EVOLVING TRENDS IN THE CURRICULUM OF HIGHER LEVEL ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN KERALA: AN APPRAISAL FROM SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

> Son, sit at the feet of the scholars and dose to them, for God gives life to the heart through the light of wisdom *(al-Hikmah),* Like as He gives life to the dead soil through rain from heaven. (*Mālik ibn Anas, Muwattah,* 2:328)

Abstract
The main intention of this paper is to provide details on how Islamic Religious Higher Education (IRHE) and its curriculum evolved in Kerala. While doing this, the history of various educational organizations, their reform attempts will be dealt briefly, but with the main intention of tracing the evolution of curriculum. In the course of this, firstly, the paper provides a brief historical account of Islamic education at higher levels in India, but with specific focus on their curriculum. Secondly, it traces in brief the history of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in Kerala. As obvious the central concern will be on the higher level IRE provided in various institutions throughout the breadth and length of Kerala. History of IRE at primary and secondary levels, thus, is not specifically within the scope of the paper, unless such an account is demanded for explanation on the key purpose. The special focus of the paper will be on various current attempts of reform of the curriculum of these institutions, and what could be done further to make these institutions relevant to the empowerment of Muslims and their creative social involvements.

Prepared by
Dr. Shafeeq Hussain Vazhathodi al-Hudawi
BA (IGNOU), BIC and MIC (DHIU), MHSc. ELS (IIUM), PhD Curriculum and Instruction (IIUM)
Senior Lecturer, Department of Foundations of Education, Faculty of Education
UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA, Skudai Campus, Johor Bahru
Phone: (07) 55-33177/Mobile: 010-5154971
Email: shafeeq@utm.my/ shafeeq75@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

As far as the history of arrival of Islam and the subsequent establishment of Islamic religious education institutions is concerned, South Indian states especially Kerala has a separate identity from that of the North India. This is mainly due to different means of introduction of Islam in India. Coming to southern parts of India, Islam came through Arab tradesmen who had business ties even prior to the period of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The business ties, thus, facilitated the message of Islam to spread through peaceful means, through mosques (Dale, 1980). Meanwhile, since Islam spread in the Northern parts of India through various Muslim Kings, it should be assumed that the organized of system of religious instruction must have firstly started there. Ahmad (1985)'s reference that "the responsibility of providing higher education was in hands of the state, while primary education remained in the private hands" points to this fact" (p. 12).

The Islamic Higher Education Institutions (IHEIs) 'introduced in India by Muslim rulers was a prototype of the system prevalent in parts of the Central and Western Asia' *(Ibid)*.

Specifically, they served two interests. First, they trained bureaucrats, judges (*qudāt*, sing. *qādī*), jurisprudents (*fuqahā'*, sing. *faqīh*), the juris-consultants (*muftī)* qualified to issue *fatāwā* (sing. *fatwā*) or legal opinions, and civil servants able to man the administrative cadres of different ruling dynasties (Ahsan, 2008; Sikand, 2008). Such a trend of establishing *madāris* for administrative interests was also perceived in the Abbasid times as well (Nakosteen, 1964). Persian, Arabic, *fiqh*, principles of *fiqh*, *tafsīr, hadith* and rational sciences and various scholastic disciplines were the subjects in their curriculum.

Second, the IHEIs served the fervour of certain rulers in certain intellectual fields. Few of these rules were scholars on their own and they accordingly patronized erudite scholars of specific disciplines. For example, during the Khilji dynasty (1290-1320 A.D.) scholars like Mawlana Ilmuddin, who was second to none in Logic and philosophy were invited to Delhi (Ahmad, 1985, p. 8). Babur, a prominent Mughal ruler, invited Fut'hullah Shirazi to his capital, who in turn led the progress of rational subjects like logic, philosophy and scholastic theology, which became very much favourable with the *'ulamā'*.

Some prominent rulers like Akbar and Aurangazeb made temporal changes in order to make the system produce civil servants capable to man the administrative cadres of the dynasty in power. Akbar for example, introduced agriculture, astronomy, physiognomy, economics, civics, and medicine in the curriculum for children. During his time, the higher sciences were divided into *Ilāhī* (Theology), *Riyāḍī* (Mathematics) and *Tabī'ī* (Natural Sciences) (Sufi, 1981; Qmaruddin, 1996; Siddiqui, 2004).

Aurangazeb, interested in reforming the curriculum, was the first to appeal that History and Geography, the languages of surrounding nations, their forms of governments, manners and custom must find suitable place in every curriculum prepared for *Madrasah* (pl. *madāris*) education (Ahmad, 1985; Siddiqui, 2004). But Aurangazeb could not do much in the field of re-vitalization of education of *madāris,* because the Mughal dynasty was about to crumble that time. Nevertheless, he commissioned a French Quarter for Mulla Nizamuddin Sihālwi, who later on compiled the famous curricula, called after his name, *Dars-i- Nizāmī* or *Nizāmī* curriculum. This famous *Nizāmiyyah* curriculum is still followed in many Indian *madāris.*

The *Nizāmī* curriculum

The *Nizāmī* curriculum was dominated by discursive rational sciences such as logic, philosophy and dialectics (Parveen 2005). It gave instruction in the Persian and Arabic languages besides natural philosophy, theology, law, astronomy, geometry, arithmetic, logic, rhetoric and grammar. Mulla Nizamuddin gave importance to the art of historiography. He also included many new books on physics, mathematics, geometry, astronomy, Astrology, Algebra, Physics and medicine" (Parveen 2005, p. 64). However, books on 'transmitted' sciences such as Hadīth, *tafsīr* were only to nominal levels (Sikand, 2005).

It was against this backdrop, Shah Waliyyullah of Delhi (1703-1762) started to give more stress to *tafsīr* and Hadīth in the new curriculum. Through assiduous efforts, he and his son Shah Abdul Aziz popularised the *Sihāh al-Sittah* on *hadīth*, though it did not get general acceptance (Sufi, 1986). Other *'ulamā'* like Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, Shaikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlawi and Mualana Khairabadi also sought to revive the *hadīth* studies in the traditional curriculum in early 18th century. However, their attempts were disintegrated as soon as the British started to settle in India.

The two trends identified about bring another point into our attention. That is, not only that the existence of IHEIs was only sporadic incidents, but that various Muslim dynasties being the elite culture, they remained indifferent about the education of general masses and did not recruit other than elites and nobles for such posts. Accordingly, "higher religious education and top religious and administrative posts were to be kept as a closely-guarded preserve of the foreign-born Turkish, Central Asian, Iranian and Arab Muslim elite",

not for Indians who converted to Islam at the hands of rulers (Ahsan, 2008, p. 27). They had to be content merely with knowledge of the basic principles of the faith.

It was in this backdrop, various *Sufi* orders had theirown *madāris* to instruct the common Muslim mass in Islamic spiritual and moral teachings. Called *Zāwiyah* in Arabic *or khānqāh* in India, they taught similar subjects but from a *sufi* perspective. Jafri (2006) narrates what Shaikh Nizam al-Din Awliya had to do when he reached the *Jamā'at khanqāh* of Baba Farid. Though Shaikh Nizam al-Din was already instructed in the Islamic theological sciences, yet he was instructed again on six chapters of the Qur'an by Baba Farid (p. 94). Beside other regular subjects taught in normal IHEIs, the works of al-Suhrawardi (founder of the Suhrawardi order), Ibn al-Arabi and later those of Jami were taught in these Sufi *madāris* (*khānqāh*) (FazlurRahman as cited El-Muhammady, p. 53). Also, at times, such kinds of education were also imparted through learning circles in mosques, the homes of '*ulamā'*, nobles and merchants (Sikand, 2005, p. 33).

In summary, three types of curricula coexisted during that time with three different points of view; one comparatively more religious in outlook with *hadith* and *tafsir* as core subjects in Delhi, the second with *fiqh* and principles of *fiqh* as its focus at Luknow, and the other dominated by rationalist patterns of thought emphasising the study of discursive sciences at Khairabad. These sets of curriculum continued in their original formulation for more than a century (Siddiqui, 2004; Deoband: The Education, n.d.).

THE COLONIAL TIMES (1757-1947 A.D.)

