

Role of Islamic Universities of The Modern Age Towards Islamization of Knowledge

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Abstract

Knowledge (Ilm) is power. Islam makes "Education" or "Acquiring Knowledge" obligatory for every Muslim, male or female. Muslims considered seeking 'intellectual' or 'human' knowledge as 'Ibadah' or religious service that brings blessings and pleasure of Allah, in the same way as they considered seeking 'revealed' knowledge. According to Islam human knowledge has two main sources: Divine source and human source. So 'Knowledge' is obtained either through revelation or through human intuition, reason, rational thinking, deduction, experience or empirical observation. It is evident that there was no contradiction or conflict between clergy and scientists or between 'religious' and 'scientific' knowledge. Under the above circumstances Muslim scholars around the world struggled to find out solutions for this conflicting dualism in education. Their suggestions were establishment of 'Islamic University'. It was not meant only to facilitate higher education and research in 'Islamic disciplines', but also to teach other disciplines of humanities and science in the light of Islamic perspective, Islamic thoughts, ideals and values. In other word it was meant for 'Islamization of Knowledge'. Islamization has two-fold job: first: expanding, upgrading and modernizing Islamic disciplines, second: connecting all other disciplines to Islamic faith and values. The article identifies the roles played by the Islamic Universities especially i) Al-Imam Muhammad Bin Saud Islamic University, Riyadh; ii) International Islamic University, Islamabad; iii) International Islamic University Malaysia; and iv) Islamic University, Kushtia, Bangladesh towards Islamization of knowledge. International Islamic University, Chittagong, Bangladesh also plays a vital role in Islamization of knowledge in Bangladesh. Thus it is seen that the universities in the Muslim countries were established upon a unique and unified Islamic system. Under this system they produced numerous scientists, philosophers, thinkers, intellectuals and scholars who preserved and developed the human heritage in all fields of humanities and science, carried the torch of learning and led the world toward knowledge. These Universities also produced scholars in Islamic theology and jurisprudence, who mastered knowledge of the Holy Qura-n and Hadith. They knew all matters affecting the lives of Muslims. They also had good command on all the disciplines from literature and philosophy to medicine and astronomy. They have got the clear-sighted, intuitive knowledge of Islamic law and ethics. They got the ability of 'Ijtihad'.

Keywords

Islamic University, Islamization of Knowledge, Modern Age

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1. Prelude

Knowledge (Ilm) occupies a dominant position in the Islamic world-view. According to Franz Rosenthal "In Islam, the concept of knowledge enjoyed an importance unparalleled in other civilizations. It dominated over all aspects of Muslim intellectual, spiritual and social life." (Hashim, 1996). This is an attempt to identify the roles played by the Islamic Universities around the world towards Islamization of knowledge. It will help to understand the background of determined, consistent, resolute and devoted efforts made by Muslim scholars around the world for Islamization of knowledge.

2. Objectives of the study

- i) To identify the roles played by the Islamic Universities of the world for Islamization of knowledge;
- ii) To assess the problems faced by the Universities;
- iii) To give some recommendations to overcome the problems.

3. Methodology

This study is conducted through primary and secondary data.. Primary data are collected through face to face interrogation. Secondary data are collected through renowned books, articles and internet facilities. For this study, four universities are chosen as sample like i) Al-Imam Muhammad Bin Saud Islamic University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, ii) International Islamic University, Islamabad, iii) Pakistan, International Islamic University Malaysia and iv) Islamic University, Kushtia, Bangladesh. The data are processed and analysed in logical order.

4. Historical aspects of Islamization of Knowledge in Muslim Universities

Before discussing the role of Islamic Universities in Islamization of Knowledge in our contemporary world, there is a scope to look into the historical aspects of Islamization of Knowledge in Muslim educational system in general and Muslim Universities in particular. According to Islam human knowledge has two main sources: Divine source and human source. So 'Knowledge' is obtained either through revelation or through human intuition, reason, rational thinking, deduction, experience or empirical observation. The two sources are complementary. (Ibid, pp.79-81)

"The Muslim's understanding of the nature between revelation and reason is based upon Islamic ontology. Allah has gifted man with reason, which is the tool required to know the world around him, to utilize it in satisfying his needs and in shouldering his responsibilities as a vicegerent. On the other hand, Divine revelation is meant to guide man toward knowledge of the aims of righteous life, of the definition of its responsibilities and of ascertaining its components. Revelation enlightens man, despite his limited mental powers, about metaphysical concepts, about relationships in the whole universe and on earth, and about the complexities of human and social interactions and concepts. All of these are indispensable for endowing the human mind and will with the power to

account for liabilities and for guiding man's energies and behaviour in accordance with his aims in life. Thus, revelation and reason are both complementary and essential for righteous life on earth." (Sulaiman, 1989).

