A Critical Review of Approaches to Islamizing Knowledge in a Muslim Minority Country

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Abstract

Ever since the contemporary Islamization of knowledge programme became operational, many world conferences on Islamic education have been organized, the seventh of which was concluded in Malaysia in December 2009. These are complimented with a series of international and regional conferences on Islamization of human knowledge. The programme has recorded significant progress in education reform in many Muslim countries. It however assumes different approaches in some Muslim minority countries. This paper takes a critical look at some of these approaches with particular references to Nigeria. It observes that most of the approaches are not actually speaking the mind of the Islamization programme, but with serious intensification of efforts it will reach a state of perfection if the tempo is sustained.

Introduction

The historic First World Conference on Muslim Education which was held in Makkah left indelible influences on the history of Muslim education worldwide. The caliber of personality in attendance, the scope of its participants which cut across various fields of disciplines, as well as the resolutions reached, suggest the landmark achievements of the conference. In compliance with the theme of the conference, different sub-committees were set up to design the aims and objectives of education in Islam and in relation to different disciplines. The conference unanimously observed that:

> The existing conditions in present day educational institutions
> in most Muslim countries do not truly reflect the Islamic ideal,

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and these institutions do not play their rightful role in the education of the younger generation in Islamic faith, thought and conduct, and there exists at present a regrettable dichotomy in education in the Muslim world; one system namely, religious education being completely divorced from the secular sciences, and secular education being equally divorced from religion, although such compartmentalization was contrary to the true Islamic concept of education and made it impossible for the products of either system to represent Islam as a comprehensive and integrated vision of life.[1]

Consequent upon the first conference, the Second World Conference on Muslim Education was jointly organised by Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan and King Abdul Aziz University, Saudi Arabia. It was held at Islamabad, Pakistan on 15-20 March 1980 (1400A. H). The main task of the conference was to design curriculum for different ladders of education with the view of bridging the gap between secular and madrasah systems of education.

Participants at the Conference jointly agreed with the classification of knowledge into perennial and acquired sciences. Perennial knowledge includes Qur'an, Hadith, Tawhid, Qur'anic Arabic, Sirah, Usul Fiqh and such ancillary subjects like Islamic culture, Comparative Religion and Islamic Metaphysics. Acquired knowledge has to do with all branches of knowledge categorised as Humanities, Social Studies, Natural, Applied and Practical Sciences. However, there was the need to integrate the two branches of knowledge through a curriculum.

In its bid to facilitate and encourage the integration of science and technology with Islam, the Conference set up a committee on science, Shariᶜah and Education. The committee recommended among other things that, institutions, departments and centres be set up for studies, research and publications on Islamic ethics and values in science and technology, and Islamic philosophy,

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[1]   G.N. Saqib, "Modernization of Muslim Society and Education: Need for a Practical Approach" in M. Wasiullah Khan (Ed), *Education and Society in the Muslim World;* Jeddah, Hodder and Stoughton & King Abdul-Aziz University; 1981, p. 53.

sociology and history of science and technology for development.[2] At the conference, the recommended curriculum for different strata of education was designed. In Islamic countries, the curriculum for different age groups in primary education includes the teaching of the reading and meaning of some selected surahs through translation in the national language; Diniyat (including Tawhid and Fiqh), History, Narratives and poems, Geography, Mathematics, Arabic, Nature Study and Elementary Science. At the secondary school level, the recommended compulsory subjects include Islamic Studies (including Qur'an recitation, memorization and interpretation; Hadith, Sirah and History of Islam); Arabic, Mathematics, one of the natural sciences, Geography, History and Civics. At the university level, it was recommended that Islamic education be made compulsory for all students and should consist of two courses: one Arabic language and the other, either Islamic Culture and Civilization or History of Islamic Thought and Ideas; (in addition to two other courses from acquired knowledge which could be Islamic philosophy of science and learning and either Islamic Arts and Architectures or any other subject from History, Economics or Sociology to be taught from an Islamic perspective).[3]

In non-Muslim or Muslim minority countries or educational institutions where optimum conditions are not present, the committee suggested the adoption of substitute, adjunct, source or relational strategies for introducing Islamic ideology, ethics and values in science and technology curricula.[4] The focus of this paper is to critically examine these and other approaches as they were adopted in various ladders of education especially in a Muslim minority country as well as a multi-religious nation like Nigeria.

