ISLAMIC EDUCATION STRATEGY OF ISLAMIC TE LEVISION CHANNELS: A COMPARISION OF AL-RESALAH AND AL-HIJRAH

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Abstract

The main concern of this paper is the Islamic education strategy of Islamic television channels. It identifies the vision, mission and objectives of al-Resalah and al-Hijrah television channels. The first objective of this paper is identify the vision, mission and objectives of al-Resalah and al-Hijrah channels. The second objective is to analyze education programs of the two channels for a week of broadcasting. The method used is qualitative content analysis. Thematic categorization of programs is conducted to find out the Islamic education programs broadcast on both channels. The major outcome of the paper is that the theme of education cannot be achieved throughout a number of programs broadcast on the screen, but it should be a continuous well-planed efforts to achieve the obligation of laid upon Muslims. Islamic education should not be randomly conducted through broadcasting a mixture of programs, but it should be based on a well-planned strategy to guaranty effective impact.

Keywords: Islamic education, television channels, *al-Resalah*, *al-Hijrah*

Abstrak

Permasalahan utama kertas ini adalah strategi pendidikan Islam oleh saluran televisyen Islam. Kertas ini mengenal pasti visi, misi, dan objektif-objektif saluran televisyen al-Resalah dan al-Hijrah. Objektif pertama kertas ini adalah mengenal pasti visi, misi, dan

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objektif-objektif saluran televisyen al-Resalah dan al-Hijrah. Objektif kedua adalah untuk menganalisis program-program pendidikan bagi kedua-dua saluran selama seminggu waktu penyiaran. Kaedah yang digunakan adalah analisis kandungan kualitatif. Pengkategorian bertema dijalankan untuk mengetahui tentang program-program pendidikan Islam yang bersiaran di kedua-dua saluran. Hasil utama kertas ini adalah tema pendidikan tidak boleh dicapai melalui bilangan program yang disiarkan, akan tetapi, tema pendidikan haruslah menjadi usaha terancang yang berterusan untuk mencapai kewajipan yang diletakkan kepada orang-orang Islam. Pendidikan Islam tidak sepatutnya dijalankan secara rambang menerusi penyiaran pelbagai jenis program, tetapi perlulah berdasarkan satu strategi terancang untuk jaminan impak yang berkesan.

Kata kunci: pendidikan Islam, saluran televisyen, *al-Resalah*, *al-Hijrah*

INTRODUCTION

According to ʿAdawi (2011), establishment of an Islamic satellite television channels is a duty laid upon Muslims because television is the medium most capable of achieving the duty of Islamic education. In response to this duty, Islamic satellite television channels are spread in Muslim countries and broadcast in the languages that suit the target audiences. Even though the programs on these television channels are characterized as Islamic, whereas Islam never contains mistakes; they remain production of human philosophy that is subject to errors. Studying examples and learning from experiences of current management philosophy reduce errors of Islamic broadcasting. This paper sets forth two management philosophy experiences from two different Muslim countries in order to serve as a current experience to enrich the field of Islamic broadcasting and help the current and future Islamic television channels to make use of them. This paper identifies management philosophy of *al-Resalah* and *al-Hijrah* television channels throughout their visions missions and objectives. A comparison of Islamic education program between *al-Resalah* and *al-Hijrah* will be conducted.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Both *al-Resalah* and *al-Hijrah* television channels' visions, missions and objectives are going to be identified. Both channels are Islamic-based, but they belong to different cultures. Identifying these channels shows their similarities and diferences.

Al-Resalah Television Channel

According to 'Adawi (2011) who studied the Role of Aesthetic Composition in Contemporary Islamic Media: A Case Study of al-Resalah Television Channel, *al-Resalah* in Arabic means the message. It is an Arabic language Islamic satellite television channel aimed at presenting Islam. *Al-Resalah*, owned by Prince al-Waleed bin Talal of Saudi Arabia, was launched in March 2006. *Al-Resalah* broadcasts twenty four hours daily and accepts advertisements and programs sponsorship. The motto of *al-Resalah* is Ibda' wa Asalah (Creative and Authentic). This motto is chosen because as al-Swuaidan (2008) discusses, *al-Resalah* returns to the roots of Islam and the noble Qur'an, but it is also very creative in representation, in the way of talking; and it is authentic in the principles of love and peace and in following the values of religion. *Al-Resalah* is recorded all over the United Arab Emirates and from Morocco to Kuwait, and broadcasts from Cairo. It has slots on Arbsat and Nilesat satellites, serving primarily the Middle East, North Africa and Europe. The funding of *al-Resalah* television comes from the Prince al-Waleed bin Talal 100%, but this funding will reduce to zero over five years, and the channel should be able to fund itself if it is successful (al-Swuaidan, 2006). However, this agreement was not fulfilled because the financial capital allocated for setting up the channel at the beginning of establishing *al-Resalah* was cut off.