Regarding Education and Knowledge the researchers find differences between Islam and other religions. In most of the religions in the world knowledge or education has nothing to do with religion. In every religion there is "Religious Education" for the clergy or preachers. For ordinary followers of the religion, they were discouraged or barred from "Religious Education". They are asked to believe without knowledge or reasoning and follow the clergy who are the mediators or intermediary between God and the man. It was not prohibited for them to learn "Worldly Knowledge" or "Secular Knowledge", but in many instances they were discouraged from such knowledge the clergy perceived contradiction between "religious" and "worldly" knowledge.

But in Islam the things are very different in many ways. A few points are mentioned here:

1. In Islam there is no clergy, no mediator between the Creator and His creature. There may be some learned people, who are specialized, in "Religious Education". They are considered only as scholars. Nobody can offer prayer or other religious duty on behalf of others. All are equal in the sight of Allah. Each and every human being is to submit himself directly to His Creator to seek His divine blessings. So every Muslim has to acquire knowledge about his/her faith, values and religious duties.

2. Islam makes "Education" or "Acquiring Knowledge" obligatory for every Muslim, male or female. It encourages its followers to learn. Hundreds of Qura-nic verses and Prophetic traditions may be quoted in this respect. But that is not the subject of the researchers' discussion. What should be focused on, that, Islam does not make difference between "Religious" and "Worldly" knowledge in this respect. Any kind of 'knowledge' that serves the society, the nation and leads to welfare of persons or people is obligatory or recommended for learning. It is mentioned here only one example from the Holy Qura-n. The Almighty Allah says: "Seest thou not that God sends down rain from the sky? With it we then bring out produce of various colours. And in the mountains are tracts white and red, of various shades of colour, and black intense in hue. And so amongst men and crawling creatures and cattle, are they of various colours. Those truly fear God, among His Servants, who have knowledge: for God is Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving." (Al-Qur'an, 35:27-28).

Here it is obvious that these verses indicate clearly the importance of thinking about nature and that those who have knowledge about nature, or the scholars of 'Natural Science' are most pious and Allah-fearing people. Professor M. Shamsheer Ali opines that Islam perceives that science discovers the law of nature and leads to trust, submission and surrender to the creator of nature. The diversity of hues in the physical and biological world is evident to all of us but it is only the learned that can really appreciate the great wisdom of the Almighty. He also observes that Allah Himself has proclaimed that the Holy Qura-n is for 'a people who think'. (Ali, 1995).

In other places in the holy Qura-n, it has been mentioned that only people with 'Ilm'(Knowledge) can comprehend His signs. Incidentally, most of the phenomena which have been mentioned as signs in the Holy Qura-n are of a scientific and technological nature, thus it is no wonder that 'Ilm' (knowledge) unless otherwise qualified stands for science. The early Muslims derived inspiration from the Holy Qura-n for the acquisition of knowledge. They considered knowledge in its entirety. And the humanities and the sciences were studied in an integrated manner. It is the pursuit of Ilm, which gave the Muslims the power, and the prestige with which they ruled a vast empire for more than a thousand years. This glory later faded away due to a number of reasons. However, the lesson that one learns from the history of the Muslim civilization is that knowledge in general and science and technology in particular must be practiced along with religion. In fact, science like other human activities is an integral part of religion. On the one hand, science teaches men how nature works and enables them to use this teaching for generating products and processes for the satisfaction of our needs. And religion teaches men the values that Allah has asked them to practice so that the value and utility aspects of life may be blended together in a harmonious manner. Thus talking in terms of the modern perspectives of life, one would need both religion and science. Science imparts material knowledge; religion teaches us the ethics of using that knowledge. Religion invites man to ponder over creation and the creator, science provides the language for understanding creation and it is the creation, which acts as the Signature of the Creator. Thus there is no real conflict between science and religion." (Ibid, p. preface - xi)

3. The Muslims, in early days of Islam, expanded their educational system to include all kinds of knowledge, such as Chemistry, Physics, Medicine, Philosophy, etc. Mosques were the centers for their primary education. "Madrasas" were the institutes for higher education for all these disciplines. 'Madrasas' were the universities of those days. All kinds of knowledge were learnt with religious zeal and enthusiasm. (Islamic Encyclopaedia,1995). Muslims considered seeking 'intellectual' or 'human' knowledge as 'Ibadah' or religious service that brings blessings and pleasure of Allah, in the same way as they considered seeking 'revealed' knowledge.