The Substitute Approach

The substitute method is an approach where a course offered, for example, by the Department of Islamic Studies is substituted in lieu of the course in the social sciences, is required to be studied in the secularized departments. This

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[2]   S.W.A. Husaini, Islamic Science and Public Policies: Lessons from History of Science; Malaysia, n.p. 1986. Pp. 45 – 46.

[3]   S. Zaim, "Evaluation and Implementation of Islamic Education in the Context of Modern Systems in Turkey" *Muslim Education Quarterly*; Britain, Vol. 4, No. 4. 1987. Pp. 16 –18.

[4]   S.W.A. Husaini, p. 54.

method adopted after necessary permission must have been sought from the appropriate authorities or educational institutions concerned. This is the approach used at the Usmanu Dan Fodiyo University, Sokoto (UDUS) as well as the Bayero University, Kano (BUK). It is an approach whereby some Islamic courses are slotted into the secular departments. At Usmanu Dan Fodiyo University, Islam-based courses have been introduced into the Departments of Economics, Management Studies, Sociology and Political Science in the Faculty of Social Sciences. A breakdown of some of these courses is given below:

UDUS Islamized Courses

Department of Economics

Undergraduate Courses

Courses	Course Title	Unit	Semester
ECO 105	Introduction to Islamic Economics	4	1st and 2nd
ECO 208	Economics of Production and Consumption in Islam	4	1st and 2nd
ECO 309	Islamic Economic Analysis	3	1st
ECO 316	Economics of Zakat	2	1st
ECO 410	Advanced Islamic Economics Analysis	4	1st and 2nd
ECO 412	Economic of Islamic Welfarism	2	1st
ECO 417	Economic Development under Islamic Framework	2	1st

Postgraduate Courses

Course Code	Course Title	Unit	Semester
ECO 604	Contemporary Issues in Islamic Economics	2	2nd
ECO 606	Fiqh For Economics	2	2nd
ECO 612	Islamic Finance and Banking	2	2nd

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES

Undergraduate Courses

Course Code	Course Title	Unit	Status
ECO 105	Introduction to Islamic Economic System	2	Compulsory
ECO 107	Sociology of Islamic Society	2	Elective
ECO 208	Economic of Production and Consumption in Islam	4	Compulsory
MAN 308	Islamic Business Ethics	2	Compulsory
ECO 309	Islamic Economic Analysis	3	Elective
ECO 417	Economic Development Under Islamic Framework	2	Compulsory
ECO 410	Advanced Islamic Economic Analysis	2	Compulsory
MAN 409	Interest Free Banking	2	Compulsory

The Department also has one Islam-based course entitled "Islamic Business Ethics" in its postgraduate studies.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Undergraduate Courses:

Course Code	Course Title	Unit
SOC 107	Sociology of Islamic Society	2
SOC 207	Islamic Order and Institutions	2
SOC 309	Islamic Social Thought	2
SOC 310	Islam as a Social Factor in Nigeria	2
SOC 317	Sociology of Religion	2
SOC 310	Social Organization of Islamic Societies	2
SOC 422	Economy and Society in the Sokoto Caliphate	2
SOC 423	Islam and Social Change	2

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Undergraduate Courses

Course Code	Course Title	Unit
POL 308	Islamic Political Thought	3
POL 419	Islamic Political Institutions	2
POL 422	The Concept of State and Society in Islam	2

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Course Code	Course Title	Unit
EDU 407	Education in Islam	2

At Bayero University, Kano, some Islam-based courses are introduced in the Faculties of Arts and Islamic Studies, Law, Education and Social and Management Sciences at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. A breakdown of these courses is given below:

BUK ISLAM-BASED COURSES

UNIDERGRADUATE COURSES

FACULTY OF SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

Sociology

Course Code	Course Title	Unit
SOC 4306	Islamic Social Thought	3 credits
SOC 4314	Sociology of Islamic Societies	3 credits

Political Science

Course Code	Course Title	Unit
POL 1306	Islamic Political Institution	3 credits
POL 3203	Islamic Political Thought I	3 credits
POL 3311	Islamic Political Thought II	3 credits

Faculty of Education

Course Code	Course Title	Unit
EDU 2104	Islamic Education	2 credits
EDU 3207	Introduction to Islamic Psychology	2 credits
EDU 4216	Ideas and Institution of Islamic Education	2 credits

Among the postgraduate courses that have Islamic connotation in the university's postgraduate prospectus are:

Department of Education:

EDU 8330 – Islamic Education option

Department of Political Science:

POL 8404 – Islamic Political Experience

Department of Economics

MBF 8335 – Issues in Islamic Banking and Finance.