Vision and Mission of *al-Resalah*

According to Ibrahim (2011) the vision of an Islamic television channel should emanate from Islamic 'aqidah for both its form and content. *Al-Resalah* specifies its vision to be a satellite television channel that offers Islamic broadcasting distinguished by its creative thoughts and innovative high quality programs that are in accordance with international specifications (al-Resalah, 2013). *Al-Resalah* makes a bid to broadcast unprecedented and innovative programs for its audience. It also seeks to offer Islamic innovative television

programs that attract a large audience and do not contradict Islamic rules. *Al-Resalah* confirms its vision to provide broadcasting that does not contradict Islam as a whole and not only based on 'aqidah.

Furthermore, *al-Resalah* seeks to achieve the mission of creating positive change in the thought of the Muslim Arab nation and maintaining moderation of the young generation by keeping them away from extremism. *Al-Resalah* also tries to improve behaviors of Muslim youth and advises and supports them to be responsible for development (al-Resalah, 2013). Wise (2006) questions the ability of *al-Resalah* to provide moderate programs by saying that the new Islamic television channel, *al-Resalah*, is amid a buzz of speculation about whether the station, billed as the first-ever moderate Islamic entertainment channel, would be able to offer a sufficiently appealing product (Islam-friendly comedies, talk shows, reality TV, music videos and game shows) to attract secular viewers. This questioning is answered by the General Manager of *al-Resalah* who explains the philosophy of *al-Resalah* by saying: "We only represent moderate and modern Islam, We have viewers all over the Arab world" (al-Swuaidan, 2006, p.1). The question to be raised is what is moderation? Muslims from one country to another differ in specifying the notion of moderation. The notion of moderation is a matter of debate because it is not a fixed criterion.

Objectives of *al-Resalah*
According to Kanakir et al. (2010) *al-Resalah* television channel has five main objectives to fulfill throughout its broadcasting: changing wrong principles, directing interests, developing skills, developing relations and introducing role models. It is stated in *al-Resalah* website (2013) that *al-Resalah* seeks to correct five main principles. First, *al-Resalah* directs its efforts to consolidate moderate and record the true thoughts of the Muslim community. Second, *al-Resalah* wants to implant Islamic principles, show the glory of Islam and promote Pan-Arabism. Third, *al-Resalah* attempts to stabilize right convictions and correct wrong ones. Fourth, *al-Resalah* seeks to present positive values such as truthfulness, honesty, humbleness, patriotism, fairness etc. Fifth, *al-Resalah* assures the respect of mind and the use of proofs which involve refusing imaginary impressions that have no proofs. Osama Kanaker (2010) argues that *al-Resalah*

has some programs that serve its objectives like *Hattem al-Quyud* (Demolish Restrictions), *Yathununa Annahum Yuhsinun* (They Think that They are Doing Well) and *5×3*. Anyway, fulfilling these objectives cannot be through a number of programs. Therefore, *al-Resalah* allocates some programs in each season that are related to these principles.

A survey conducted by Mustafa Kanakir (2007) about whether television is able to create change among its viewers showed the following results. Great change is 31.2%, average change 42.84%, weak change 14.52%, no change 4.94% and do not know 6.48% as shown in figure 1.