During the colonial rule there were two types of *madāris*; one run on the tradition of Muslim education system during the period of Muslim dynasties and the other run by the British. The traditional *madāris* were established by the '*ulamā* after the unsuccessful event of 1857. Consequent to the event, many religious leaders were targeted by the British, many *madāris* were closed and their properties were confiscated, to which the '*ulamā'* reacted vigorously by establishing *madāris* and educational institutions throughout India. They were creative and timely in reacting to these threats and made *madrasah* the institutional basis of their work (Ahmad, 1985). They diverted their attention to safeguarding the religious faith of Muslim masses against the intensified proselytizing activities and bold criticism against Islam from various circles; educational, intellectual, cultural as well as political; and protecting the Muslim cultural legacy from the cultural onslaught of the British (Metcalf, 1982; Hashmi, 1989). Their curriculum focused on the Holy Qur'ān and *Hadīth* and other traditional sciences relatd to the religion. Thus, in contrary to the situation during the period of Muslim dynasties, the *madāris* now "were increasingly part of the frontline in defending Muslim society against both pressures of the colonial rule and Western culture, and the possibility of being absorbed into the wider Hindu world" (Robinson, 2005, p. xii). The famous *Darul Uloom,* Deoband of Saharanpur district in the Western Uttar Pradesh was the first to be established with this purpose in mind.

On the other hand, *madāris* run by the British administration prepared educated Muslim for various cadres for the civil services "… and to enable them to compete on more equal terms with Hindus for employment under government" (Golden jubilee souvenir, the Muslim Educational Association of Southern India, 1954, p. 35). *Madaris* like *Madrasah 'Āliyah* in Calcutta established by Warren Hastings in 1781, and *Madrasah Ghazi al-Din* in Delhi -later became the well-known as Anglo-Arabic College or Delhi College under its principal Alois Sprenger (d. 1893)- followed *Dars-i-Nizāmi* system. These types of *madāris* attracted a good number of Muslim students, for after their study students were drawn to the government services. These *madāris*, therefore, differed both on the scores of the purpose they served and the agencies responsible for their establishment, from the traditional *madāris.*

THE POST INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

In the post-independence period, the number of *madāris* continuted to multiply, but their standard declined, their utility was limited to only for a small community and their strengths were substantially lost (Hamid, 2004). There were three trends among those joined these *madāris*, which might have also controbuted to this quandary. Firstly, for many families *madāris* were the only accessible means of any form of education in their localities. So these family were pleased with whatever little chances of education they had. Secondly, even if the children were trained and educated in secular schools, they could not aspire for jobs both in public and private sectors. Therefore, more and more parents began to sent their children to *madāris* (Sikand, 2005). These groups sought to improve the standards of the *madāris* and reform their curriculum. Thirdly, many families also wanted to carry on the tradition to get one of their son to become an *'ālim* and they did not aspire anything more than that. These trend, in other words, also caused the number of *madāris* to increase. The degree of internal dispute among *'ulamā'* -that is 'the striking characteristic of the process of modern religious changes among Indian Muslims'- according to Metcalf (1982), was another factor that caused their number to increase (p. 334).

SOUTH INDIAN *MADĀRIS*

Coming to southern parts of India, as mentioned earlier it is observed that religious instruction was imparted to the emerging community of Muslim through mosques, established by tradesmen and *Sufis* as propagators of Islam.

For example, in Tamil Nadu scholars from Yemen such as Makhdum Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir as-Siddiqi is said to have lead the propagation of Islam in the town of Adirampattinam about 140 km north to Kilakkarai, in Ramanathapuram district. By the late 17th century, Kilakkarai was also graced by the presence of Shaykh SadaqatallHh, a disciple of the former, considered to be one of Tamil Nadu's most important religious scholar who had established the first madrasah in Tamil Nadu (Tschacher, 2006). *Madaris* like *Bāqiyāt al-Sālihāt* established 1884, and *Darussalam 'Umrābād* founded in 1924 in Tamil Nadu were influenced by their North Indian counter parts. Their curriculum was a modified version of the north Indian Nizami curriculum. This is mainly due to the presence of followers of the Shafi'ite school of law in Tamil Nadu and thus the Shafi'ite law is taught beside Hanafite law.

In Kerala, for example, scholars from Yemen, Egypt, and Hijaz are said to have conducted classes in the oldest but the famous *dars* like the one at Tanur *Valiya Kulangara* Mosque (Islamic Encyclopaedia (Malayalam, 2005). The tradition of *dars* (pl. *durūs*)was the very first mode of public education. It is a unique feature of Kerala, not found anywhere else in India (Kutty, 2003, p. 54).

The *Dars* follows a book (*kitab*) based system. Students learned *kitāb* by *kitāb*. Whoever completed one *kitāb* could start with the second and finish early. The jurisprudence (*fiqh*) is put as forefront of their teachings. They are taught with little bearing on the pupils' social life and psychological needs. Whereas in the earlier times, the curriculum was broad enough to include both religious and secular subjects to cater the material moral and spiritual wellbeing of students (Muhammad, 1974), towards the end of 19th century, such a tradition was left behind and the *dars* system shrink to a bare skeleton of knowledge in *fiqh*, *Qur'an*, *Hadīth*, and few ancillary sciences, which later became a convention especially with the emergence of modern social and applied science in a secular format and alienation of religious scholars from such fields.

DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN KERALA

Besides *dars*, presently, three trends are in vogue, which variedly contribute to the Islamic Religious Higher Education tradition, i.e., (1) the Sharī'ah College tradition, (2) the Arabic college tradition and (3) the Integrated system that have incorporated 'modern' subjects and teaching methods to varying degrees into the curriculum. Kerala accommodates a large number of institutions among all these categories. The following Table 1 provide for comparison among these categories.

These types of Islamic Higher Education Institutions (IHEIs) began to be established in an organized and institutionalized manner in Kerala during the early twentieth century, by various newer religious organizations. And when they started to found institutions for higher studies of Islam, their areas of religious activism and discourse were, in fact, much determined by the secular-liberal and social-intellectual milieu which sustained a bifurcated conception of knowledge, and educational system. They were not inspired by the united Islamic vision of truth and reality. They also established many 'Islamic' Shari'ah and Arabic colleges, although their theoretical foundations were almost non-existent. Consequently their conceptions of overall educational atmosphere as well as their curricula never have been a holistic or integrated one, neither inspired by the architectonic unity of the spiritual and intellectual tradition. Sadly and unfortunately, any determined and collective efforts in this regard yet to be realized.

Thus, the Shari'ah colleges evolved out of conventional *dars* system, under the leadership of Kerala graduates of higher Seminaries like *Bāqiyāth al-Ṣālihat Arabic College*, *Lathīfiyah Arabic College*, *Darul Uloom Umarabad* in Tamil Nadu and other higher seminaries. In line with *madāris* of they graduated from, they appended *dars* with subjects such as Arabic language, Arabic grammar, philology and rhetoric, logics, theology, Islamic Jurisprudence, *tasawwuf, tafsir, hadīth, munāzarah*, History, Geography, Astronomy, Engineering (*handasah*), Mathematics and Malayalam in the *Dars* curriculum; some at nominal level, cut off from the authentic tradition (Miller, 1974, p. 369). As Zubair (2006) observes, with the establishment of the *Al-Jāmi'ah Al-Nooriyyah al-'Arabiyyah* (JNA) in 1962, one of the first of such colleges, the trend of transferring the traditional mode of learning from mosques to separate building, with divided classes and provisions for examinations and certificates started to crop up among Kerala Muslims. It is the premier Sunni training college (Miller, 1974, p. 369).

The Shari'ah colleges like JNA, which count approximate into two hundred, similar with the JNA, specifically train religious scholars. Students join them for collegiate or higher level education, after they have completed a five year general education and another five year study at a mosque-oriented *dars*. The main aim of the institution is to prepare religious specialists who as *qādī*, teacher and *imām* in the Muslim community could nourish their religious life and preserve the faith.

In a sense, their primary task is to prepare the interpreter of the religious tradition as envisaged in the past, than being its re-interpreter relating the tradition with the contemporary reality. As a result, many of its products, although very much influential among the traditional Muslims, could not approach the changes with Islamic spirit and fervour. With few exceptions, many of them are not equipped with insight to provide improved and visionary leadership especially among the young audience who are better exposed to the modern trend, mostly well-educated and work as teachers, social activitists and lecturers (Miller, 1974).

Their curricula are oriented to the task of correctly transmitting and teaching of the traditional books in *tafsīr* (*Baidāwī*), *Hadīth (Bukhārī, Muslim, Tirmidhī),* theology *(sharh al-'aqā'id)*, fiqh *(Mahalli, Tuhfah)* to a young generation of scholars. However, in order the students be able to work effectively as religious head of Muslim localities, students are given practical training in *wa'z* (religious oration). Thoroughly devoted and disciplined, they were

effective workers and symbols of continuity (Miller, 1974). As regular prayer leaders (*a'immah*, sing. *imām*) in mosques they constantly guided the public on religious matters. As teachers in primary *madāris,* they hand on the Islamic tradition to young minds. At instances, students are also provided with tuition, although in very limited scale, in English, Urdu and other secular subjects (Zubair, 2004).