Department of Management Sciences:

MBA 8331 – Islamic Banking and Finance

MBL 8314 – Islamic Law and Contemporary Issues

At the nursery and primary school level, some steps have been taken to discourage the learning of English alphabets based on the conventional secular "A for Apple, B for Ball" method; and this has been substituted for learning Allah's attributes through an English alphabetical rhyme.[5] Although the rhyme can hardly be taught with relevant instructional materials to facilitate effective teaching and learning, learning it by rote will sharpen the brain of the pupils and it will equally avail them the opportunity of memorizing the attributes of Allah without much tears.

The Adjunct Approach

The adjunct approach is a system whereby courses or supplementary readings from the Islamic viewpoint are introduced to add to courses in existing secular curricula. This approach is generally used by AbuSulayman who studied the so-called secular disciplines like political science, social sciences and

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[5]   Prof. Hussain Abdul-Kareem of the Lagos State University College of Medicine prepared the rhyme for Islamic Nursery schools.

international relations from Islamic perspectives. He considers such fashionable and borrowed concepts like democracy and sovereignty as un-Islamic as preached in the secular perspective. Among the Muslim economists, Khan observes that some scholars attempt to understand Islamic economics within the conceptual framework of conventional economics while others work within the framework of Islamic epistemology to develop concepts and instruments that can explain economic activity from an Islamic perspective.[6] The former represents this approach. Other relative issues that people are trying to find solution to from an Islamic perspective using this approach are the issues of whether the earth is stationary or not, whether the earth is spherical or flat in shape and other similar astronomical problems. In this approach, the disparity between Islamic and western concepts is searched for. A good example of this is the parallel concept of the theory of evolution propounded by Charles Darwin (1809 –1882), which traced the changeability of man from prosimian forms (ancestors of monkeys, apes and man) to the upright, intelligent homosapiens, as against the Qur'anic account of human creation.[7] Though, Islam realizes the changeability of human form from a drop to full human being in the woman's womb,[8] and that the fact that Allah created the first man, Adam by His command, it does not agree with the theory of evolution as conceived by some philosophers and scientists in the field of paleontology (study of fossils), comparative anatomy and embryology.

The Source Approach

The source approach is the system of making references to the Qur'an during the course of teaching science and technology and other social science concepts. The Qur'an is believed to have contained relevant verses having bearing on some topics taught in some subjects. As such, references are made to it as a step for Islamizing such topics. For instance, a teacher of Social Studies teaching the topic "Natural Disaster" enriches the topic by reformulating its objectives thus:

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[6] M.A.M. Khan, "The Philosophical Foundations of Islamic Political Economy"; *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, (AJISS)*, vol. 13, No. 3, Fall 1996. Pp. 391 – 392.

[7] F.A. Akinyosoye, "Man: His Evolution and the Changing Environment" in R.D. Abubakre, et.al (Eds) *Reading in General Studies in Nigeria;* Ilorin, Unilorin Library and Publication Committee, 1994. P. 104.

[8] Qur'an 23: 12 –14.

At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

    i. explain the meaning of disaster;

    ii. recognize that disasters are mainly with the awareness of Allah;

    iii. believe that disasters are to test the faith of believers;

    iv. give means through which disasters are controlled by prayer and other means (humanly possible efforts).

References are then made to the following Qur'anic verses to drive home the points:

> Do men think that they will be left alone on saying "we believe" and that they will not be tested? We did test those before them and Allah will certainly know those who are true from those who are false.[9]

> Do they not realize that they are tried every year once or twice? Yet, they turn not in repentance and they take no heed.[10]

> Be sure We shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods, lives and the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere – who say, when afflicted with calamity: "To Allah we belong and to Him is our return."[11]

References are also made to prophets like Ibrahim, Yusuf, Yunus, Ayub and Muhammad, who had been inflicted with one calamity or the other and how Allah rescued them from the calamities due to their patience, perseverance and prayer.

Similarly, some dwell on relevant portions of the prophetic traditions to support their point. For example, a primary five Social Studies' teacher teaching the topic 'Marriage Custom/ Selection of Wife/ husband', Islamizes the objectives of the topic thus:

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[9]   Ibid, 29: 2 –3.
[10] Ibid, 9: 126
[11] Ibid, 2: 155 –156.