Figure 1: Creating Change by Television
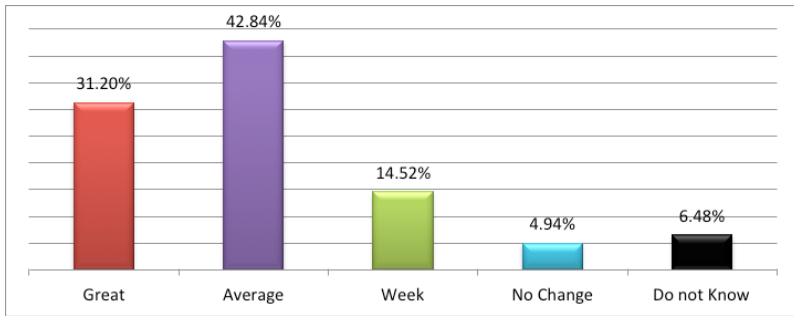
Source: Retrieved from Mustafa Kanakir (2007)

However, Mustafa Kanakir opposes this result based on studies that prove the great impact of television on its viewers and the noticed impact of television on Muslim audiences. This finding seems to be as a result of the lack of knowledge among Arab societies about theories and impact of television. This result may be due to the arrangement of the question in the survey because it comes after some questions about Islamic programs in television and respondents assumed that it is about Islamic television channels which do not make change among its audience not about television in general. In this case, this chart reflects the audience's attitude of Islamic television channels' impact. Therefore, *al-Resalah* has to improve its program to change the wrong assumption made among audiences.

In addition, the second objective of *al-Resalah* is directing audience's interests. *Al-Resalah* concerns itself with interests like reading, art, beauty, sport, education and entertainment. It can be assumed that viewing religious programs is closely associated with religious interest. Religious interests in *al-Resalah* are associated with interests of everyday life. An example of this objective is a program called Khawater 8 (Reflection 8) which is a program broadcast every Ramadan. Khawater 8 was broadcast in Ramadan 2012. This program encourages young people both males and females to make charitable contributions and volunteer to perform jobs in twelve countries such as Kuwait, Egypt, Niger, Switzerland, Turkish, South Korea, Spain, Jordan, and Uganda. In the first episode of *Khawater 8*, the presenter stated that more than five hundred volunteers contributed to successfully perform different tasks all over the twelve countries such as renovating houses for poor families, establishing a library in a condominium, lending a helping hand to an orphanage and so on. Al-Shuqairi, the presenter of *Khawater 8* stated that more than thirty projects were successfully completed during this season and there were financial gifts for the best three projects. This program emphasizes creation and not imitation in all its projects. Voluntary jobs continue even after Ramadan for young people who would like to volunteer at any time. This program is not produced by *al-Resalah*, but *al-Resalah* buys it from the producer. *Al-Resalah* attempts to guide the interests of its audience to be in line with Islamic teaching. This is derived from Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) saying who says:

> None of you believes until his fancy is following what I bring.
>
> (Al-Sunnah, n.d. 1:15)

Furthermore, *al-Resalah*'s third objective is to develop human skills such as administrative skills, personal skills, artistic skills, technical skills, and social and human skills. Administrative skills are handled by focusing on planning, taking decisions, organizing, marketing ideas and products, quality and authorization. Personal skills like delivering speeches, dialogue, listening, managing time, innovation and leadership are also aimed to be developed by *al-Resalah* among its viewers. *Al-Resalah* also concerns itself with skills of art such as

photography, drawing and acting. Technical skills like skills of using a computer, modern equipment and programming is the fourth kind of skills to be developed by *al-Resalah*. Social and human skills are the last sort of skills to be developed such as skills of communication and human relations. *Al-Resalah* is also concerned with the skills of establishing families and social intelligence (al-Resalah, 2013). The CEO of *al-Resalah* is an expert in this field. He is renowned for his television programs and books of managing time and developing human efforts and skills (Osama Kanaker, 2010). Al-Swuaidan (2006) specifies the aim of his programs by saying "I'm talking here about how to be creative, to become a leader, organize your life and your time, improve your communication skills, learn public speaking, decision making, running meetings and so on - management and leadership skills" (p.6). Al-Swuaidan further clarifies the nature of his programs by saying that they are not lectures. Usually it's done through an exercise, and usually they are challenging exercises that the young people who undergo them are surprised. Al-Swuaidan (2006) gives more explanation of his programs by saying "I let them work, and I watch. Then after they are done, I tell them where they are wrong and what they do well. From that, they learn and viewers learn teamwork and leadership skills" (p.6).