About integration of knowledge in Islam Rosnani Hashim observes: "The holistic or integral nature of knowledge is evident in these classifications, a reflection of Islam's monotheistic world-view. The scope of epistemological concerns is not only confined to ethics and spirituality but also extends to the secular sphere. The Islamic intellectual tradition does not admit compartmentalization of sciences as that is considered a denial of divine wisdom and guidance in a particular branch of knowledge, which also originates from God. It does not support the idea of pursuing a particular branch of knowledge in the secular sphere to the exclusion of revealed knowledge and vice versa." (Hashim, p.81).

4. It is evident that there was no contradiction or conflict between clergy and scientists or between 'religious' and 'scientific' knowledge. In the long history of Islam it is not found any instance of persecuting scientists for their theories,

inventions or discoveries. There may be differences or disagreement of opinion between scholars of religious sciences and scholars of 'natural sciences' or philosophers regarding Islamic thoughts, but not regarding their discoveries of scientific theories.

5. Through this educational system and from these Madrasas or 'Universities' the Muslim world produced a good number of scholars and scientists who preserved and developed the human heritage in various fields of science.

George sarton, in his monumental *'Introduction to the History of Science'*, recorded the period between AD 750 and AD 1100 as an unbroken succession of influence belonging to the culture of Islam that Jabir, Khwarizmi, Razi, Masudi, Wafa, Biruni and Omar Khayyam- Arabs, Turks, Afghans and Persians- chemists, algebrists, geographers, mathematicians, physicists and astronomers. Only after AD 1100 did the first Western names- Gerard of Cremona and Roger Bacon- appear on the scene. Even the honours were still shared for another 250 years with men like Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and Nasir Al-Din Al- Tusi. (Ibid, pp.81-82).

Mr. M. N. Roy, the prominent leader of socialist movement of India, observes: "Fathers of modern philosophy and pioneers of modern scientific researches received precious Greek heritage of knowledge from Arab philosophers and scientists. Roger Bacon was a disciple of the Arabs. The Arabs were the founders of modern physics. They not only preserved and protected works of ancient Greek scholars, but also they developed and enriched it through valuable discussion and experiment" (Mollik Brothers, pp.51-74).

6. There was only one educational system in primitive Islam. Each and every student got basic education based on Islamic faith, values and morals. He or she learnt what was needed to perform religious duties and live according to Islamic teachings. Then the learners opt for the discipline of their choice. During their study of various subjects of Humanities, Social Science of Natural Science they discussed and compared relevant theories or findings in the light of Islam. That is why it is seen that Muslim scholars in Medicine, Philosophy, Chemistry, Physics, etc had very good command in Islamic theology and thoughts.

7. Muslim scholars in their Madrasas or Universities Islamized all sorts of knowledge. They did so by making the Islamic faith and value the base of the educational system and by examining all sorts of knowledge in the light of Islam. When they transferred the works of Greek, Roman or Indian scientists and scholars into Arabic for Muslim learners they translated matters related to Science and Knowledge and avoided matters related to idolatry or contradicting Islamic faith, morals or values, without having any importance in relevant brunch of science.

8. Thus it is seen that the universities in the Muslim countries were established upon a unique and unified Islamic system. Under this system they produced numerous scientists, philosophers, thinkers, intellectuals and scholars who preserved and developed the human heritage in all fields of humanities and science, carried the torch of learning and lead the world toward knowledge.

9. These Universities also produced scholars in Islamic theology and jurisprudence, who mastered knowledge of the Holy Qura-n and Hadith. They knew all matters affecting the lives of Muslims. They also had good command on all the disciplines from literature and philosophy to medicine and astronomy. They have got the clear-sighted, intuitive knowledge of Islamic law and ethics. They got the ability of 'Ijtihad' (research, that is their mastery of the Islamic revealed knowledge enabled them give independent judgment in all legal or theological questions, according to the need and challenge of their time, without blindly copying the text or opinion of other. So they were able to provide their nations Islamic solutions in every question and problem in all aspects of national and individual life. They creatively handled all problems facing the Islamic nation and carried out very successfully their duties and responsibilities in guiding the lives of millions of practicing Muslims. (Sulaiman, p.25).

5. De-Islamization of Knowledge in the past few Centuries

For many reasons, such as corruption, deviation of Muslim rulers from Islamic teachings, their internal fraud, non-encouragement of education and scholar, spread of ignorance among the masses, and many other reasons weakened the Muslim countries and their commitment to education. In the same time European industrialism and material progress reached their peak. Europe achieved prominence and power. At the end, most of the Muslim countries became under European colonization.