At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

i.   list stages followed in selecting a wife or husband;

ii.   list the role of parents in marriage;

iii. mention the essentials of marriage;

iv.   appreciate the importance of mahr in marriage;

v.   mention some categories of women one should not marry.

In addition to making references to such Qur'anic verses as 4:3' 4:25; 4:4; 5:5; and 4: 23-24, the teacher refers to the following prophetic traditions:

> A matron should not be given in marriage except after consulting her, and a virgin should not be given in marriage except after her permission.[12]

> O you young man! Whoever is able to marry, should marry, for that will help him to lower his gaze and guard his modesty.[13]

> A believer is a brother of a believer, hence it is not lawful for him to bargain upon the bargain of a brother, nor propose (the hand of a girl) on the marriage proposal of his brother, until the latter (voluntarily) withdraws the proposal.[14]

The Relational Approach

The relational approach is a method of relating scientific and technological concepts and principles to the Qur'an and *sunnah*. This approach is of two fold, namely expounding scientific facts from the Qur'an and Hadith, and searching for scientific proof of the Qur'an. The former sometimes referred to as Bucaillistic approach had been a dynamic Islamization strategy taken by some Muslim scholars via writing and discussing science from a true faith perspective. AbuSulayman listed some scholars that used this method: Ibrahim Farag, Muhammad Ahmad El-Ghamrawi, Muhammad Mahmoud Ibrahim, Khattab Muhammad, Malek bin Nabi, Waheed-uddin Khan, Muhammad Said Kira, Ahmad Abdu-Salam El-kerdani, Muhammad Jamaluddin, El-Fandi, Abder-Razzak Nawfal, Ahmad Zaki, Hanafi Ahmad, Mustafa Mahmood,

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12   M.M. Khan, *Sahih Al-Bukhari (Arabic – English)*, vol. 7, Beirut, Dar a- Arabia, 1985. P. 52.
13   Ibid, p. 3.
14   Ibid, p. 55 – 56.

Hasan Zeino. Afeef Tabbarah, Ferdouse Khan, Akbar Alli and Maurice Buccaile to mention but a few.[15] It needs to be mentioned that the interplay of orientations in the sciences and the liberal arts had made some non-Muslim writers to dabble into the Qur'an via sciences. Among such orientalist scholars are Sir James Geans, A Cressy Morrison, Alexis Carel, Graham Cannon and Albert Einstein. John Clover Monsma also invited about forty American specialists to contribute to his work he published under the title, *The Evidence of God in an Expanding Universe*. This work was later revised by M.J. El-Fandi and translated into Arabic by Ab-Dimirdash Abdel-Majeed Sarhan.[16]

The approach involves searching for scientific facts in the Qur'an and hadith. For example, in human reproduction, it is scientifically asserted that fertilization of an ovule starts with the presence of a small quantity of sperm containing a large number of spermatozoa after detaching itself from the ovary in the fallopian tube. The confirmation of this scientific fact demonstrates the mighty power of Allah in creating man from a drop of sperm where in a Qur'anic verse, Allah says:

> Was he not a drop of sperm emitted (in lowly form), then did he become a leech-like clot; then did (Allah) make and fashion (him) in due proportion; and of him He made two sexes, male and female.[17]

To confirm man's period of gestation in the uterus, the following verses are referred to:

> Man We did create a quintessence (of clay), then We placed him as (a drop of) sperm in a place of rest firmly fixed; then We made sperm into a clot of congealed blood; then of that clot We made a (foetus) lump; then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed out of it another creature. So blessed be Allah, the best to create.[18]

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[15] A.A. AbuSulayman, "Islamization of Knowledge: A New Approach Toward Reform of Contemporary Knowledge" in *Islam: Source and Purpose of Knowledge*; International Institute of Islamic Thought, Herndon, 1988. P. 145.

[16] Z.R. El-Nejjar, "The Limitations of science and the Teachings of science from the Islamic Perspective;" *AJISS,* Herndon, vol. 3, No. 1. 1986. P. 65.

[17] Qur'an 75: 37 – 39.

[18] Ibid, 23: 12 – 14.

