western Hermeneutics in the Writings of Two Muslim Scholars Ph D thesis done by Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu, department of Usuluddin and Comparative Religion, Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia in the year 2003 under the supervision of Fikret Karcic

Abstract

This thesis examines the historical hermeneutical theory of the Qur'an. Historicism, as developed in the nineteenth-century Western scholarship, refers to the belief that a text cannot be understood apart from the conventions, values, and socio-political interests of the culture in which it was produced. The question of the basic truth claim of any work, including those that aimed to be eternal and universally applicable, is seriously challenged. In historicist hermeneutical theory, understanding is associated with the author's mind and historical period

in which he lived. Fascinated by its critical insight, some modern Muslim thinkers have chosen to apply certain aspects of historicism to the interpretation of the Qur'an. Based on historical and comparative analysis, the study examines Western historicism as exemplified in the thought of Schleiermacher, Dilthey, and Betti against its Biblical and cultural settings. This is done in order to single out factors that had led to the emergence of historicism and made it indispensable for a critical study. The thesis also studies the history and major characteristics of the Qur'an to find out how they may contribute to its understanding. Against its Islamic and Western backgrounds, the hermeneutical theory as espoused by Fazhur Rahman and Mohammad Arkoun is examined and critically assessed. The study finds that while the Qur'an was revealed in a certain historical context, such factors, which could have necessitated the application of the historicist principles, were not accessible. It shares the general concerns of historicism, particularly on the role of history in understanding. However, it argues that a viable historical approach to the Qur'an has to be based on the characteristics of the Qur'an itself. Therefore, the study proposes an alternative way of understanding the Qur'an from the historical perspective but not based on that particular Western historicism.

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