Under the colonial rule the mainstream educational system became 'westernized' in the name of 'modernizing' or 'secularizing' or 'scientific education'. It was alienated from Islamic faith, morals and values. Islamic vision of the learners was clouded. Their link with their history, heritage and legacy was severed. A great number of the educated people in this system- without having any sound idea of Islam and its vision of knowledge and science- perceived that religion of Islam was and is against reason, scientific thinking and progress, as was religion in Europe. Many others suffered from conflicting dualism in faith and practice, in thought and action.

On the other hand, another system of education remained in the Muslim countries in the name of 'Islamic education'. It was also de-Islamized, because it no longer represented Islam or its comprehensive education system. It lagged far behind the age. It was confined in teaching some Islamic subjects in an old and unproductive way. The learners learnt inadequate knowledge in a few Islamic subjects without grasping the Islam's deep and far-sighted vision of life and civilization. Neither they had any idea about the world around them. They did not know the problems of Muslim masses.

It was in fact de-Islamization of 'Islamic education'. It changed Muslims' understanding of Shariah', Islam, and Islamic education. It turned the great principles inherent in Islam from an active, motivating and highly positive power into a rigid formalism that was incapable of inspiring or directing the spirit and lives of the Muslims. (Ibid. Introduction p.ix)

Explaining the affect of de-Islamization a leading Malaysian expert observes: "The de-Islamization of the Muslim mind was accomplished gradually through an increasingly secularized educational system. Inadequate Islamic education gave rise of 'false Ulema' who restricted knowledge to the domain of jurisprudence. These 'false Ulema' and secular political leaders caused confusion in knowledge, which led to excesses in belief and practice." (Hashim, opcit, p.12).

6. Islamic University: The New Phenomenon

Under the above circumstances Muslim scholars around the world struggled to find out solutions for this conflicting dualism in education. One of their suggestions was establishment of 'Islamic University'. It was not meant only to facilitate higher education and research in 'Islamic disciplines', but also to teach other disciplines of humanities and science in the light of Islamic perspective, Islamic thoughts, ideals and values. In other word it was meant for '**Islamization of Knowledge**'.

Call for establishing Islamic Universities was raised in various parts of the Islamic world during the past century and even in later nineteenth century. (Ibrahim, 1985). But the idea got its way for implementation only in eighties and nineties of the last centuries. A number of Islamic Universities have been established in Uganda, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia and other Muslim and western countries.

7. Islamization of Knowledge in our Days and Role of Islamic Universities

Islamization has twofold job: first: expanding, upgrading and modernizing Islamic disciplines, second: connecting all other disciplines to Islamic faith and values.

An Islamic University may play its role in Islamization of Knowledge in the following ways:

1. Developing and modernizing Islamic disciplines. It may be done by expanding faculties and departments for learning in depth knowledge in the Holy Qura-n, the traditions of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him), Islamic Jurisprudence, History of Islam, Islamic Civilization and Islamic people, Islamic Theology, etc. All students of these disciplines should take necessary courses in humanities, social and natural science.

Islamic life in general and Islamic education in particular depends on two kinds of knowledge: revealed and human. Islamic faith, morals, values, rituals are basically grounded on 'Revealed Knowledge'. So to Islamize knowledge a good number of expert scholars must be produced who have full command and mastery on all brunches of 'Revealed Knowledge', in-depth and encyclopedic knowledge of all Islamic disciplines, along with workable knowledge of other disciplines. Their mastery of the Islamic revealed knowledge should enable them for 'Ijtihad' or giving independent judgment in all legal or theological questions, according to the need and challenge of their time, without blindly copying the text or opinion of others. Like their great predecessors they will be able to creatively handle all problems facing the Islamic nation and carry out successfully their duties and responsibilities in guiding the Muslims.

2. Making a bridge between different brunches of knowledge and Islam. It needs two things:

- a) Students of all disciplines must be given adequate courses in Islamic faith, morals and values, Islamic Theology, History and Legacy. These subjects should be taught by practicing Muslims with deep faith and conviction in the cause. So that they will be able to inspire and motivate the students to learn and practice. They will inspire them to master their discipline with devotion, not only to secure a good job or success in this life, but with a zeal to serve his nation and attain Divine blessing and pleasure in this life and in the hereafter.
- b) In addition, one or more courses should be introduced in every discipline to discuss Islamic point of view and contribution of Islam and the Muslims in this branch of knowledge.

3. Setting up a special department or institute for Islamization of national education system. This institute should work for writing books for primary and secondary education, training up the teachers, administrators and organizers to operate in the field of Islamization with profound expertise conviction and absolute sincerity in its significance and necessity.

