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**GUEST EDITORS' NOTE: THE DIRECTIONS AND CHALLENGES OF
REGIONAL ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS
WITHIN THE MODERNIZATION AND FOURTH INDUSTRIAL
REVOLUTION**

***Editor Tamu: Halatuju dan Cabaran Institusi Pendidikan Tinggi Islam Serantau
dalam Arus Pemodenan dan Revolusi Industri Keempat***

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This special issue reveals pertinent academic discourses of 13 articles that had been presented in the 6th Regional Seminar on Higher Islamic Education (*SeIPTI 2019*), At Sultan Sharif Ali University, Brunei Darussalam. All articles connote within the themes of *The Directions and Challenges of Regional Islamic Higher Education Institutions within the Modernization and Fourth Industrial Revolution*. The articles presented and discussed in various angles of multi-discipline knowledge hence arrive at the same objectives to produce balance human being in accordance with Maqasid Syariah.

Islamic teaching brings together the values in which epitomizes the belief system, the structure of life, the practicality and implementation in all actions, whereas all those signifies the spiritual values postulates within human beings. In a dynamic process of human civilization and knowledge expansion, the nature of development has undergone a tremendous change similarly Higher Educational Institutions (HEI) experiencing changes that are in tandem with the current technological developments and latest communication tools used today. In this scenario, HEI's citizens included students are among the most affected whereas, in personality and capacity building, they should possess robust ability to face rapid challenges and the changes in this modernization and technological opulence. The certainty of goals and directions to achieve should be based on a strong understanding of Islamic philosophical education elements, hence the implementation and practices of those embedded in the vision and mission of the organization.

A few discussions focus on the activities, performance and developments of the university students and its sustainability for the future. It involved the query on their capabilities and sustainability in communication as dai'e and agent of change in the society. The essence of discussion points towards Islamic Higher Educational Institutions, its capacity to face the challenges in the fourth industrial revolution. Thus, it is the responsibility of the university to educate students to become resilient in all aspects of life and fields. Graduate students are the source of human capital to the nation and dai'e to society. In this juncture, the representations of Islam should be established on the exemplary conduct of akhlak (moral values) and khudwah hasanah (good example) that is grounded on robust Islamic worldview and deep-seated Islamic philosophical underpinnings.

Unearthing the Psycho-Spiritual Values within the Training Module for Disaster Workers by Khatijah Othman, Nik Nadian Nisa Nik Nazli, Muhammad Khairi Mahyuddin, Mashitah Sulaiman, Suhailiza Md. Hamdani, Yuseri Ahmad, Marina Munira Abdul Mutalib, Nurhafizah Mohd Sukor, Zulfadhli Hamzah and Nor Adila Syahira Jusoh (2020) examined how in a different situation the psycho-spirituality skill is needed to deal with an unexpected scenario. The findings of the study highlighted in their articles show the significant relations between three essential components of psycho-spiritual competence, the belief system and religious values. Hence, psycho-spiritual competent play vital role in encountering hurdles and difficulties since it offers tranquility and calmness by boosting the internal spirit of the individual with full submission to Allah SWT. It proposed that the value of psycho-spirituality is vital, especially to the disaster workers as an extra value to be practised during any calamities and rescue work. The state of dependency to Allah SWT helps to build a wholesome relation and unshakeable belief to Allah SWT, thus reconcile with Allah's plan and decree.

In a different connotation, job satisfaction is one of the critical attitudes reflecting the behaviour of workers at the workplace. It is constituted by many predictors, including the nature of work. Khairunneezam Mohd Noor and Muhamad Zaki Mustafa (2020) analysed academics satisfaction in higher education institutions on the nature of work and its differences based on demographic backgrounds. The findings from their study discussed in the article titled '*Nature of Work Satisfaction: The Differences in Gender, Age, Tenure and Management Position Among Academics in Malaysian Universities*' indicate a high level of satisfaction with nature of work among academics and there are differences of satisfaction level based on academics' age, gender, tenure and management position.