The major focus of the curriculum has been and continue to be jurisprudential than theological. Students are trained in the *Shafi'ī* school of jurisprudence. Mastery of specific texts *(kitāb)* is the prime method used. Variedly the focus is on learning to analyse the sentence structures, their primary tones and intricacies of ritual practices, than comprehending the wisdom behind their institution as a law and methods of their implementation in the contemporary situations. Largely, the training in various disciplines was theoretical than being practical. These types of colleges, thus, miss to train students to deal independently, but effectively with the authentic sources of Islam and comprehensively understanding its principles. Even under the guidance of pious but capable teachers, students are never given a chance to practice and utilize various methodical tools related to the principle of jurisprudence or Hadīth (*usūl al-fiqh* and *usūl al-Hadīth*) through first hand practice, thereby some students even miss the whole point of why a certain text is taught. No avenues are made to train students to engage in theological reflection in the issues of the present.

Variedly some of the Sharī'ah Colleges provided special training in Arts and Islamic Courses (AIC) in order to prepare their Muslim students with approved credentials in humanities and social sciences, but with so called Islamic orientations. This attracted more students, mainly because its graduates got government employments. The last trend, therefore, evolved out of these AIC course, that at present, many institutions providing Islamic religious higher education sector have integrated modern and Islamic education. This latter type taught various subjects related to religion as well as various subjects taught in secular schools, but without ever trying to compromise them.

Those institution under this third category, variedly integrate various subjects and that too at different educational levels. For example, *Al-Jamia al-Islamiya*, which started as a Madrasah in 1955 (JI) strive to produce pious and active scholars capable of leading the Islamic society in terms of knowledge and thought, skilled in religious and modern sciences, capable to contribute to the formation of the Islamic society. In the attempt it claims to providing a creative exemplary for Islamic education combining both meritorious old and useful from the new, on the model of modern universities in the Muslim world.

Those admitted to JI go through a two-year preparatory *(tamhīdī)* course, and then through degree programmes offered in *Usūl al-Din* and *Sharī'ah* which run for four years. After completing the degree courses at JI, students can do a two-year Master's course in the Qur'an Studies or *Hadīth* Studies or Islamic Mission *(Da'wah)* or a two years Leadership and Orators' course. One of its peculiarities is that it facilitates for researchers to carry out varieties of scientific research and strategic studies with regards to issue related Muslim community in India.

Another example of the integrated education is provided by Darul Huda Islamic University, which started as an Islamic Academy (DHIA) in 1986. DHIA emerged from the efforts to re-orient the *dars* curricula taking lessons from 'the outstanding personalities such as Imam al-Ghazali' (Zubair, 2004, p. 63). DHIU aims to produce exemplary and pious scholars capable of propagating Islam and to prepare scientific and fruitful strategies for revitalization of the Islamic religious education so as to benefit the Muslim community.

In short, there are scores of institutions providing for higher-level religious studies. The problems is that initially, the educational reform movements in India as well in Kerala who run these institutions chose between secular modern or Muslim traditional system. Then it

was combination of the both traditional and modern, mostly championing modernist interpretations of Islam, than being ISLAMIC. However, there is growing concerns among the elder religious scholars that these systems do not produce able scholars who would play creative role in the society.

Table 1
Major types of Islamic Religious Higher Education Institutions

	Authentic *Dars*	**Traditional Type of *madāris*/*Sharī'ah* Colleges**	**Arabic Colleges**	**Arts and Islamic Science Colleges**	**Integrated IRHE Institutions**
Main Characteristics	● Oriented to produce to authentic and well-rounded scholars	● Oriented about traditional professions; ●continue the spirit of the Ponnani tradition	● Job-oriented ● a more modern direction in Islamic education	● Job-oriented ● Specialist in Arabic Language and Social Science majors	All-inclusive curriculum
Aims	Produce genuine, religious oriented scholars and leaders	Produce *Imām*, *khatīb*, religious teachers for *madāris*	Produce Arabic teachers for mainstream government schools.	Offer degree/PG certificate in Arabic and Social Science majors in affiliation with Public Universities	Aims for the scholarly leaders able to modern trends with Islamic perspectives
Syllabus	Inclusive of all branches of knowledge relevant to human life	Curriculum on the pattern of *Ponnani* tradition and *Nizāmī* curriculum	Prescribed curriculum for the five year *Afzalul ulama'* course/ two post-*Afzalul ulama* course, plus some Islamic courses	● Prescribed curriculum of the Universities, plus some Islamic courses	Integrating modern and Islamic education

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN KERALA

The key problem is related to the term curriculum itself. A process definition of curriculum should cover every element involved in the process of education, i.e., Intents (aims, goals, objectives); Contents (scope and sequence); Pedagogy rather Andragogy (teaching adults focused on development of spirit, intellect and physical capabilities); Learning experiences and outcome; and Assessment. Deliberative plans around each of these key elements are essential to the success of IHEIs.

Intent

The IHEIs are most conspicuous for not having a vision about the role of their graduates in the future. Passivity with regards to the intents surrounds the question such as why we need these institutions.

At no stage of the educational process, the intellectual dynamism and spiritual activisms are coupled. The avenues for training students to engage in various forms of academic, student-oriented and community-service activities are so limited that even after graduation they remain insulated from 'social-welfare, health-related programme for the public and issues related to social justice and development' (Rosnani, 2007). As a result, the graduates of these institutions fail in the wider process of identity formation in the secular-democratic state of India. It is in fact in such contexts, the crucial need and subsequent plan to explore new ways of imagining the role of religion to develop and implement a comprehensive curriculum should be well coordinated (Zaman, 2002; AbuSulayman, 2009).

That is not to say that the founders the IHEIs were not passionate about, or cognizant of the unified vision of Islam. They were, indeed passionate; that is why they established many of such institutions for safeguarding the religious faith of the Muslims. Nevertheless, beyond a considerable level, they failed to seriously deliberate about how the Islamic concept of reality, knowledge, man and his destiny holistically be translated into the educational plane. The traditional education system that were available did not present Islam as an overall comprehensive and holistic belief-life-thought system, rather restricted the teaching on obligatory ritual and practices only. For sure, they had some general vision about what their graduates would eventually do. However, mostly, with regard to the curriculum in general, they were unaware what specifically they were meant for? With regard to various disciplines included in the curriculum, they just followed what they inherited from the past, without bothering about the criteria to be oriented when subject components are selected or without worrying whether the contents of such disciplines were developed according to the needs of time different from what these institutions were supposed to cater for.

This does not contradict the claim that, in fact, in the past it was the same textbooks and their contents that produced great scholars, and sometimes in the contemporary times. It is true that they did it; especially, few centuries back from now, although not generally, they were dynamic and productive in their mission. It is also true that, because of the inherent worth and merits congenital in these disciplines, worries about the ultimate success were misplaced as well. After all, the social, human and educational sciences prevalent today were established only quite recently. In fact, the current developments in the educational and social sciences, and the unleashed technological progress, brought about not only development and progress, but also many many-fold challenges and chaos. They even influenced and transformed the way people think and act. They become more engrossed with material progress and luxury than being concerned about the sufferings of the poor and have-nots. These chaotic situations mandate the regeneration of Islam and its dynamic ideals once again. It is in the face of severe challenges, the Islamic education system need to be revived with Islamic vigour and universality. "If the Muslim world wishes to set the reform agenda on the

right track, its priorities have to be reflected in an educational reform plan" (AbuSulayman, 2009, p. 43). Only when various choices regarding the knowledge, values and skills to be imparted through Islamic education curricula are mould in the crucible of Islam, these institutions can genuinely and most effectively serve Muslims.

It is in this regard, those institution providing for Higher Education for preparing 'scholar' should subscribe to such an enlightened vision, especially in the light of the intellectual challenges and threats from the educational and curriculum theories, models and designs moulded from Western-centric secular-liberal perspectives. That is, the paper demands that the curricula of Islamic education system are planned, and the contents of various subjects coherently interlinked. Rather it demands that the pedagogy of Islamic education be well developed so that the students would be well motivated by the enlightened Islamic vision. Table 2 presents how various structures of the Islamic Worldview should be reflected when contemplating on the Aims and Goals of IHEIs. These deliberations, in turn, provide the rationale and justification for adoption of certain approaches than others while planning, developing, implementing and evaluating the curriculum at theoretical and practical levels. They have serious consequence on the content, andragogy, learning experiences, assessment and evaluation methods to be adopted by these IHEIs. Rather, it should be done through collaborative engagement of theologians, subject-experts, *Sharī'ah* experts, educationists and curriculum specialists.