4. Making strong educational, academic and cultural relation with all other Islamic Universities and higher academic institutes around the world for exchange of views and experience, exchange of experts and students.

Here efforts of a few leading Islamic Universities regarding Islamization of Knowledge are discussed:

1) Al-Imam Muhammad Bin Saud Islamic University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
This University is working in this field in three ways (The Bulletin, 1992):

Firstly: promotion and development of departments for 'Revealed Knowledge:

Al-Imam University devoted itself in improving the standard of 'Islamic disciplines', So that it may produce a good number of scholars who are capable to lead the nation and guide the Muslims towards victory and success in this world and in the Hereafter. In this regard this University has established a number of faculties, colleges and higher institutes, such as: Faculty of Islamic Law (Shari'ah), Faculty of Fundamentals of Religion or Theology, Faculty of Islamic Call (D'awah) And Mass Communication, Higher Institute for Islamic Judiciary, Higher Institute for Islamic call (D'awah), etc.

Every faculty has different departments. Efforts have been made to expand and modernize the curricula and teaching methodology, so that the learners have full command on traditional Islamic knowledge, along with basic knowledge related to modern literature, philosophy and science. They may replace the 'half-ulemas' or 'false-ulemas' and fulfil the intellectual, spiritual and judiciary needs of their society.

Secondly: in the field of Islamizing disciplines of humanities and social science: It has a number of departments in humanities and social science. Here are the pictures of some of them:

In the Department of English: Total classes/ hours (weekly classes) in four year, 8 terms: 195 hours. Out of 195 hours 26 hours are devoted for Islamization, that is about 13% of total hours. In the Department of Geography out of total 198 hours 49 hours are assigned for Islamization, that is about 25% of total hours. In the Dept. of Psychology 38 hours out of 187 are assigned for Islamic subjects, that is about 20% of total hours. In the Department of Library and Information 36 hours out of total 178 hours are reserved for Islamic subjects, that is about 20% of total hours. In the Department of Social Work 37 hours out of 197 hours are booked for Islamization, that is about 19% of total hours. In the Department of Sociology 44 hours out of 184 hours are employed for Islamic subjects, that is about 24% of total subject.

These hours are distributed in all 8 terms so that the student are continued to be in touch with Islamic teachings, thoughts, values and faith throughout their educational tenure. Some departments tend to put most of the Islamic subjects in first and second years, so that more emphasis is given in the last 2 years for subjects related to the discipline itself. We may classify these Islamic subject in 3 categories:

1. Fundamentals of Islamic faith and values: The Holy Qur'an, Qur'anic Commentary The Prophetic Traditions, Islamic faith and theology.
2. Contemporary thoughts on Islam/ Discussion of different contemporary thoughts and theories in the light of Islam: Islamic thought,
3. The Ummah (nation) of Islam, contemporary Muslim world, Islamic Civilization, history and heritage, etc.

Islamic contribution and Islamic Teachings regarding the particular discipline, such as Muslim Geographic heritage, Muslim Geographers in the Department of Geography, Fundamentals of Islamic Education, Islamic guidance for psychology study, Islam and Psychology in the department of Psychology, Sources of information on the Muslim world in the Department of Library and Information, Social Work in Islam in the Department of Social Work, Sociology: Islamic perspective, Religious Sociology, Social Theories and Their Evaluation in the light of Islam in the Department of Sociology,

Thirdly: Islamization of knowledge outside the University:

Besides its efforts inside the campuses, this university made admirable efforts in 'Islamization' of secondary education. It established a number of intermediate and secondary institutes in different parts of Saudi Arabia, with emphasis of Islamization.

2) International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan

We find a strong similarity in Islamization process of this University and the previous one. This varsity also works mainly in three ways (Prospectus, 1996, IIUI): development and modernization of 'Specialized education in Islamic disciplines', Islamization of disciplines of humanities and social science and extending Islamization efforts outside the university.

For the first objective this university established a number of faculties or institutes, such as: Faculty of Shari'ah & Law, Faculty of Usuluddin (Fundamentals of Religion), Faculty of Arabic. These faculties offers

specialization in various major areas, such as: Islamic theology, D'awah, Qiraat, Tafseer, Hadith, Comparative Religion, Islamic Jurisprudence, Arabic language, etc. Students of these disciplines have to complete a few courses in General Science, Social Science and English as 'University Requirements'.

Regarding the second objective this university offers specialization in Economics, Management sciences, Computer science, English, Business Administration, etc.