> O people, if you are in doubt concerning the resurrection; then consider that We have indeed created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then from clotted blood, then from a lump of flesh, partly formed and partly unformed, in order that We may make our power manifest to you. And We cause what will remain in the wombs for an appointed term; then we bring you forth as babes….[19]

Still on the same subject matter, references are made to popular hadith:

> Undoubtedly, the creation of each of you takes place when he is assembled in his mother's womb, for (the period of) forty days it is in the state of a drop, then it becomes a clot (of blood) in the same way, and then in similar way it becomes a mass (piece of flesh). Thereafter an angel is sent to it who breathes the spirit (ruh) into it….[20]

Searching for scientific proof of the Qur'an is used by scholars to determine some scientific facts within the scope of the Qur'an. It involves finding answers to why certain injunctions are enjoined or forbidden in Islam. For instance, the Qur'anic injunction that mothers should breastfeed their babies for two whole years for those who desire to complete the term has been buttressed by scientific finding that breast milk contains protein, fat, carbohydrate, mineral salts particularly those of calcium and magnesium and vitamins;[21] hence, the recent campaign against the use of canned milk and feeding bottle by nursing mothers. To further corroborate the stand of Islam on breastfeeding, it has been discovered that breastfeeding protects babies from allergic disorders especially asthma and eczema, and gastro-intestinal infections, respiratory infections and viral infections.[22]

Also, the prohibition of pork consumption in Islam has been given scientific backing. Dr. Mohammed Jaffer listed sixteen kinds of germs discovered in

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[19] Ibid, 22: 6.

[20] M.O.A. Abdul, *The Selected Traditions of An-Nawawi,* Lagos, Islamic Publications Bureau. 1973. P. 26.

[21] M. Duncombe & B. Weller, *Paediatric Nursing*; London, ELBS and Baillere Tindall. 1979. Pp. 126 – 144.

[22] L.J. Derek, *Every Woman;* London, Faber & Faber. 1986. P. 330.

pork in modern researches and the diseases which could be caused by them.[23] It is equally discovered that the fat content of pork is more that what can be found in any other meat. Dr. Glen equally has this to say on pork:

> One in six people in the USA and Canada has germ in their muscles-trichinosis from eating pork infected with trichina worms. Many people so infected have no symptoms. Most of those who do have, recover slowly. Some die. Some are reduced to permanent invalids. All were careless pork eater…. No one is immune from this disease and there is no cure. Neither antibiotics or drugs or vaccines affect these tiny deadly worms. Preventing infection is the real answer.[24]

Tributary Approach

The contributions of the Muslims in the advancement of science and promotion of intellectual activities are often used as a means of Islamizing knowledge. These valuable contributions are referred to in the field of mathematics, alchemy, astronomy, cartography, architecture, agriculture, medicine and others. In medicine, such scholars like Al-Tarabi, Abu ᶜAli Hussayn ibn Sina, Al-Majusi and Al-Razi are constantly eulogized for their numerous contributions to medicine as a discipline.[25] Al-Razi is said to have written about two hundred books on various subjects and his medical encyclopedia entitled *al-Hawi* was in twenty volumes, and it covered the whole range of medical knowledge.[26] In Mathematics, Al-Khawarizmi introduced into Europe the science of Algebra and Arabic numerals. The discovery of zero, trigonometry, tangent and cotangent was attributed to the Muslims.[27] Considering the great influence of Muslims on Western Europe, Watt writes:

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[23] A.S. Alkali, "Muslims' Abstinence from Pork: Medical Highlights;" *Al-ᶜIlm – Magazine of the Islamic Medical Association,* Zaria, Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital, vol. 4. No. 1, Nov. 1989. P. 55.

[24] Ibid, p. 56.

[25] I.R. Al-Faruqi & L.L. Al-Faruqi, *The Cultural Atlas of Islam;* New York, Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986. Pp. 305 – 313.

[26] M.O. Opeloye, "Islam and Intellectual Development: A Challenge to Contemporary Nigerian Muslims" in I. A. B. Balogun, et. Al. (Eds), *The Place of Religion in the Development of Nigeria*; Ilorin, Department of Religions, Unilorin, 1988. Pp. 60 - 62.

[27] Ibid, p. 63.