Moreover, according to Dakir and Ibrahim (2005), the purpose of communication in Islam is to strengthen relations among Muslims, and between Muslims and non-Muslims to establish human solidarity. In conformity with this purpose, *al-Resalah* specifies its fourth objective - to develop human relationships such as familial, marital and friendly relations in order to produce good personalities that play positive roles in building the whole society. An example of developing marital relations is a program titled *al-Dawrah al-Ta'hiliah fi al-Hayat al-Zawjiah* (A Preparatory Course for Marital Life). The idea of this program is unprecedented and infrequent on other television channels (Kanakir et al., 2010). In this program, the presenter discuses and elaborates the Islamic point of view about marital relations starting from choosing a wife, engagements, marriage ceremony, husband-wife family relations, raising children and other factors. Another example is *Ahla Bait* (The most Beautiful House). This program focuses on how to create love among family members through respect, cooperation and so on. In this regard, al-

Swuaidan (2006) argues that the use of such kind of programs is necessary because "Islam is not only a relation between us and God. It is how we deal with life, and how we deal with others and how do we deal in a positive way" (p.7). The objective of developing relations is a necessity because the life of human beings is not but communication and relations. Mustafa Kanakir (2008) argues that Muslim broadcasters have to take into consideration three kinds of relations: with the Creator (SWT), the audience and one's own self. Even though the overall focus of *al-Resalah* programs touches on the three kinds of relations, this objective seems to focus mainly on the second kind of relations.

The last objective of *al-Resalah* is introducing role models for the audience. Al-Swuaidan (2006) discusses that *al-Resalah* aims to introduce role models through the personality and performance of presenters of the programs. He says: "now, the performance itself should have a message in it. The way they dress, the way they talk-these anchors and stars are role models to the youth, and the question is whether they are good role models and are they showing that in this program from the way they dress and the way they talk?" (p.4). Kanakir et al. (2010) argue that al-Resalah focuses on five kinds of role models. They are: historical models, scholars, sport models, successful personalities and innovators and religious personalities. *Al-Resalah* also introduces Muslim and non-Muslim scholars who are specialized in religious, natural and human studies. Besides that, *al-Resalah* seeks to introduce sportsmen models who have positive impact on the young. *Al-Resalah* goes further to introduce successful personalities who have good experience because they can change people's behavior and spread hope among them by presenting the difficulties they have faced and how they solved them. Innovators and religious abiding personalities are introduced by *al-Resalah* too. *Al-Resalah*'s focus on role models is apparent throughout its programs. For example, there is a program titled *Fi Hubi al-Mustafa* (Loving the Prophet) where the presenter chooses her episodes from the biography of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to serve as a model for the audience. *Ula'ika Aaba'i* (Those are my Ancestors) is another program that introduces role models. The presenter narrates and comments on stories of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) companions may Allah be pleased with them and their followers.

The objective of introducing role models is in line with the noble Qur'an and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Allah (SWT) says in the noble Qur'an:

> There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern.
>
> (Al-Ahzar, 33: 21)

This verse introduces the first model for human beings i.e. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Other models are introduced by the Prophet (PBUH) himself such as his caliphs (Mustafa Kanaker, 2008). Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) says:

> Follow my Sunnah and the Sunnah of my rightly guided caliphs.
>
> (Sunan Abu Dawod, 2009, 4: 4607)

The Prophet's companions, Muslim scholars and the wise can be introduced as models for the audience too. These kinds of role models are not only narrated by a presenter, but they should be broadcast in different forms of drama and cartoon.

The five objectives mentioned above are announced by *al-Resalah* television channel as their guiding principles. However, 'Adawi (2011) argues that mass media has hidden objectives not stated. These objectives are usually to get profit. In the case of *al-Resalah*, the owner also owns Rotana group which is one of the leading diversified media companies operating in the Middle East. The group's portfolio comprises music production, film and series production, management services, television channels, radio stations and a production house. Rotana is widely known as the world's largest producer of Arabic music and a key distributor and producer of Arabic movies, with a library comprising more than 2000 movies (Rotana, 2013). Therefore, 'Adawi (2011) argues that maybe there are hidden objectives of *al-Resalah* not to be publicized yet. Even he argues that there is no indication of any hidden objective, 'Adawi suggests that *al-Resalah* may be a shield for Rotana and other entertainment companies in which the prince owns stakes; or it might be a kind of flattery needed for big businessmen. However, *al-*

Resalah may be a translation of the Islamic feelings of the owner that he has to do something for Islam because. In the case of *al-Resalah*, the connection between the owner and the objectives cannot be emphasized because the General Manager of *al-Resalah* assures in an interview with al-Hufi and Hussein (2006) that he and his crew are completely responsible for the objectives of the channel and it is not related to Rotana at all. He further states that the prince himself rejected the first suggested name of the channel which was Rotana Deen (Religious Rotana) to assure the separation of *al-Resalah* from other secular channels owned by the prince.