Each and every student of this university, in all faculties and department requires to complete a number of credit courses about Islamic Faith, Morals, History, Islamic thought, Civilization, Contemporary Muslim World, Arabic language, English language and social science as 'University Requirements'. These courses comprise about 25% of total credit courses. In addition there are some non-credit courses devoted for Islamization and all students have to memorize 30th part and a few chapters of the Holy Qur'an.

Apart from the above, in every department there are a number of courses to study the subject in Islamic perspective. In the department of economics students have to complete some compulsory major courses in this regard, such as: Principles of Islamic Economics, Foundations of Islamic Jurisprudence, the Islamic Concept of Ownership & Contracts, Islamic Business Forms, Fiqh and Financial Claims, Special Themes in Fiqh for Economics & Business, Economic System of Islam, Islamic Banking in theory and practices, Zakat and Public Finance in Islam, Objectives of Shari'ah, Legal Maxims of Fiqh for Economics & Business, Compensation in Fiqh, Exploration in Fiqh for Economics & Business, Fiqh & Selected Contemporary Issues.

Students in the department of Business Administration study- in addition to 'University Requirements' a few other courses such as: Islamic Financial Jurisprudence, Business Ethics: An Islamic Perspective.

In the department of English 'Islam and Modern Western Thought' is taught in addition to 'University Requirements'.

3) International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia

Malaysia is a leading Muslim country in the field of 'Islamization of Knowledge', as it plays a leading role in economic, industrial, technological development.

In the field of education, it took great pains to bind its educational system to its Islamic faith, morals and heritage. To promote the cause of Islamization 'International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) was established in 1983. The University consists of four Faculties: Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Economics and Management, Faculty of Laws and Faculty of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences. (Prospectus, 1996, IIUM) Every faculty has various departments, including departments of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage, Arabic Language and literature, English Language and Literature,

Communication, History and Civilization, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology, Accounting, Business Administration, Economics, Law, Shari'ah, Computer and Information Systems Engineering, Manufacturing Systems Engineering, Electronic Engineering, etc.

Students in every department are required to successfully complete a number of credit courses on Arabic language, English language, Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Ulum Al-Qur'an) as 'University Requirements'. In addition, there are a few courses in different departments to examine the particular discipline in the light of Islam. In the Department of Accounting two credit courses are taught, each of 3 credit hours: Zakah Accounting and Accounting for Islamic Banks.

The Department of Business Administration "seeks to demonstrate the importance and usefulness of Islam for the business world." (Ibid, p.59). In course titled 'Strategic Management' issues relating to business ethics are discussed in the light of Islamic Ethics and values. Another course named 'Consumer Behaviour' Islamic perspectives on theoretical and practical aspects of consumer behaviour that are discussed, along with other topics. The courses offered by the Department of Economics 'seek to develop in students an ability to think critically from a firm grounding in the sources of Islam in order to contribute to efforts to apply divine guidance to the understanding and direction of contemporary economic activity' (Ibid, p.64). Apart from the Islamic courses designed as university requirement the students are strongly encouraged to select some of his or her elective courses from 'Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage department'.

A number of courses in this department are designed to examine Islam's view, such as: 'Foundation of Islamic Economics', 'Fiqh for Economists', 'Usul al-Fiqh', 'Economic Cooperation Among Muslim Countries', 'Issues of Islamic Economics'. In course termed 'Money and Banking' differences between conventional and interest-free Islamic approaches are discussed. Another course labeled as 'Public Finance' discusses among other topics budgetary aspects of Zakah.

In the department of Law special efforts are made to study Islamic legal system and compare it with modern legal systems. In addition, students must complete 12 credit hours of courses from the department of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage.

In the Faculty of 'Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences' students of human sciences, such as Arabic Language and literature, English Language and Literature, Communication, History and Civilization, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology, required to complete 27 credit hours in the minor field of study from the department of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage, out of minimum 125 credit hours required to receive a Bachelors degree in Human Sciences.

In addition, there are a few courses in some Human Science disciplines to discuss Islamic outlook. In the department of Communication a course is named:

Foundation for Communication in the Qur'an and Sunnah, to discuss Islamic concepts in this regard. Another course is titled 'Communication and Religion'.

Another course 'Principles of Advertising' also discusses modern advertising and Islamic moral values. 'Communication Law and Ethics', another course, discusses the media ethics prevalent in the West and explores the prospects of formulating a framework of ethics in the Islamic perspective.