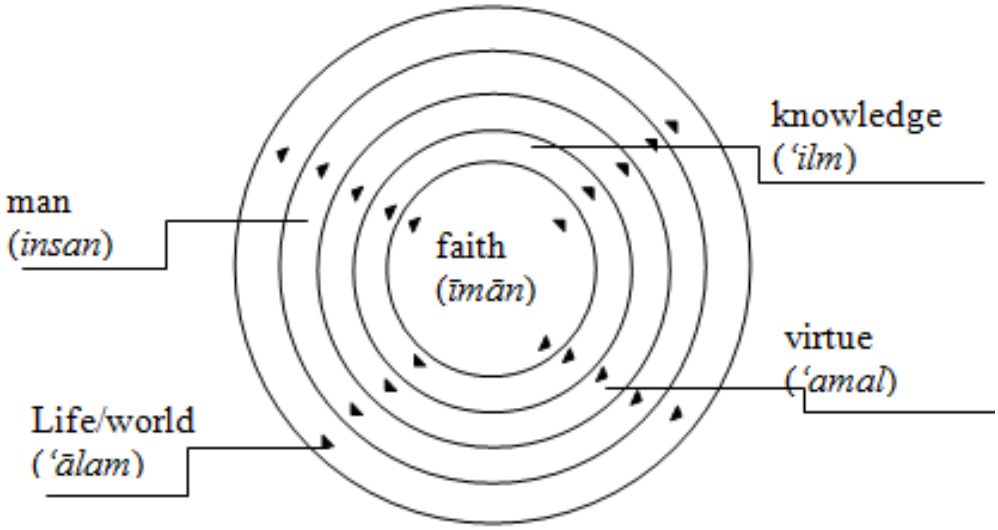
Table 2
Aims and Goals of Islamic Religious Education at Higher Levels

	Aims at IRHE levels	**Goals at IRHE levels**
Faith Domain	● Develop a deep level of understanding of the fundamental principles, essential themes, concepts, and key values related to articles of faith; pillar of Islam and the comprehensiveness promoted by *Ihsān*	● Create an awareness of the indispensability of divine guidance in deciding upon order, meaning and purpose, to justice, self-fulfilment, ethical endeavours, inter-personal relationship, human spirituality and the necessity of its actualization at the personal and collectives levels ● Create deep-understanding and appreciate the Divine Signs in Revealed, Human and Natural world
Knowledge Domain	● Develop a thorough awareness of Islamic epistemological and metaphysical *Weltanschauung* and its integrated knowledge structure	● Enhance the intellectual potentials to be able to interpret and synthesize facts, principles, theories, of the various religious, scientific, historical, socio-anthropological, psychological fields from the essential Islamic stand
Value Domain	● Develop the potentials to reinvigorate the Islamic ethical and axiological traditions in conducting one's individual and collective life;	● Develop the potentials to establish the Islamic ethical and axiological traditions in conducting one's individual and collective life; ● Create deep-understanding and awareness of the status and destiny of human beings on earth and the relationship to God, the universe and their fellow beings; ● Develop the dislike for, and the commitment to correct, all that is evil, unjust

		and the opposites of knowledge in a wise and proper manner; and inculcate the desire, responsibility and courage to seek, express and defend what is true, just and humane through direct-involvement and exemplification
Man Domain	● Recognition of the direct relevance of various fundamental elements of Islam to the preservation of human generation and the well-being of their life processes	● Cultivate the Islamic identity traits at the immediate personal and family levels as exemplary models expanding their vision of self, others, the world, life, etc. ● Provide spiritual and intellectual leadership to be able to contribute to revival and regeneration of Islam as a way of life and as a lived religion.
Civilizational Domain	● Accustom learners to ways of sustaining the continuity and recognizable identity of the Muslim society, its intellectual and spiritual heritage but without failing humanity at large	● Inculcate commitment to the continuation of social institutions, socio-economic justice, promotion of educational, moral and spiritual development of the community, the practice of *shūrā* and other Islamic social institutions all the time; ● Make learner reflect on the implications of pluralism at religious, cultural, ideological levels, appraise them as well as the mainstream political, financial and cultural establishments while to strive for the betterment of the *Ummah* and world community

Source: Developed based on Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud (1989)'s The concept of Education in Islam and its implication for Education in a Developing Country. pp. 99-101.

The five domains mentioned above refer essential foundations of Islamic Education. While conceptualizing Islamic Education, the concept of Islam *al-dīn* is very central. Islam is not conceived not merely as belief or faith system, rather as way of life. Faith set the foundations for how to lead the life, thereby casting various dimensions of human life within a worldview. The Islamic conception of a successful and virtuous life develops so closely to its concept of faith. This is a pre-requisite in order that the life be realized within the individual human self and the collective societal civilizational and developmental planes. To put it succinctly, within this Islamic Worldview (IW), a Muslim should develop the idea of 'knowledge' within the purview of 'faith structure,' to be authenticated in its 'virtue-structure' and realized within the human and civilizational structures. Thus, in total, there are five structures within the Islamic Worldview , the faith, knowledge, virtue structures which are the theoretical and conceptual foundations of IW, whereas the Psycho-Social and Civilization structures are applied and practical foundations. Figure 1 represents the coherence and links between these structures or foundations. In turn, this inevitably demands that the bases of the education and thereby curriculum be founded on the genuine but definite foundations, i.e., : 1) The Faith-Based Theological Foundations of the Curriculum, 2) The Knowledge-based Intellectual Foundations of the Curriculum; 3) The Virtue-based Moral Foundations of the Curriculum; 4) the Man-related Psychical-Social Foundations of the Curriculum and 5) The Physical World-related Civilizational Foundations of the Curriculum.



In Islam, the process of education is all about nurturing and maturing various spiritual, cognitive, affective and psychomotor potentials of man, in the progressive and balanced manner (Al-Attas, 1979; Ashraf, 1985). That is, 'education is a purposeful activity' directed at the development of the totality of human life. Therefore, according to al-Kilani (1995), neither the traditionalist nor the modernist approach to curriculum would serve the Islamic curriculum process, for the curriculum that Islam envisages is all-comprehensive and integrative, encompassing the contemporary needs, the past issues and future concerns of man.

***'Ulamā'*: The Islamic Scientists?**

Providing appropriate leadership to the community, as 'heirs of the Prophets' is the main question, when it comes to intents of IHEIs. All the Holy Prophets of Allah were leaders who lived among the people. They were not just 'spiritual' guides, for they exhorted the followers on matters of the physical world too. They dealt questions, problems, conflicts and ailments related to both worldly and spiritual issues. They guided people on them based on the wisdom and on the 'right' knowledge. They did not lead fortified or secluded lives, away from the people, nor constrained themselves within the walls of religious seminary or even within the ivory towers, presently called as universities. It is in this context, a major shift from the Muslim religious scholars' role being just as mere transmitters of the past knowledge to that of providers of creative leadership and solutions to various socio-cultural and socio-economic issues is much mandated.

The brief hint above on fundamental foundation of Islamic Religious education, foundations of its curriculum and various key principles, concepts and key values related to these foundations provide a general outline of the generic Islamic conceptual scheme. These conceptual schemes are derived from the authentic sources of Islam, the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). (More on these are found elsewhere by the same author). Traditionally, *'ulamā'* or religious scientists have been at the helm of developing and interpreting these schemes, rather consolidating their authenticity and originality, within the domains of spirituality and intellectuality. Essentially, this role corroborates with the role of the Holy Prophet. The Holy Qur'an explain this role of the Prophet as reciting to the community of Believers Allah's verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and Wisdom (*al- Qur'ān*, *Āl'Imrān:* 164). The three functions ascribed to the Prophets in this and other verses with similar meanings are (a) Rehearsal of the Divine Signs, (b) Sanctification and (c) Instruction in Scripture and Wisdom.

The three functions ascribed to the Prophets in this and other verses with similar meanings are (a) Rehearsal of the Divine Signs, (b) Sanctification and (c) Instruction in Scripture and Wisdom.