Al-Hijrah Television Channel
Al-Hijrah Media Corporation (AHMC) was incorporated under the companies act as a company limited by guarantee in September 2009. The creation of al-Hijrah Media Corporation (AHMC) is to realize the operation of a free television station broadcasting throughout Malaysia and the production of various types of media programs based on Islamic religious teachings and universal values. Al-Hijrah in Arabic means 'migration'. Al-Hijrah television is the first Malaysian free-to-air (FTA) high-definition channel. It was launched on December 7th, 2010 (Sani, 2010). Al-Hijrah broadcasts in three languages: Malay, English and Arabic. It is located in the capital of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur in a building named Pusat Islam (Islamic Center) of the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur.

The first seven months of broadcasting, *al-Hijrah* started as a local channel where an antenna could be used to watch it. On 1st of June, 2011 *al-Hijrah* became a satellite channel by broadcasting via Astro which exploits the number 114. Astro is the brand name of the Malaysian direct broadcast satellite (DBS) pay television service. It transmits digital satellite television and radio to households in Malaysia and Brunei. The name Astro is an acronym for All-Asian Satellite Television and Radio Operator. *Al-Hijrah* made a step forward to achieving the *al-Hijrah* objective of being an international channel. *Al-Hijrah* television is funded by the Malaysian government. Sani (2010) argues that the government has granted *al-Hijrah* television an initial allocation of RM 60 million (Malaysian Ringgit) for establishment where not the entire grant was used to run the station. The CEO of *al-Hijrah* television, Bukhari, said "To

date the company has only spent RM 30 million in setting up the channel" (Sani, 2010, p.2). Bukhari further argues in an interview with the researchers (2012) that *al-Hijrah* saved a lot of expenses because of the experience of the *al-Hijrah* team who established the station. Otherwise, the expenses of establishing a television channel similar to *al-Hijrah* would have been much greater.

Vision and Mission of *al-Hijrah*

The vision of *al-Hijrah* television is to be a channel that educates, entertains and unifies the community through creative, high-quality and universal programs that are in-line with Islamic principles and suitable for local and international communities. Malaysia is a multi-racial community composed of Muslims as a majority and non-Muslims (Proposal for Application of CASP License for Free TV Station- al-Hijrah TV, n.d.). Al-Hijrah is aware of the importance of unity and it seeks to promote unity and establish peace. Islam emphasizes the primordial equality and unity of human beings by asserting that all of humanity came from one man and one woman, i.e. Adam and Eve. However, some forms of Islamic discourse emerge with the purpose of destroying unity instead of fostering it and sowing discord and conflict instead of trust, mutual respect and brotherhood (Azhar, 2011). Therefore, achieving this vision is not a facile task for al-Hijrah to fulfill because it requires true understanding of Islam and society. Al-Hijrah's vision to attract its audience by choosing suitable programs for them is in line with Islamic teachings. This reflects Ali's RAA saying who says:

> Tell people what they understand. Do you want Allah and
> His messenger to be accused of lying?
> (al-Bukhari, 1422H, 1:137)

Moreover, the vision of al-Hijrah television is to be a channel that educates and entertains. Buyong and Ismail (2012) argue that television provides information and entertainment. However, the crucial problem in this technological age is to apply Islamic precepts to entertainment and arts as all of these social items have to be reconciled with religious obligations. Secular entertainment broadcast in the Muslim world creates a state of uncertainty of the legality of entertainment in Islam. The domination of non-Islamic

culture creates a situation of uncertainty among Muslims as to what extent they are permitted to participate in or enjoy themselves with entertainment activities which are available in their contemporary life. Uncertainty of entertainment in Islamic broadcasting leads to some challenges among the Muslim society. The challenge facing contemporary Muslim society is not only that of disparaging corruptive entertainments, but also of ensuring that Islamic alternative entertainments are available to the Muslim masses. To produce Islamic entertainment products, a high degree of commitment and professionalism are required.