In the department of English Language and Literature a few courses are devoted for study of 'Islamic Literature', its theory and practice in several world language, like Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Malay, etc. In some other course, including Literary Genres: Poetry, Drama, Novel, Short Stories Literary Criticism, British Literature, American Literature, World Literature in English and Malaysian and Singaporean Literature Islamic outlook is discussed, various issues arising in the works selected for discussion are studied from an Islamic point of view. Attempts are made to introduce students to the works of Muslim scholars and authors or to literature that includes significant references to Islam in these fields.

In the department of History and Civilization, in addition to studying Islamic History and Civilization, attempts are made to study various issues and theories in the light of the Qur'an and Islamic faith. Courses in this respect include 'Muslim Historiography', 'Issues in Islamic History'.

In the department of Political Science courses like 'Comparative Politics in the Muslim World', 'Islamic Theory of International Relations', 'Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism in the Muslim World' and 'Ethics and Politics', 'Contemporary Islamic Political Thought' are taught. Many other courses like 'Political Thought', 'International Relations', 'Survey of Political History', 'U. S. Foreign Policy', 'Post-Soviet Politics', 'People and War Studies', 'Nationalism and the Emergence of Nation-States', 'Public Administration', 'Women in Politics' explore Islamic perspective and Islamic issues.

In the department of Psychology courses like 'Islam and Psychology' and 'Psychological Studies among Early Muslim Scholars' are given. Other courses like 'History of Psychology', 'Theories of Vocational Counselling', 'Health Psychology', 'Human Creativity' also investigate Islamic perspective and contribution of Muslims.

In the department of Sociology and Anthropology courses like 'Contemporary Muslim Societies', 'Islamic Ideology and Muslim Society' and Shariah and Ijtihad in contemporary Muslim Society' are designed to provide the students an insight to understand the nature and basis of human collectivity as embodied in Islamic sources of knowledge. Other courses, like 'Media and Society', 'Sociological Theory', 'Physical Anthropology' and 'Social Anthropology' also discuss Islamic perspective and contribution of Muslim scholars.

The department of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage is considered the heart of the Faculty of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences.

Grounded in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (r), the courses offered in this department lay a solid foundation for efforts to overcome the dichotomy between 'religious' and 'secular' sciences and revive the Islamic vision of the unity of knowledge with the spirit of Tawhid. The Objectives are 1) to produce a new generation of scholars with an understanding not only of Islam and its sciences, but also of contemporary social realities, in order to find Islamic solutions for contemporary problems of the Ummah and of humanity, and 2) to produce scholars imbued with the spirit of 'taqwa' and committed to the Islamic way of life and to the establishment of a just and harmonious society. (Ibid. 139)

Students of this department are required to minor in one of the following Human Science fields: Communication, History and Civilization, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology. They have to complete 27 credit hours in the minor field of study, to be taken in English.

Major courses are taught in Arabic and designed to give the students profound and penetrating knowledge in traditional Islamic subjects, like The Qura-n, Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqh or Jurisprudence, etc. In addition a number of courses are meant for exploring human sciences and modern thoughts in the light of Islamic vision. Among these courses: 'Man in the Qur'an and Sunnah', Tawhid and the Methodology of the Human Sciences', 'Islamic Law and Contemporary Society', 'Methodology of Islamic Thought', 'Foundations for Communication in the Qura-n and Sunnah', Foundations of History in the Qura-n and Sunnah', Foundations of Philosophy in the Qura-n and Sunnah', Foundations of Political Sciences in the Qura-n and Sunnah', Foundations of Psychology in the Qura-n and Sunnah', Foundations Sociology and anthropology in the Qura-n and Sunnah', Foundations of Economics in the Qura-n and Sunnah', Muslim Contribution to World Culture, Islam and Contemporary Society, Islam and Science, Islam and Contemporary Ideologies and Movements, etc.

4) Islamic University, Kushtia, Bangladesh

In response to the longstanding demand of Muslim scholars and public, the Government of Bangladesh declared in 1/12/1976 its decision to establish an 'Islamic University'. The Late President of Bangladesh, Gen. Ziaur Rahman laid the foundation of the University on 22/11/1979. Later in 27/12/1980 the National Parliament adopted 'Islamic University act', with an objective of higher study and research in Islamic disciplines, and study of other disciplines in the spirit of Islamic faith and vision.

The University has 5 faculties: Faculty of Theology and Islamic Studies, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Faculty of Applied Science and Technology, Faculty of Business Administration, Faculty of Law and Shariah. There are 18 departments under these faculties. The University plays its role toward Islamization in the following ways (Syllabus, IUK):

First: It started its academic program with Islamic disciplines in the Faculty of Theology and Islamic Studies, to provide scopes for higher study and research in

'Theology and other fields of Islamic Studies and comparative jurisprudence' and produce a new generation of scholars endowed with devoutness and having full understanding of Islam and contemporary social reality that enable them to give appropriate Islamic solutions for contemporary problems facing the Ummah.