These roles should be understood from the contexts of epistemological challenges posed by the proliferation of information -the true, false and pseudo truths- for the authenticity of Islam religious principles. The Holy Prophet nurtured an ideal Islamic society within the shadow of the Holy Scripture and the Divine Wisdom, highlighting the ultimate purpose of human life. Hence, the role of scholars at the *Suffah*, according Açikgenç (1996) was at once cognitive (intellectual) and affective (spiritual). The message of Islam was not 'just emotionally and spiritually satisfying' but also 'intellectually fulfilling' (Kazmi, 1999, p. 503).

It was through these three functions, the foundations of the Muslim society were consolidated. It was on that basis, the Holy Prophet and his companions overcame the internal moral challenge from the unbelievers in Makkah and the literary challenges of advanced poetical tradition and the external intellectual and philosophical challenges from the Hellenistic civilization (Açikgenç, 1996).

As the heirs of the legacy of the Holy Prophet, the restoration of the authenticity and originality of the fundamental principles related to various structures identified above, within the domains of spirituality and intellectuality is the foremost responsibility of *'ulamā'*. The *'ulamā'* or religious scientists, according to Acikgenc (1996) is responsible for once again reinstating the well-equipped Islamic conceptual scheme, worldview as well as a sophisticated mechanism that is suitable for the development of the spiritual and intellectual dynamism. The terms spirituality and intellectuality denote to two dimensions, that inevitably, but simultaneously should be taken into account by the *'ulamā'* while shouldering the above three key roles; the first, in regard to the authenticity and originality of the concepts, the other in regard to their applicability and practicality to the contemporary challenges of the time.

According to Açikgenç (2003), 'the emergence of a community of scholars' is 'a significant factor' in moulding various key development indicators considered essential in the contemporary world. The scholars need to be beacons enlightening the entire intellectual and physical developments in the world, but within the spiritual tradition of Islam. To Açikgenç (2003), the obvious answer to the question "how can the Muslim world come to terms with those demands of the twenty-first century which require science and technology without losing its spiritual foundations?" lies in the epistemology of the Islamic religious-scientific tradition.

> The spiritual foundation of Islam itself is the general framework of science in Islam, if we accept that foundation. However, if we decide to do science from a different perspective by using a different framework, we cannot capture that spiritual foundation; we are, that is, bound to lose that spirituality. Someone who is performing the Islamic rites of prayers but doing science in the manner of another tradition cannot be a Muslim scientist, even though he may personally be a Muslim. These are fundamentally two different issues. A scientist that is actively involved in scientific activities within the epistemological framework thus far outlined is a scientist who has not lost the Islamic spirituality.

The same logic applies to Islamic education. Rather, traditionally education is the field where *'ulamā'* were engaged with since olden times. In this sense, the idea of religious scientist, which is primarily based on a cognitive scheme, includes the achievements of

generations of religious scientists within which religious education is carried out, and thus supplies a foundation for their further religious practices.

The *'ulamā'* in the past, developed a series of general Islamic conceptual schemes based on the revealed science such as *'ilm, usūl, ra'y, ijtihād, qiyās, fiqh, 'aql, qalb, idrāk, wahm, tadabbur, fikr, nazar, hikmah, yaqīn, wahy, tafsīr, ta'wīl, 'ālam, kalām, nutq, zann, haqq, bātil, sidq, kidhb, wujūd, 'adam* and many others. After which, they specified conceptual scheme in each sciences, which was also linked intimately to the Islamic worldview as the general framework of all scientific activities (Açikgenç, 2003). As of now, it is the responsibility of present *'ulamā'* to further explicate the implication of these terms on the new developments made in various fields and sciences. On the other hand, any error at this level, rather an absolute turn-back from carrying out these duties would endanger the frame and fabric of the Muslim society.

Content

With regards to the curriculum content, they are inherited from the tradition of Muslim dynasties in India. Mostly, most of the IHEIs follow the same books followed centuries ago, thereby repeating the old arguments, which are not particularly relevant or not to the interest of students of modern times.

Generally, the curriculum content is traditional in orientation, furbished on the lines of *Nizaāmī* curriculum which was initially aimed to prepare office bearers than 'scholars to revitalize the legacy of holy Prophets. The IHEIs, thereby, obviously under-prepare students for creative involvement in socio-cultural-political-economic solutions in an extensive manner. Such an isolationist stand results in perpetuating the general Muslim public remain inundated of the spirit of Islam in socio-economic developments. Add to this, the massive mainstream culture of secular education and the resultant eroding of the religious fervour and ethos among the educated youngsters. Such an isolationist stand results in perpetuating backwardness among Muslim in all departments of development as well as their civilizational and cultural insulation from other faith communities. On the other hand, the general Muslim public remain inundated of the spirit of Islam in socio-economic developments.

In this regard, one main problem that needs to be settled is the bifurcation of their subjects into Islamic and modern. The IHEIs are unable to overcome the influences of dual-divide of knowledge in the religious and modern physical secular studies although variably, they adopt traditional and modern subjects and methods of teaching them. In some cases, either the latter part is completely removed, or the former part is dealt peripherally or superficially.

For example, instructions on various disciples related to the Qur'anic exigency, jurisprudence, theology, prophetic history and others are mostly done in an insulated manner, mostly not linked with other disciplines, because of which student fail to get a wholesome picture ideas presented in the texts. This because, while studying various disciplines in either streams, they are not inter-linked to each other. They are not studied in relation to their implications on the fundamentals of belief, the conception of self, humanity and environment. This breeds marginalized and bifurcated thinking, thereby trivializing the role of Islam as concerned just with rituals, instead of promoting the integrity and relevance of Islam to the modern world.

In fact, preserving the tradition of Islamic learning, by correcting the fatal mistake of dividing knowledge whose essence was indivisible and universal is very key to the process of reform. The early Muslims made no distinction between the religious and the 'secular' knowledge. In order to overcome the bifurcation, the IHEIs need to incorporate modern as well old texts and encourage a comparative analysis. In this a research culture that calls for

depth of analysis is much mandated and need to instituted. They should widen the scope of their curriculum to integrate religious and academic subjects.

Pedagogy rather Andragogy

Pedagogy refers to how you teach children. Andragogy refers to how you teach adults. Basically it is authentic learning, helping adults connect what they are learning with their life experience.

What Rosnani (2007) says about Malaysian experience is also true about these institutions in Kerala. The andragogical methods are 'not conducive to the development of intellectualism and academic freedom' (p. 102). Rarely students are encouraged to engage in research and intellectual activities. Consequently, the gap between the religious and temporal style of education and life, instead of being covered, is ever widening.

The teaching methods pedagogy focuses much on theoretical aspects, rather than on the practical aspects. They are book-based and emphasizes a transmission model of teaching. The main problem of solely depending on one or two textbooks is that teachers arrest their students' horizons and knowledge and trap them in the mind of one scholar. According to Rosnani (2007), this contrasts sharply with the various scholastic methods employed by the early scholars. Add to this the fact that teachers of these institutions mostly lack any training in pedagogy, although over the course of the time they have developed in their teaching skills. While teaching *fiqh*, which is the prince of religious sciences, injunctions related to matter of family, business-transactions, criminal cases and others are never related to the living reality. Thereby students lack understanding of *fiqh* in its pragmatic applications in these respects. In fact, this is caused by the habit of studying *fiqhi* matters as hard-facts and because of the lack of components of principle of *fiqh (Usūl al-fiqh*) with practical focus.

For example, although *Usūl al-fiqh* is considered as an essential component of the *fiqh*, students are hardly trained on practicing various methods of extracting laws from the Holy Qur'an and the Prophetic tradition (*Sunnah*). They are not related to their implications on the jurisprudential, attitudinal and everyday life. Because of such a narrow, limited monotonous one-way method of lecturing, and focusing only on classical text books, graduates fail to get a comprehensive portrait about Islam as a living faith.

Learning Experiences and Outcome

In the absence of a research culture, students are neither made cognizant of contemporary texts related to these disciplines, nor able to relate one subject with another as well as to get a holistic picture of Islam simultaneously as a belief-knowledge-value-human-civilizational system.

Islam is presented largely as just a set of rituals, rather than as a force for social transformation. In certain case, for example, while teaching jurisprudence, the focus is so narrow that the minor specificities are so much emphasized rather than the fundamentals. Although students are well versed in the particularities of various obligatory rituals, because of the compartmentalized teaching and learning methods, they fail to comprehend the essence and spirit (wisdom) behind them in relation to social justice and educational, economic and social welfare.

Assessment: The Quality Factor

Most of IHEIs in Kerala follow a conventional examination-oriented curriculum model, which hardly care about the practical and intellectual abilities. They test students for the larger amount of religious contents they memorize, where in fact they should have assessed students abilities to develop systematically a comprehensive worldview with implications on practical and theoretical, personal and collective, and intellectual and spiritual levels.