Furthermore, al-Hijrah television shoulders the mission to become the first television station with an Islamic concept in Malaysia that broadcasts good quality and creative programs that encourage people to continuously migrate towards the path of righteousness in all aspects of life (Proposal for Application of CASP License for Free TV Station- al-Hijrah TV, n.d.). Davies (1987) argues that what gets produced for television and radio at present are da'wah efforts which lack professional production techniques, concentrate on limited sets of agreed content heavily weighted to have minimal Islamic content, lack imagination and creativity in presentation and misuse of opportunities of the very medium they utilize. Therefore, al-Hijrah should come up with new and original programs to fulfill its mission. Al-Hijrah tries to broadcast a variety of attractive programs by utilizing modern technology which is controlled by professional and transparent management who follows effective policies and depends on sustained financial support to survive. Al-Hijrah also attempts to present and encourage prominent inventors and promote their inventions through marketing and sponsorship of packages.

Objectives of Al-Hijrah
According to the Proposal for Application of CASP License for Free TV Station- al-Hijrah TV (n.d.), there are eight primary objectives for creating al-Hijrah television. First, al-Hijrah is a television channel that supports the idea of 'One Malaysia' because it is consistent with the requirements of Islam. One Malaysia is the slogan of Malaysian Prime Minister at the time of establishing al-Hijrah because Malaysia is a multi-racial country with a mixed population of Muslims and non-Muslims. Television is controlled by government

in most Muslim countries. In Malaysia, for example, television starts as a government station (Sabran, 2010). Sabran (2010) further argues that the Malaysian government monopolized both radio and television especially before introduction of private television. Nonetheless, Davies (1987) assures that Islamic broadcasting needs guaranteed independence and this cannot happen under government control. However, Sani (2010) discusses that al-Hijrah television is a government initiative to establish a channel based on Islam and provide an Islamic perspective through its programs. Thus, al-Hijrah television is a commencement and contribution of the government to disseminate Islam.

Second, al-Hijrah television functions as a station that promotes unity in a multi-racial society. The Malaysian Canon of Journalism obliges journalists to contribute to nation building, to promote national unity, to work against communism, and to uphold standards of social morality (Hafez, 2002). Davies (1987) discusses that the prime duty of broadcasting is to serve the needs of communities. The needs of communities are different from one country to another according to social and cultural relations. The Malaysian society, for example, is in need of national unity and peace as it is a collection of societies of different cultures and religions. Azhar (2011) further argues that television should promote not national but international unity. He argues that the programs of television should seek to promote dialogue, understanding, co-existence and co-operation with all the parties of the international community, in order to spread the values of justice, peace and welfare. Unity of human beings is tressed in the noble Qur'an. Allah (SWT) says:

> O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another
>
> (al-Hujurat, 49: 13)

Thus, living in peace and unity is the way that Allah (SWT) wants His creation to spend their lives. Al-Hijrah recognizes that unity is crucial for Malaysia so it is considered an objective to be achieved throughout its broadcasting.

Third, al-Hijrah serves as an informal educational institution that disseminates knowledge to the community. Outputs of television production should provide education and impart information and should not be designed merely for entertainment. Educating and informing through television requires attractive programs in different formats to catch the attention of viewers. Al-Ahmad (2012) argues that television originally is an entertainment medium and converting it to a medium for education is not an easy task. It requires experience, capabilities and a right vision. Al-Ahmad questions the availability of this experience, capabilities and vision for the Islamic television channels. Islamic television channels often face different problems due to lack of experience of broadcasting. They frequently face crises due to unavailability of professional practitioners, weak qualifications of religious program makers and poor Islamic education of program producers (Ibrahim, 2011). Therefore, al-Ramani (2010) calls on Muslim scholars to participate in da'wah through television and the Internet not leaving them to whom he calls 'half-educated' - who are not able to educate others since they are not fully educated. Therefore, it is a challenge for al-Hijrah to provide fully educated and self-purified Muslim scholars who have the ability to educate the audience.

Fourth, al-Hijrah television serves as a channel that stimulates the population's economy to be in line with Islamic teachings. Al-Hijrah Corporation does not only broadcast Islamic television programs, but also encourages others to invest in this field of Islamic education. Some researchers warn Islamic television channels against being profit-seekers following after only financial benefits. For example, Ibrahim (2011) states that it is a loss for Islamic television channels to become money seekers instead of seeking to fulfill their objectives because it is deviation from the essential task of the channel. Encouraging audiences to invest in Islamic television channels is a new attempt to guarantee financial support for the channel. Stimulating the population to invest is an attempt by the channel to share with its audience the importance of such investment that supports an effective medium of disseminating the Islamic message. Encouraging the population to invest and participate in Islamic television through investment seems to be more attractive than encouraging them to pay sadaqah and zakah because the public are

not fully aware of the importance of television channels for Islamic education on the one hand and the lack of Islamic television channels which attract people and show wisdom in their broadcasting on the other.