> … it is clear that the influence of Islam on Western
> Christendom is greater than is usually realized. Not merely did
> Islam share with Western Europe many material products and
> technological discoveries; not merely did it stimulate Europe
> intellectually in the field of science and philosophy, but it
> provoked Europe into forming a new image of itself.[28]

In the same vein, Brifeld further recognizes the contributions of Muslims to the
modern world when he, as quoted by Qutb, says:

> Science was the most important contribution of Arab
> civilization to the modern world ... and it was not science
> alone that revived Europe. Many other effects of Islamic
> civilization shed their rays of light on Europe. Although there
> is not a particular aspect of the European blossoming whose
> origin cannot safely be ascribed to the influence of Islamic
> culture. These influences are found most clearly and most
> significantly in that capacity which has flourished the modern
> world with its enduring and distinctive power; namely the
> natural science and the spirit of scientific enquiry.[29]

Critical Review Approach

Islam began to be studied in Europe in the twelfth century based on the Bible
and theology. The Biblical conception of nature, man and God was taken by
the Europeans to be the perfect view, which could not be expressed by any
alternative means. Whenever the teaching of Islam went contrary to the
Biblical view, the former was taken to be false.[30] They thus described Islam as
falsehood and a deliberate perversion of the truth.[31] As a means of correcting
the heresy of the non-Muslim orientalists and their writings on Islam, Muslims
are now taking time to study these works with a view to showing their cloven
hoof on Islam. Scholars like ᶜAbdur-Rahman Doi, Hamza Mustafa Ngozi,
Muhammad Qutb, Al-Mawdudi, Mustafa al-Subba'iy, As-Sabuni, Jamal

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[28] W.M. Watt, *The Influence of Islam on Medieval Europe (Islamic Survey 9);* Edinburgh,
Edinburgh University press. 1972. P. 84.

[29] S. Qutb, *The Religion of Islam;* Beirut, IIFSO, 1975. P. 72.

[30] W.M. Watt, p. 83.

[31] Among the scholars who wrote against Islam are Schacht, Goldziher, A.A. Fyzee, N.J.
Coulson, Perron, Salman Rushdie and many others.

Badawi and Isma^cil Raji al-Faruqi, have written some critical works on the distorted information about Islam made by these non-Muslim writers.[32]

Closely related to the above is the promotion of the works written by non-Muslims in favour of Islam and Islamic civilization. This measure is taken as a means of repudiating the works initially written by non-Muslims against Islam. Some orientalists who embraced Islam also gained the support of the Muslims in this method. Among such authors who won the favour of the Muslims was Muhtar Holland who was once a student of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He embraced Islam and translated a lot of Arabic works into English including Al-Ghazali's works.[33] Also, Muhammad William John Sheard, an English man who embraced Islam and is now writing in favour of Islam.[34] Other writers include Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall and Maurice Bucaille. While the former was an English man who worked on the translation of the Glorious Qur'an, the latter was a French scientist who studied the scientific nature of the Qur'an.

Islamic Perspectives' Approach

This approach was initiated in Nigeria by the authority of the New Horizons College in Minna. It entails leaving the secular subjects in the hands of the teachers using the secular syllabus and the secular textbooks to prepare students for the secular national examinations, but to appoint a new teacher to teach a completely new subject called Islamic Perspectives. The objective of this approach is to expose students to Islamic viewpoints on concepts and contemporary issues. The approach is not actually meant for teaching Islamic Studies per se, but to look outward at the world around from the perspective of thinking, rational committed Muslim.[35] In this wise, the teacher of Islamic perspectives does not need to be trained as an Islamic Studies teacher, but must

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[32] For instance, Dr. Jamal Badawi wrote a book titled *"Muhammad's Prophethood: An Analytical View";* while H.M. Njozi wrote "*The Sources of the Qur'an: A Critical Review of the Authorship Theories"* to refute the wrong information written by some Orientalists on Prophet Muhammad and the Qur'an respectively.

[33] See M.Holland, *Al-Ghazali: Inner Dimensions of Islamic Worship;* London, The Islamic Foundation; 1983; and M. Holland, The Duties of Brotherhood in Islam; London, The Islamic Foundation; 1980.

[34] Among his books is "*The Myth of the Crucified Saviour"* published in Lagos by the Islamic Publications Bureau.

[35] B. Aisha, Lemu, "Islamization of Knowledge and Islamic Perspectives". A paper presented at the International Conference on Education held in Kano between 16th February 2008. P. 4.

have a deep understanding of Islam based on her personal interest, wide reading in the areas of sciences, geography, history, government, law, economics, arts, culture, and so on. To facilitate effective teaching of Islamic perspectives, the school authority must make adequate provision for relevant textbooks, video cassettes and DVDs.