This is one of the consequences of grapping the models that were in vogue in the modern education, where many advancements were made recently. With regard to the religious disciplines, thus, IHEIs transfer loads of information. Because of the 'information fatigue', the students are passive and their intellectual and scientific potentials are infertile.

The above criticisms can be ascribed to almost all IHEIs in varying degrees. In fact, the rich heritage of Islamic Higher Education was dynamic and proactive in character. Various disciplines related to religious obligations and man's life on the earth was taught in a comprehensive manner. Concepts related to faith elements were given sufficient emphasis, that students could engage actively with them and thereby relate them to all other concepts related to his mundane life. Take Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) as an example. It included not just few theoretical propositions regarding the compulsory ritualistic practices regarding five-times prayers *(salāh)*, giving out obligatory alms *(zakāh)* and others. Further, it discussed various legal issues related to family *(munākahat, nafaqāt)*, business transactions *(mu'āmalāt)*, criminal cases *(jināyāt)* and various jurisdictional issues (*qadā'a*, *siyāsat*, *hisbah*). The holy Qur'an, the *ahādīth* and the historical narrative of the Holy Prophet *(sīrah)* were taught, so that the *faqīh* be able to depend on the authentic sources as references and be motivated by their spirit and message. The *'aqīdah* (theology) were taught so that these prospective scholars well comprehend the essence of the Revealed message of Islam. Ethics and morality *(akhlāq)* was integral congruent of the system, aiming to purify their ethical conducts, behaviour and attitudes which played the part of modern social and human sciences. Then various auxiliary tools and sciences were taught so that they make correct judgements about matters related to individual and collective interested. These scholars, however, were not discouraged to earn money for their livelihood by involving themselves in various occupations. In essence, the religious education tradition and culture was productive, self-contained, unique and distinctive in imparting spirituality, holiness and wholeness. Further exploration into this tradition would reveal how various disciplines were harmonized and various the educational experiences of all these disciplines were integrated in the most effective and balanced manner.

However, this tradition has diluted from its original wholesomeness over the centuries. Such a dilution was caused by various internal and external factors. The bifurcation of Islamic knowledge into *dunyawī* and *ukhrawī* sciences' and the conscious adoption of the western system of education by Muslim countries have seriously contributed to the knowledge crisis and the thought crisis (Malkawi, 2006; Kasule, 2007). As an aftermath, the *'ulamā'* -the specialized scholars in the fundamental sources and principles of faith, largely choose to remain at the periphery of the mainstream. Their alienation from the developments at various fronts further sustained the dualistic trend in education. Conversely, by uncritically aping the Western tradition, the Islamic theological, jurisprudential and legal studies and the Islamic identity were largely sidelined and kept in its silo.

It is in this regard, the institutions providing for the Islamic Religious education should once again be revitalized. They should be reviving the authenticity of the Islamic principles, their pragmatic worth and ultimately the Islamic intellectual and spiritual tradition. They need to develop new insights and experiences relevant to the socio-cultural life of the present times.

RECOMMENDATION FOR REFORM

The Holy Qur'an Studies

While teaching the Holy Qur'an, at methodical level, students at IHEIs should be familiarized with its various types of interpretations: classical as well as modern, subject or themes-oriented as well as language-oriented. Various kinds and schools of interpretations, fundamental rules *(usūl)* of *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl*, differences among them as well as their distinction from interpretation based on conjectures also should be integrated into the curriculum. This includes the comparative study of origins, development and methodology of *tafsīr*. Then, they should have deep knowledge of the key terminologies such as *wahy*, *khāss*, *āmm*, *muhkam*, *mutashābih*, etc and their implications in the particular disciplines as well as other disciplines.

The Hadith Studies

Concerning the *Hadīth,* the specific terms related to *Hadīth* literature, their implications on affirming validity of *ahādīth* and other topics related to it, should be studied in order to portray the implication of various prophetic actions on the contemporary lives of the Muslims. Most importantly, the Prophetic traditions *(Sunnah)* should be studied in order to portray the implication of various prophetic actions on the contemporary lives of the Muslims. That is, *Hadīth* studies should be coupled with the *sīrah* of the Holy Prophet and His companions. Even then, major events in the life of Holy Prophet, need to be studies analytically for their political, social, strategic and intellectual, but universal messages. In addition, various key values such as justice, mercy, trustworthiness and others as impersonated in His life should be explored for their implication on the current situations of Muslims at local and international levels. In addition, with regard to various internal challenges, such as rejecting *Ahādīth* for not conforming to modern rational sensitivities and perspectives, the problem of confrontation among Muslim groups on minor specificities of *fiqh* ruling, it is also very pertinent to search through the prophetic traditions on how the Holy Prophet (PBUH) personalised Islam through his life examples. This will help the students to establish the position of the Holy Prophet in the religion of Islam and his role in Muslim life.

Principles of Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqh

The sciences of principles *(usūl)* related to *tafsīr*, *Hadīth* and *fiqh* should constitute a major component of tertiary level religious studies. These sciences should be taught and studied to "facilitate derivation of rules and concepts from the Divine Revelation" (Safi, 1993, p. 465). At methodical level, the teachers and students need to get first-hand training to investigate how these methodical sciences imply on various sciences such as *fiqh*, *kalām*, *akhlāq*, study of objectives of *Sharī'ah,* as well as how they evolved as new sciences. Students should be given many opportunities to see how they were practically utilized by the classical scholars to arrive at certain conclusions. They should be trained to learn through practice by analyzing various conclusions made in the past from the historical contexts of those times and from the perspective of objectives of the *Sharī'ah,* thereby, relating them to the present time.

Fiqh or Islamic Jurisprudence

The jurisprudential studies, as mentioned before, are the pragmatic manifestations of Islam as *al-din*. This would become further significant when read into the point raised by Acikgenc (1996) that '*fiqh* include**s** religion, law and morality so integrally that one cannot be without the others' and therefore cannot be translated into English simply as 'law' (Acikgenc, 1996, p. 25). Therefore, at higher level should not be confined learning some facts about particularities of various individual and interpersonal obligations. All various aspects related to worship (*'ibādāt),* family *(munākahāt)*, social and economic transactions *(mu'āmalāt)*, political and legal matters *(qadā')*, criminal issues *(jināyāt)* should be taught with equal

weights, but insistently relating to the realities of the people. In fact, the Islamic jurisprudence and law is the manifestation of fundamentals and principles of faith with implications on the individual and collective life. Thus, a pragmatic approach is very much needed while teaching jurisprudence.

The study of *fiqh* should be related to various branches social and human sciences, rules and regulations in a country, medical, biomedical, social, cultural, political and other areas, and essentially to the maintenance of faith, harmony, social justice and peace among the citizen of the country and for the preservation of the environment. In order to make this possible, it essential that at tertiary levels that students know various rules of *fiqh* intimately. It is in this respect, Osman Bakar (1991) opines that the method of *fuqahā'* (sing. *faqīh*) is also a sort of *tafsīr* of the Holy Qur'an 'although with somewhat different connotations' (p. 35).

Yet another point to be stressed while dealing with jurisprudence is its utilitarian aspects with regard to social polity, economics and finance. The essentially principles of *Sharī'ah* and its majors concerns should be at the forefront of venturing in these fields, especially since political and financial systems are mostly seen as means of oppression of the poor and unskilled. Critical analysis of monetary and political forms of hegemony demands the urgent, but creative interference of the religious-scientists, so that Islam once again be presented as boon, not bane to the human welfare. These are related to practical aspects of dealing with *fiqh al-mu'āmalat* (jurisprudence of social transactional obligations) and *fiqh al-siyāsah* (jurisprudence of public polity). It would be also worthwhile to compare the Islamic law with common law as practiced locally and internationally, because such practice would enhance the horizon of the graduates.

Rather, this universal utilitarian aspects of *fiqh* with regard to social polity, economics and finance might be the reason why the specialization in the traditional sense "meant excellence in the field of law, supported by high degree of competence in the other Islamic fields" (Makdisi, 1981, p. 84). Furthermore, 'the greatest knowledge of Islamic law', along 'with some knowledge of every sciences' (Makdisi, 1981, p. 7; p. 84) was traditionally the universal acceptable leadership criteria of an Islamic scholar. In the classical tradition, therefore, various religious as well as ancillary sciences such as grammar, poetry, dialectical sciences such *jadal* (dialectic) and *khilāf* (disputed questions) were all studied with specialization in jurisprudence in mind.