Fifth and sixth objectives are complementary to each other. Fifth, al-Hijrah introduces to the whole society that Islam is beautiful, attractive, interesting and a way of life. Sixth, the station purposes to ward off evil propaganda against Islam from within and outside the country. The image of Islam and Muslims is deliberately associated with backwardness, poverty, ignorance and terrorists, especially by the institution of international mass media. Azhar (2011) further argues that Islam has often been considered by the western media in the twentieth century as a source of conflict, violence and fanaticism. Therefore Azhar (2011) calls upon Muslim media to strive to clarify and highlight the truth of Islam and dispel the doubts harbored about it. This issue is not handled seriously by Muslims who do not make serious inroads into the task of broadcasting about Islam to a general audience (Davies, 1987). Lack of programs that present Islam as beautiful, attractive, interesting and a way of life makes Islamic television in need of such programs. Davies (1987) states that there is a desperate need for programs about contemporary Islamic thinking and ideas that can clarify the relationship between Muslims and Islam today. Davies (1987) further clarifies the kind of programs needed in the Islamic television by saying "we need far more programs to clarify that Islam is not an abstract ideal removed from the real world, or the endless succession of programs that seek to explain or portray Islam only in the context of its past history". Therefore, this objective seems to fill a necessary gap in the production of Islamic television programs.

Seventh, al-Hijrah aims at developing a morally-sound and honorable society especially among the youth and teenagers. Developing a morally-sound and honorable society is a necessity because it is the mission of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who was sent to complete high moral standards and Muslims have to follow his guidance. The majority of Muslims in the meantime have abandoned the mission of establishing a righteous community in their broadcasting. The Islamic moral and ethical framework is absent in the practice of

broadcasting in Muslim society today, and in any other system of broadcasting as well (Davies, 1987). Dakir and Ibrahim (2005) argue that through communication human beings can develop many aspects of the society such as economy, science etc. Besides, some codes of broadcasting and journalism consider society to be the top priority even before government. For example, Hafez (2002) argues that The Algerian Code states that a journalist's obligations toward the publisher and the state rank second to his or her responsibility toward the public and society. The concern of establishing a moral society is sought only by Muslims because western media is concerned only with satisfying its audience whereas Islam does not allow dissemination of only what people and society desire (Ali, 1996). Hasnain (1988) argues that the Western approach to communication emphasizes individuals whereas the Islamic approach emphasizes societies at large. thus, al-Hijrah by choosing this objective contributes to achieve an important need for every society all over the world.

Eighth, al-Hijrah seeks to become a regional and international media that spreads Islamic television programs to the world and serves as a model of Islamic television for other countries. Al-Hijrah also spends pioneering efforts to export Islamic programs by making Malaysia a hub for Islamic programs. Programs of Islamic television channels should be produced in a variety of attractive formats and should not consist only of talk which makes this objective harder to be fulfilled. The recent broadcasting scenario is very challenging due to lack of Islamic production houses. Producing and exporting Islamic programs to the world requires multiple production abilities like proficiency of languages that prevail over this world, understanding fiqh broadcasting and establishing Islamic television production houses. Applying fiqh broadcasting to television programs requires a proper knowledge of television production and fiqh, and laudable efforts have been executed by al-Hijrah television channel in this regard. To produce international programs, it is necessary to establish a production house. Production houses for Islamic television programs at the international level are limited, among other things due to inability of Muslims to understand the importance of films and television and then nurture them according to their belief. Thus, this objective is a big challenge to al-Hijrah and it may be a long term objective to be achieved.

METHOD

This paper focuses on Islamic education programs of both *al-Resalah* and *al-Hijrah* television channels. The study lasts for one week starting from Saturday 21st of April, 2012 to Friday 27th of the same month for *al-Resalah*. The week sample of *al-Hijrah* is from Monday 23rd of April, 2012 to Sunday 29th of the same month because the broadcasting week of *al-Resalah* is from Saturday to Friday, and the week of *al-Hijrah* is from Monday to Sunday. This paper is based on a PhD study of Islamic television broadcasting. The programs were recorded and listed in a coding sheet. Then a thematic categorization for all the programs was conducted based on observation of the two channels. Only Islamic education programs were chosen for this paper.