It should be mentioned that the International Board for Educational Research and Resources (IBERR) has a similar strategy of Islamizing knowledge called "Skill for Life" a full syllabus has been prepared for this, while work is in progress on textbooks written to the syllabus under the guidance of the IBERR Executive Committee members.[36]

A Critical Appraisal of the Approaches

A Professor of Medicine, Omar Hasan Kasule has considered all the abovementioned methodologies wrong approaches to the Islamization of knowledge programme.[37] His argument is that they did not address the core issues of the paradigms and methodology of disciplines. To him successful discipline reform must be characterized by pro-active intellectual effort, academically and methodologically rigorous, objective and have practical consequences. He concludes by saying:

> Reform (Islamization) is not theologizing knowledge since Islam is universal and all-embracing; it does not seek to parochialize knowledge and tailor it to a particular culture or place. The reform we have in mind is of paradigms, methodology and uses of knowledge and not its contents. Content is changing so rapidly that reforming it is clearly futile. [38]

As appropriate as the observation of the scholar is, we observe that constructive criticisms of such nature will further strengthen the programme. However, one needs to note that western education has been imbibed by the Muslim world and it is difficult to part with overnight. Today, Muslims attend

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[36]   Ibid
[37]   O.H. Kasule, "Islamization (Reform) of Disciplines of Knowledge: Procedures and Processes." A paper presented at the 6th World Conference on Islamic Education, Cape Town, South Africa, on 19 – 25, September, 1996) in IBERR, *IBERR's Manual For Muslim Schools;* Cape Town, 2001. P. 134.
[38]   Ibid, p. 135.

western schools and universities where their books, worldviews, ideas, culture and achievements are being taught to Muslim youths right from the nursery level to the university level. Worse still is the new globalization syndrome which exposes Muslims to the social life of the West with its mess. So, it will take a century to have the kind of educational reform Kasule is agitating for. The numerous methodologies mentioned above are, in our own opinion, not an end in themselves, but means to an end.

To start with, the substitute approach is a welcome development. It bails out Islamic Studies from the cage of being studied only from its department. If fairly lessens the effect of departmentalization as one of the major defects of the contemporary education system. The approach exposes both Muslim and non-Muslim to the contributions and views of Islam on certain concepts which hitherto might not be clear to them for not belonging to Islamic Department.

Expounding scientific facts from the Qur'an and hadith as a strategy demands proper knowledge of both secular and Islamic sciences. Though the method has been exposed to criticisms from scholars, it has helped in appreciating the authenticity of the Qur'an and the prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him). For instance, the Prophet was credited for giving a precise account of stages of fetus in the womb of pregnant women in that period when sophisticated hi-tech medical and scientific equipment like telescopes, microscopes, ultra-sound or scanning machine had not been invented.

Also, the approaches and methods of introducing Islamic ideologies to science and technology are not without shortcomings. For instance, the Source Approach does not represent ideal Islamization undertaking and ditto to the Relational Approach which reduces the Qur'an to mere confirmation of scientific proofs and makes Islam relevant to science and technology instead of making it relevant to Islam. At times, science itself is not static as it wobbles from one theory to the other. An embraced scientific theory today may become obsolete tomorrow. Thus, if certain Qur'anic verses have been used to buttress a theory, which is later rejected, such scriptural verses can then be subjected to questioning, hence such a Bucaillistic approach may not appropriately represent the true sense of Islamization. This approach has been criticized by some scholars who foresaw the danger of instability in theories of science as against the teaching of the Qur'an. In the view of Hoodbhoy, the system is nothing but a caricature of sciences in the Golden Age of Islam. He says:

In truth the new Islamic science is nothing but a fraudulent use of the word science. It seeks to capitalize on the science practised by the early Muslims. But it shares none of qualities which immortalized the achievements of scientists in Islam's Golden Age. If they were alive today, the great men of Islamic scholarship – like Ibn Sina, Omar Khayyam, Ibn al Haytham, and others – would probably be deeply embarrassed to see what is being called Islamic science.[39]

Thus it is not enough to use verses of the Qur'an to support some scientific discoveries; rather scholars are expected to discover important scientific facts and create new concepts just as Al-Jazari and Omar Khayyam discovered intricate machines and solution of cubic equations respectively.