Mohd Anuar Mamat (2020) in his article on '*Beberapa Metodologi Pendidikan Melayu-Islam: Analisis Terhadap Manuskrip MSS 2906(A) Bab Al-Adab (Some*

Malay-Islamic Educational Methodology: An Analysis of Manuscript MSS2906(A) Bab Al-Adab' presents a codicological analysis of the MSS 2906A manuscript which includes its origins, authorship and content. All of this intended to disclose the role and contribution of the scholars of the Malay world in the idea of thinking and methodology of Islamic education to guide the traditional education system in various institutions including *pondok*, *pesantren*, *dayah*, *meunasah* and others.

In the directions and challenges of regional Islamic higher education institutions, Mohd Rushdan Mohd Jailani and Nurul Ashikin Ahmat Miskam (2020) argues and sheds light on the shifting reality foreseen in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4th IR) era in which the orientation of things and affairs is getting more complex, uncertain, deterministic and disruptive. In this article '*The Roles of Islamic University in the Fourth Industrial Revolution Era (4th IR)*', the authors addressed their concern towards Islamic universities on its roles to nurture graduates towards maintaining happiness, revivalism of Islamic intellectualism tradition and *insan Kamil* mission become the primary concerns. The findings of this study point to four critical domains of roles of Islamic university which are a restatement of the philosophy of Islamic education, integrated curriculum design with a pedagogy based on *adab*, strategized research activities and academic professionalism and leadership practices centering on the principle of Islamic virtues.

Lingering on the Higher Education Institutions (HEI) issues, Sofia Hayati Yusoff, Fauziah Hassan and Amirah Zainun (2020) highlighted in their article '*Spiritualising Communication Technology: The Use of New Media For Da'wah Purpose Among USIM Communication Students*' on how to prepare students as modern *da'i* in their multi-tasking role as a member of society and actors of change. In this study, students taught to develop and produce the blog content and able to analyse the content as a form of *da'wah* approach to society. Relating to the HEI's student's role as *dai'e* and their responsibilities to spread *da'wah*, it is such an appropriate activity needed especially to the peers and younger students. This situation is raised as well by Amnah Zanariah, Amirah Zainun, Sahlan Surat and Rosadah Abd Majid (2020) in their article titled '*Kebimbangan Sosial dalam Kalangan Pelajar Muslim Pintar dan Berbakat (Social Anxiety among Gifted and Talented Muslim Students)*'. They deliberated the fact that social anxiety of the smart and talented students are at a high level whereby efforts to help students understand and reduce these social concerns need to be done not only by students themselves but with the strong support from teachers, staff, parents and the surrounding community. The findings of this study suggest for the development of motivational modules in helping students understand and be able to adapt to the uniqueness of this socioemotional, in facing social anxiety among intelligent and talented Muslim students.

Besides that, Rosidayu Sabran, Suria Hani A. Rahman, and Rosninawati Hussin (2020) bring forward their concern on the challenges of students' campus radio whether it is still relevant in the era of mass media revolution and the creation of better modern gadget with high-technology. In their article titled '*Cabaran Mengekalkan Kemampanan Radio Kampus di Universiti-Universiti di Malaysia dan Indonesia dalam Era Media (Challenges of Campus Radio Sustainability at Malaysian and Indonesian Universities in New Media Era)*', the finding stated that financial factor is minimal to manage campus radio. However, alumni of the university may become the factor of attraction to participate which ultimately contributes to the sustainability of campus radio operations in Malaysia and Indonesia. The radio programs conducted are knowledge-generating for educational purposes. Hence it may change the content of the program to suit promotional strategies and to increase the number of listeners.

Study on the representation of Islam and Muslims is strongly encouraged since in certain circumstances there exist the negative portrayals of Islam and Muslims in the media, especially from the West. This is the gist of the article entitled '*Media Practitioners' Perspective on News Media Reporting of Islam and Muslims: A Room for Improvement through a Formulation of Writing News Guideline*' by Fauziah Hassan, Sofia Hayati Yusoff, Osama Kanaker and Muhammad Zaki Mustafa (2020). In this article, the researchers developed the acrostic model of Islamic journalistic writing by presenting the general principles of news writing and innovated the model from an Islamic perspective. The analysis focus on how a journalist should provide a fair and well-written report without bias and favouritism. The finding emphasized the hope that the West could understand the style of reporting on Islam and Muslims issues from the Malaysian media perspective.