In the classical times, a law student applied himself to the learning of law in its positive aspects normally in four years period. He began his study of disputations before this period was over. After graduation, he worked as a graduate fellow under a professor with the aims of enabling himself to issue solicited legal opinions, and to defend opinion against jurisconsults who held opinion to the contrary. Such a practice, if revived, would certainly benefit the prospective *'ulamā'* of the modern times as they step into the community as real scholar research of religious sciences (Ali, 2000).

At IHEIs, therefore, students should be trained to dissect *fatāwā* made in past. Furthermore, students should practically trained, under the guidance of able scholars, to issue *fatāwā*. This well corroborates with the practice of 'constant companionship' (*suhbah*), "a practice that goes as far back in Islam [as with the Holy Prophet]…. As old as Islam itself, the institution of fellowship antedates the college system in Islam" (Makdisi, 1981, p. 128). This is very much needed, if IHEIs once again aims to produce genuine and authentic *'ulamā'*.

And in general,

- *Akhlāq* is the integral spiritual anchor of religious education, whereas '*aqīdah* is the philosophical anchor. Fiqh on the other hand give both of them a pragmatic dimension. In this regard, the key point stressed before should be highly remembered, i.e., *fiqh* is not

just about certain rituals and obligation, rather it is through *fiqh* the comprehensive concept of Islam as '*al-dīn'* is translated into reality.

- The consolidation of faith, the welfare of the community and elimination of human hardships are essentially inherent in all obligatory rituals prescribed by the *Sharī'ah.* Therefore, at higher level, while studying *fiqh* students should be able to explore how these rituals and obligations contribute to the creation and maintenance of a balanced, positive and dynamic worldview both in the times of peace and hardships, ease and challenges. This is particularly true about theology (*'aqīdah*) as well.
- *'Aqīdah* is "the science which enables one to affirm the doctrines of religion and prove them to other by adducing proofs and eliminating doubts" (Amilah, 2005, p. 32). It should be taught for the intellectual and traditional understanding of the Islamic creedal matters as well as for their similarities and differences with other religious traditions (Wan Daud, 1998, p. 27). Besides that, it should enable the religious scholars-researchers to form a systematic and greater understanding of the purpose of world and all aspects of life and society, including education. At IRHE level, therefore, theological sciences should cover up-to-date way of presenting Islam, addressing new ideological challenges advocated by western thought such as positivism, secular humanism, liberalism and post-modernism, secularism, nationalism, materialism which threaten the tenets of Islamic creedal doctrines and way of life. Therefore, students should be trained through scholastic and dialectic discussion methods, debates and dialogues to study issues like Attributes of Allah, man's free will and choice and nature of good and evil. The intellectual understanding of Islamic creedal matters as well as their similarities and differences with other religious traditions is particularly important to theological studies. Further, more, '*aqīdah* should be learnt "in a comprehensive manner relating to its essentials in the fields of theology, philosophy, metaphysics, psychology and epistemology and the position of other religions (al-Attas in Wan Daud, 1998). Always a comparative and critical analysis of contemporary and modern interpretations of the meaning of religion in Islam, by various circles would be much helpful in envisioning 'the correct' interpretation and the salient doctrines and principle of the creed (*'aqīdah*) and their implications on the lives of Muslims in the contemporary situations.
- As pointed before, *akhlāq* is the integral spiritual anchor of religious education. The moral sciences ensures "certitude, consistency and perseverance in the hearts and minds of knowing and righteous believers in the face of' the most difficult challenges and trying circumstances" (Wan Daud, 1998, p. 214-215). Therefore, at higher levels, students should be introduced to various dimensions of the perfected character of Holy Prophet and his role leadership roles in the immediate family and larger society at various fronts. *Akhlāq* should be taught with the aim of moulding a positive self-image taking lessons from changes in community, and society. Therefore, instead of 'indoctrinating' moral values as such, students should be motivated to find it out using 'intellectual' tools from the authentic sources. Thereby, they have to be trained to compare their findings with that of established moral codes, instituted in the Islamic tradition and heritage and in practice among Muslim community. The methods of inculcating *akhlāq* should include moral reasoning and philosophical inquiry, so that students imbibe virtues consciously, reason about the ethical and social problems and accordingly learn to control their feelings and emotions and contribute to the well being of the society.
- At theoretical level, students pursuing IHE studies should provide for exploring the social and communal roles key moral values from a comparative perspective and infer on their implication on larger economic, political and ideological matters. Another key issue related to practical aspects of moral and ethical sciences is that Islam has won many hearts, not basically through the words of wisdom, but significantly through their

personification in the character of the believers and preachers *(du'āt*, sing. *dā'ī*) and many *Sufi* saints. Therefore, spiritual and moral training should be the routinely and essential congruent of Islamic religious education at any level. At tertiary level, students should be motivated to internalize and personify such exercises both spiritually and intellectually.

- The metaphysics is very fundamental to understanding of Islamic vision of reality and truth and contain the summary of all the other intellectual disciplines such as the sciences of the Holy Qur'an, *Hadīth*, and *kalām*. They, in turn, impose certain methodical approaches to deal with intellectual and philosophical sciences. Such a vision is essential to understanding the hierarchical order in the created world, which in turn point to the ultimate attributes of Allah and the Divine wisdom (*Sunnatullah*) in the universe and the course of history.
- In-depth knowledge in Arabic language is necessary to all of the above, for ultimately their comprehension depend on the comprehension the authentic sources of the Holy Qur'an and *Hadīth* for reference, which are essentially in Arabic. Only then, students will be able to analyze and interpret the basic source of Islam and the important intellectual and spiritual literature in Islam (p. 250). While studying Arabic, students should be familiarizes about the scientific nature of Arabic language and the import of the Divine Attributes and Names on various key terms denoting the fundamental principles and essential themes/concepts and values. Other than being a potent vehicle of Islamic culture, the Arabic language should be studies as source of Islamic unity (Safi, 1993).
- In order to have a deeper understanding of Islam and the Muslim society it is also necessary to cover the Islamic culture, thought and civilization thoroughly, but comparing with the Western culture, thought and civilization. The comparative study of religions should be carried out so that students be aware of various worldviews, ideologies, and belief-trends. To Safi (1993), study of the Islamic culture and civilization should focus on its function and institutional aspects, history, and development down the centuries, present day ramification as well as challenges, whereas to AbuSulayman (2009) the confrontation and reciprocal condemnation between the religions, should transformed into scholarly investigation (AbuSulayman, 2009).
- Students also need to be introduced to the study of the physical sciences, not as "autonomous domain which is cut off from higher orders of reality" but relating it to the other two entities in the tripartite structure of reality (Osman, 1991, p. 74). "The relevance of spiritual and subtle entities" should be insisted "in the study of the physical world", because as argued by the latest trends in the physical sciences, "the origin of life on earth cannot be resolved in terms of physical entities alone, no matter how deep we penetrate into the molecular world" (p. 74). What this implies is that it is necessary that students at tertiary level are induced with a correct perspective on the physical, natural and even applied sciences. Knowledge of the cosmic functions, powers, and qualities… especially in relation to the natural order, is indispensable for the integration of the physical and natural sciences into the spiritual knowledge of *tawhīd* (Osman, 1991).
- Natural sciences, on the other hand, should be introduced not just for information contained in them, but also as "a source of many types of knowledge: mathematical, metaphysical; scientific and spiritual; qualitative and quantitative; practical and aesthetical" (Osman, 1991, p. 63). As per Islam, nature is a source of 'Divine Laws'. This is in contract with what is conceived by the modem science, which promote a cleavage between the 'laws of nature' and 'the laws of God'. This 'has disastrous consequences for the unity of science and spiritual knowledge.

That is, the philosophy of science should be taught at higher levels, so that students get insights into wonders and sings of Almighty Allah contained in them. According to Osman (1991),

> If we wish to restore this unity in the modern world, then one of the possible avenues is through the re-assertion of the metaphysical or spiritual status of the 'laws of nature' (pp. 64-45).

This once again calls development of the concept of 'Islamic science', and the burden falls on the community of Muslim scholars which included social, natural, physical and religious scientists. Therefore, at IRHE level, it is significant to promote an integrative and balanced approach towards Islamic conception of sciences.

Lastly, as pointed out by Madkour (1991), although, subjects like mathematics and natural sciences may be a common component with the mainstream education system, but the aim of studying these sciences should be empowering a Muslim with those experiences needed to enlivening the Islamic civilization, not promoting narrow racisms or nationalism. Then, modern social and natural sciences should be introduced so that the graduates be aware of the potential and shortcoming of modern sciences, their inherent paradigms and propositions, limitation of their methods as well as for their contributions for the human welfare.