Second: It expanded its academic programs to include different disciplines of Humanities, Social Science, Applied Science and Technology. In these disciplines some efforts have been made for 'Islamization'. Muslim students in all departments are required to complete a course titled 'Islamic Studies' as a non-credit course.

In addition, a few departments introduced some courses to explore the Islamic perspective for the relevant discipline. Such as: 'Muslim Political Thought' and 'Administration in Islam' in the department of Politics and Public Administration, 'Principals of Islamic Economics' in the department of Economics, and 'Islamic Economics' in the department of Management. Some other courses also discuss Islam's outlook and contribution. Such as: 'Introduction to Sociology', 'Principles of Political Organization', 'Introduction to Economics and Public Finance' and 'History of Civilization' in the department of Politics and Public Administration, and 'Comparative Economic System' in the department of Economics.

8. Conclusion

From the above discussion the researchers find that the Islamic Universities in various parts of the world including Bangladesh made commendable efforts toward Islamization of knowledge. They also find some lapses, shortcomings and difficulties.

One of these drawbacks or difficulties related to lack of conviction in many of our scholars, academicians and administrators. Many of us do not aware of the Islamic conception of knowledge. Some of us may feel that Islamization in such a manner is a big burden, a big burden for the students and for the state to provide teaching materials and manpower.

The researchers agree that it is a burden. Isn't Education itself a burden? But we are ever ready and eager to bear this burden, because this burden brings much more benefits for its bearer than the trouble it makes for him. Learning through mother tongue is easy and learning a foreign language is a big burden, for the learners and the state. But, now-a-days most of us are eager to bear this additional burden and to put it on shoulders of their children. Why? Its answer is only one that they believe that this burden is necessary for better future for their children, for the nation and for themselves.

So, it is not a problem that Islamization becomes a burden. The problem is our conviction, our faith, and our perception about the necessity of Islamization. If we conceive that Islamization brings to our nation more than its costs, we will be ever ready to bear such burden. If we believe that for our survival as a nation, for balanced development of our youngsters, for a peaceful environment, to protect our society from moral deterioration and to combat increasing crime, we do not have any alternative to 'Islamization of knowledge', then we shall not feel any difficulty in bearing such burden.

Some other may feel that 'Islamization' may lead to spread of 'religious fanaticism' or 'extremism' or 'fundamentalism' in our societies. They ignore that fanaticism or extremism comes out of ignorance, not from knowledge. Only ignorance combined with passion and emotion causes fanaticism. The more a Muslim knows about Islamic teachings the more he or she becomes restrained and governed by rule of Islam, not by his emotion.

9. Recommendations

To promote Islamization process and overcome the lapses and difficulties the researchers propose some recommendations as under:

- 1) To expand the Islamic disciplines by establishing more faculties and departments for studying various disciplines related to Islamic revealed knowledge, History, Civilization, languages, contributions and problems of Muslim countries and communities.
- 2) To make more consolidated efforts towards Islamization of all disciplines of the University. It may be done through 1) developing the 'Islamic Studies' course and making it a credit course 2) introducing more courses in different disciplines to explore Islamic outlook...
- 3) Special emphasis should be made in 'Islamic Studies' course on Islamic outlook and goal of life and education, so that the students seek their knowledge as 'Ibadat', to obtain divine blessings, pleasure, and peace in this life and atonement in the Hereafter. They seek knowledge to be a good productive member of society who benefit himself and other and is ready to sacrifice his own interest for others.
- 4) Emphasis should also be made on the Islamic concept toward work, so that the student may not hate or scorn any kind work, so long it is not permitted by Islam.
- 5) To establish a cell for this purpose comprising experts of all disciplines and Islamic scholars.
- 6) To establish strong relations with all Islamic Universities and higher educational institutions all over the world for mutual cooperation in this field.
- 7) To revive the 'Institute of Islamic Thought' and enable it to play its due role in promoting Islamic thinking and research based on Islamic conception of holistic or integral nature of knowledge.
- 8) To arrange training for teachers regarding 'Islamization' oriented subject. Without a teacher with firm conviction and faith in Islam as a way of life all efforts in this regard may become fruitless or counter productive.

[*Note: International Islamic University Chittagong (IIUC), a leading Private University in Bangladesh, established in 1995, has been playing a vital role in Islamization of Knowledge. Due to lack of time, it was not possible for the researchers to include this university in the sample of the data.*]

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