FINDINGS

Al-Resalah conducted its strategy of Islamic education by broadcasting fourteen programs in form of lectures, questions and answers and discussions between guests and hosts as shown in Table 1. Some programs such as *Ayuha al-Insan* is a variety-topic program i.e. each episode is about an independent topic. For example, the episode on 25th of April, 2012 was about Mu'awiah Bin Abi Sufian; and on 8th of June 2012 was about Syria. Ashwaq is another program that falls under Islamic education. This program covers different topics such as seeking knowledge and munajah (supplication) which are the topics of two episodes on 14th of April 2012 and on 20th of April 2012 consecutively. *Riah al-Tagheer 2* is an educational program that aims at creating civilizational change in the Muslim nation (al-Swuidan, 2012).

Table 1: Islamic Education Programs of al-Resalah and al-Hijrah

Theme		Al-Resalah Programs	Theme		Al-Hijrah Programs
Islamic Education	1	Dha'if Waznak	Islamic Education	1	Kuliah Solat-Zohr
	2	Musafirun		2	Kuliah Solat-Asr
	3	al-Jawab al-Shafi		3	Kuliah Solat-Maghrib
	4	al-Islam al-Gha'ib		4	Muhasabah Diri
	5	Muhadharat al-Ausbu'		5	Yala Shabab
	6	Baini Wa Bainakum		6	Solat Jumuat
	7	Risalati		7	Bicara
	8	Hamasat		8	Assalamualicom
	9	Fadha'il		9	Dikir Zikir
	10	Liqa' al-Jumu'ah		10	Building for Islam
	11	Ashwaq		11	Perjalanan Nurani
	12	Riah al-Tagheer 2		12	The Deen Show
	13	Shabab Gher		13	Gen 21
	14	Ayuha al-Insan		14	Nota al-Zahra
				15	Sekolah Saya Hebat
				16	Annisa
				17	Facebook Ustazah Samsiah
				18	Mat Cincang
				19	Elbert the Tiger
				20	Raju the Richshow
				21	Klumpies
				22	Treks in a Wild World
				23	Pada Zaman Dahulu
				24	Law Kana Bainana
				25	Khidmat Shariah
				26	Surviving Disasters

Source: Extracted from the Table of al-Hijrah Programs Sample

Likewise, al-Hijrah conducted its strategy through a bigger number of programs. Kuliah Solat-Zohr, Kuliah Solat-Asr and Kuliah Solat-Maghrib are similar short variety programs that are broadcast daily before prayer times. Dikir Zikir is an entertainment program that includes religious chants conducted by a Muslim band. Chants take place in a mosque with people male and female sitting on the floor with an aisle separating them. Al-Hijrah directs its Islamic education through some of its programs to youth both males and females. Gen 21 is an example of such programs. Based on observation of this program, al-Hijrah aims at developing hobbies of young generation to be in line with Islam. On Saturday 5th of May 2012, the episode of Gen 21 focused on the hobbies of music and singing where ladies and young men play guitar and sing religious songs.

Besides, al-Hijrah goes further to allocate education programs for children through entertainment. For example, *Sekolah Saya Hebat* is a competition program between two schools chosen for every episode. The competition combines education and fun such as throwing balls and delivering speeches. Al-Hijrah also has variety topics of educational programs i.e. each episode is a separate topic. *Assalamualicom*, for example, is a variety educational programs that target different issues. For example, members of Islamic Relief Worldwide association are invited for this program to familiarize audience with the association. They discuss the possibilities of helping Syrians in their Dilemma during the Arab spring. On 20th of May 2012, the episode is titled Adab Di Masjid (Ethics at Mosques) which highlighted general ethical standards.

CONCLUSION
Even though *al-Hijrah* and *al-Resalah* strive to broadcast unique and valuable programs, they share few similarities. The differences seem to be due to different understanding of Islamic broadcasting, culture, audience and financial support. Each channel establishes its own vision, mission and objectives that suit its own situation. Even though both channels have one main objective i.e. dissemination of the Islamic message, the methods they follow to achieve this objective is not similar. Thus, Muslims should not follow a single strict method for all people around the world because each society

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has its own culture, belief, attitude and knowledge. Therefore, dissemination of the Islamic message should be conducted wisely to be accepted.

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