It has been observed by scholars that experts in modern sciences are over-confident, pompous and arrogant to realise the limits of their knowledge. Based on this, their discoveries are at times being faulted while some could not withstand the test of time. An example of this is documented by Quraishi and Ali-Shah thus:

It is unfortunate that very often, theories and values are projected that are not yet proved and that are later abrogated. For instance, the atom was once considered indivisible; the concept later stood as badly shattered as the atom itself. Likewise, the concept of conservation of mass was once a fundamental "law"; it is not even a theory now. We were once told that a certain quality of butter or animal fat taken daily was essential for our health, but the effects of cholesterol accumulation have considerably reduced this importance of fats. And so on and so forth. This goes to prove that some findings of science are of a transient nature and subject to frequent revision.[40]

The approach of searching for scientific proof of the Qur'an has its limitation in the fact that the Qur'an is far above being proved by science. It does not

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[39]   P. Hoodbhoy, Islam and Science: Religious Orthodoxy and the Battle for Rationality; London, Zed Books Ltd. 1991. P. 149.

[40]   Quraishi, M. Mahmud & Ali Shah S. Maqsud (1989), "The Role of Islamic Thought in the Resolution of the Present Crisis in Science and technology" in *Toward Islamization of Disciplines,* Virginia, IIIT. P. 94.

need science to provide its proof, but the other way round. In other words, it is science that needs to be proved by the Qur'an.

Identification of disparity between Islamic and Europeans concepts as an approach shows the fallibility of human knowledge which needs to be rectified by the word of God but which at times may be wrongly interpreted under the influence of faulty human whims and ideology, limitations and weaknesses inherent.

Emphasising the contributions of the Muslims to intellectual development is an approach which exposes some theories and ideas which have been considered as new discoveries and innovations as being developed by early Muslim scholars, and this has erased the notion that the West are the harbingers of these discoveries. That not withstanding, it is not enough that a son should be contented with the achievements of his father or grandfather. What matters most is how that son has been able to build upon the foundation and achievements of his father or grandfather.

Critical review of non-Muslim writers on Islam as an approach has revealed that some prescribed texts in public schools contain wrong and blasphemous information about Islam. The timely intervention of NACOMYO and her protest against the inclusion of a Yoruba literature book titled *Iyawo Alarede* led to its quick withdrawal from the prescribed textbooks for Secondary school students in the Osun State of Nigeria.[41] Also some Islamic private schools have stopped prescribing the *Macmillan Primary English Course* for their pupils following their discovery that the texts contain unwarranted provocative expressions against Islam.[42]

It has to be noted that the refutation of the wrong information of non-Muslim writers about Islam by Muslim scholars has yielded some fruitful results. With this method, some open-minded scholars are now confessing the legacy of Islam in all fields of life. This quotation from Watt's work elucidates this better:

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[41] It has to be mentioned that the author of the book has recently reviewed the book and so edited the blasphemous statement about Islam. The book has been recommended for secondary schools after the corrections.

[42] See O. Taiwo, et.al *Macmillan Primary English Course 5, Module Five,* Lagos, Macmillan Publishers. 1998. Pp. 20 ff.

> It has been recognized for some time that medieval Christian writers created an image of Islam that was in many respects denigratory, but through the efforts of scholars over the last century or so a more objective picture is now taken shape in the minds of occidental. For our cultural indebtedness to Islam, however, we Europeans have a blind spot. We sometimes belittle the extent and importance of Islamic influence in our heritage, and sometimes overlook it altogether.[43]

The strategy of adding Islamic perspectives as a means of Islamization of knowledge has been considered inadequate as it gives Muslims a false and dangerous mentality that "views Islam as some kind of detergent which when used on economics, or psychology or architecture or mass communication or logic or whatever cleanses the latter of impurities and somehow yields a purified and Islamic understanding of the discipline;" whereas the validity, value orientation and methodology of Islamic disciplines ought to have been derived from the world-view of Islam and not from the counter western disciplines.

Conclusion

One appreciates the various recommendations and suggestions on the curriculum design as reached in the world conferences on Muslim education and the subsequent international conferences on Islamization of knowledge. The numerous approaches, no doubt, are indications that Muslims have realized that education is a major vehicle of cultural promotion and is value-laden. Muslims would thus be undoing their worldview should they decide to be indifferent to the programme of Islamization as a major means of education reform. While we contend that the approaches are not perfect, we strongly believe that since Rome was not built in a day, and since a journey of a thousand kilometers commences from a step, the approaches are still in order. However, efforts should be made towards ensuring that the body and purpose of knowledge, its process and methodologies of discovering, validating, imparting and applying it, are made subservient to the Islamic worldview so that it is able to produce Islamic, social, and humanistic knowledge based on wahy and wujud. In other words, the method of practising, discovering, compiling, piecing together, communicating and publishing intellectual activity should be based on the Islamic concept of the universe, life, and man.

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[43]   W. M. Watt, pp. 2-4.

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