In other words, while familiarizing the students with methodical sciences as well as the key sciences such as '*aqīdah*, *fiqh*, and *akhlāq* it is also necessary to emphasize their unitary nature and to establish Revealed Sciences as primary sources of religious as well as social theorizing, analysis, criticism. Hence, the norms of unity of reality and knowledge, the partiality and limitations of human beings and thereby their implication of human discoveries should be emphasized in the methodological training and practice. In this regard, the nurturing of various intellectual skills is necessary. In classical times, "so important was dialectic *(jadal)* for the development of law and legal studies in Islam that it became a *sine qua non* of these studies in the colleges of law, both *masjids* and *madrasahs*" (Makdisi, 1981, p.110).

In short, as religion is related to all other branches of knowledge, the study of the authentic sources and subsequently the study of *fiqh, aqīdah and akhālq* should be wider and wider in scope, range and depth at HE level (Ashraf, 1985). The whole experience of learning should be meaningful to learners while engaging with various issues at stake when living in a global and pluralist society. At practical level, the *da'wah* and research works should be oriented to "remove the distortions afflicting its thought, culture, and educational programmes that prevent the Muslim mind from being effective…" (AbuSulayman, 2009, p. 45). This later part demands an overall integrated, and trans-disciplinary curriculum at higher levels, but ultimately linked with faith dimension. This would correspond to the methodology of the Holy Prophet who insisted on establishing the firm faith in the minds of his companions, before demanding them to embarking upon even on practical aspects of life (Açikgenç, 1996).

CONCLUSION

The history of Islamic religious education in India is tied with the introduction of Islam in India. Thus, different means of introduction of Islam in India determined the course of the development of educational institutions for higher Islamic education in the North and South. The challenge that IHEIs should take is to transform them as the true bastion of believers in essence and spirit. To make their graduates a consequence of the particular theoretical and practical application of fundamental principles, essential concepts/themes and key values

identified under five key domains of the curriculum of Islamic Education. They will have to have deep-level mastery and proficiency of relevant authentic Islamic disciplines, working familiarity of the modern disciplines and various intellectual skills, that they develop a holistic approach to Islam. The deep acquaintance with the relevant modern disciplines would assist them to appraise the modern western disciplines. Thus, they should be able to develop certain practical intellectual and spiritual skills in the learners, and accordingly provide visionary leadership.

Bibliography

AbuSulaiman, A. H. (2009). The revitalization of higher education: The IIUM as a model. In S. A. Idid (Ed.), *IIUM at 25: The path travelled and the way forward* (pp. 35-59). Kuala Lumpur: IIUM Press.

Acikgenc, A. (1996). *Islamic Science: Towards a Definition.* Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTACT).

Acikgenc, A. (1996). *Islamic Science: Towards a difinition.* Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC).

Acikgenc, A. (2003). Holisitic Approach to Scientific Traditions. *Islam & Science, 1*(1), 99.

Acikgenc, A. (2006, December). The Emergence of Scientific Tradition in Islam. (Mohamed el-Gomati). Turner Street, Manchester, United Kingdom: Foundation for Science, Technology and Civilization.

Ahmad, M. A. (1985). *Traditional education among muslims : a study of some aspects in modern India.* Delhi: B. R. Publishing Corporation.

al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Naquib. (1979). Preliminary thought on the nature of knowledge and the definition and aims of education. In S. M.-A. (Ed.), *Aims and objectives of Islamic education* (pp. 20-21). Jeddah: King Abdul Aziz University.

Amilah Awang Abd Rahman. (2005). An integrated approach to study Ilm al-Kalam: Towards enhancing the spirit of Muslim Unity. *Proceedings of International Seminar on Religious Curricula in the Muslim World: Challenges and Prospects* (pp. 27-46). Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization.

Arsahd, M. (2005). Tradition of Madrasah Education. In A. Wasey (Ed.), *Madrasas in India: Trying to be relevant* (pp. 21-35). New Delhi: Global Media Publications.

Ashraf, S.A. (1985). *New Horizons in Muslim Education.* Cambridge: Hodder and Stoughton.

Dale, S. F. (1980). *Islamic society on the South Asian Fronitier: The Mappilas of Malabar 1498-1922.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Durrani, F. K. (1986). *A plan of Muslim educational reform.* Lahore: Islamic Book Service.

FazlurRahman. (1988). Islamization of Knowledge: A response. *The American Journal of Islamic Social Science*, 3-11.

Hamid, S. (2004). Foreword. In M. A. Siddiqui, *Empowerment of Muslims through education* (pp. v-xix). New Delhi: Institute of Objective Studies.

Islamic Encyclopaedia (Malayalam). (2005). Calicut: Islamic Publishing House.

Jan-Peter Hartung, H. R. (Ed.). (2006). *Islamic Education Diversity and national identity.* New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Kasule, O. H. (2007, March 30-31). *Research priorities on epistemology and thought*. Retrieved from i-epistemology

Kutty, E. K. (2003). The development of Arabic education in Kerala: A survey. In E. Kutty (Ed.), *Arabic in South India.* Calicut: Department of Arabic, University of Calicut.

Makdisi, G. (1981). *The rise of colleges: Institutions of learning in Islam and the West.* Edirburgh University Press.
Malkawi, F., & Fattah, H. A. (Eds.). (1992). The education Conference book: Planning, Implementation, Recommendations and Abstracts of Presented Papers. *Towards the Construction of a Contemporary Islamic Educational Theory.* Amman: Islamic Studies and Research Association.
Metcalf, B. D. (1982). *Islamic revival in British India, Deoband, 1860-1900.* New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
Miller, R. E. (1974). *Mappila Muslims of Kerala: A Study in Islamic Trends.*
Moideenkutty, A. (1998). Mawlana Chalilakath and Darul Uloom at Vazhakkad (Malayalam). In K. A. Hasan (Ed.), *Prabodhanam Special Edition* (pp. 64-69). Kozhikode: Islamic Service Trust.
Muhammad, V. (1974). Mappila Education. In *Farook College Silver Jubilee Souvenir.*
Nakosteen, M. (1964). *History of Islamic origins of Western Education AD 800-1350.* Boulder: University of Colorado Press.
Osman Bakar. (1991). *Tawhid and Science: Essays on the History and Philosophy of Islamic Science.* Kuala Lumpur: Secretariat for Islamic Philosophy and Science.
Parveen, N. (2005). *Muslim education reforms in nineteenth century India: An analysis of shibli Nu'mani's thought and practice.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation: Interantional Islamic University Malaysia.
Robinson, F. (2001). *The ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic culture in south Asia.* New Delhi: Permanent Black.
Rosnani Hashim. (2007). Intellectualism in Higher Islamic Traditional Studies: Implications for the Curriculum. *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, 24*(3), 92-115.
Safi, L. (1993). The quest for an Islamic methodology: The Islamization of Knowledge project in its second decade. *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, 10*(1), 23-48.
Safi, L. (1993). *Towards a Unified Approach to the Shari'ah and Social Inference*. Retrieved January 9, 2010, from i-epistemology: General Error file:///D|/New%20Books%202010/attachments/403_V10N4 Winter 93 - Safi - Towards a Unified Approach to the Shari
Samastha Kerala Jamiyathul Ulama. (2007). Retrieved from All Kerala Scholars Association: http://www.samastha.net/madrasas.html
Siddiqui, M. A. (2004). *Empowerment of Muslims through education.* New Delhi: Institute of Objective Studies.
Sikand, Y. (2005). *Bastion of believers: Madrasas and Islamic education in India.* New Delhi: Penguin Books.
Sikand, Y. (2008, January). *Madrasa Education in South Asia.* Retrieved January 2010
Sufi, G. (1981). *Al-Minhaj: The evolution of curriculum in the Muslim educational institutions of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent.* Lahor: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf.
Tritton, A. (1957). *Muslim education in Middle ages.* London: Luzac.
Tschacher, T. (2006). Islamic Education in a Tamil Town: The Case of Kilakkarai. In H. R. Jan-Peter Hartung, *Islamic Education Diversity and national identity.* (pp. 196-226). New Delhi: Sage Publications.
Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud. (1998). *The educational philosophy and practice of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas: An exposition of the original concept of Islamization.* Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization.
Wasey, A. (Ed.). (2005). *Madrasas in India: Trying to be relevant.* New Delhi: Global Media Publications.

Zubair, K. (2006, July). Development and Modernisation of Religious Education in Kerala: Role of Samastha Kerala Jam'eyyat ul-Ulama. New Delhi, India: Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Bibliography