Meanwhile, the representation of Islam in Malaysian comedy film reflected by the work of Suria Hani A. Rahman, Rosidayu Sabran and Rosninawati Hussin (2020) in their article titled '*Islamic Moral Comedy? The Representation of Islam in Malaysian Comedy Films Syurga Cinta (Paradise of Love, 2009) and Ustaz, Mu Tunggu Aku Datang! (Ustaz, I'm Coming!, 2013)*'. The authors attempt to analyse these film from the intersection of religion and comical narrative whereas their findings show that the film featured the main characters are not merely as sinful or immoral; instead they are portrayed as misguided, but equally amusing in dealing with misfortune and wrongfulness. Since comedy and its simplicity has the ability to both question and reconfirm prevailing ideological representations, this article argues that the central element of both films lies in its incongruity between the traditional Islamic principle and trajectories which against morality. Besides the call for morality, this article argues that Malaysian comedy is shaped in response to the Islamisation of the public

sphere, thus, underlines the 're-imagine social life' within the Malaysian-Muslim context.

Mualimin Mochammad Sahid, Setiyawan Gunardi and Nur Muhammad Hadi Zahalan (2020) in their article titled '*Konsep Uruf dan Masalahah sebagai Sumber Rujukan: Status Wanita terhadap Harta Sepencarian dalam Perundangan Islam di Malaysia (Concepts of Uruf and Masalahah as A Source of Reference: Status of Matrimonial Property in Malaysian Islamic law)*' raised the issue of Islamic jurisprudence specifically on matrimonial property. This article studies the status of law and Shariah compliance on the matrimonial property and analyzes its implementation in Malaysian society. Analytical studies conducted to find out the relationship of the matrimonial property with other types of property in Islamic law, such as *Hibah*, *Nafkah*, *Maskahwin*, *wasiat*, *mut'ah* and also inheritance property. The finding shows that the classical fiqh scholars did not mention in precise about matrimonial property in their books. However, there is no doubt about the acceptance and recognition of matrimonial property by the Shariah judiciary in Malaysia is based on two proofs of reference, namely, *uruf* and *masalahah* that based on al-Quran and as-Sunnah. Hence, Islam is known as a religion that pays attention to family affairs, especially women, by placing them in a high position, safeguarding their dignity, and preserving rights such as marital property rights.

In Islamic teaching, there is no compulsion in religion symbolizes the high and glorious of this religion, how Allah SWT bestows freedom for human beings to make choices. Indeed, the right path and all the guidance, belong to Allah SWT. On a different note, Setiyawan Gunardi, Mualimin Mochammad Sahid and Nur Mohammad Hadi Zahalan (2020) draw attention towards the concept of harmony in multiracial society in their article titled '*Konsep Harmoni yang Dinamik dalam Kehidupan Beragama di Malaysia melalui Pendekatan Maqasid Syariah (The Concept of Dynamic Harmonies on Religious Life in Malaysia through the Syariah Maqasid Approach)*'. Their study elaborated on the harmony concept in multi-religious society and the role of Maqasid Syariah in creating a peaceful and harmonious society. The results found that the concept of harmony is regarded as a dynamic guide in conducting religious life through the approach of Maqasid Syariah.

Mohamed Hamadikinane Maiga (2020) wrote on the aspect of Maqasid al-Shariah entitled 'أثر اعتبار مقاصد الشريعة في تطوير برامج المؤسسات التعليمية العليا في بروناي دار السلام: ' *جامعة السلطان الشريف علي الإسلامية نموذجاً (Impact of Maqasid al-Shariah on the Development of the Programs of Higher Islamic Educational Institutions in Brunei Darussalam: Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali as an Example)*'. This article emphasized the consideration of Maqāsid al-Shariah in Higher Islamic Educational

Institutions educational development programs which able to increase the quality of teaching and learning. The research concluded that observing the purposes of Shariah at developing educational programs requires the attention to the reality of religious, social, economic and cultural society and that the organizational development is an essential pillar for any educational development in Higher Educational Institutions.

The final article discussed on Islamic law, Fiqh, Maqasid Syariah and Islamic studies, authors bring forward pertinent issues that are strongly interrelated to the practicality of Muslims in the HEIs and society as a whole. Gumma Ahmad Hammad Adam (2020) in his article ‘*Teaching the Holy Al-Qur’an for People with Special Needs تعليم القرآن الكريم لذوي الإحتياجات الخاصة (الكفيف نموذجاً)*’ (*Teaching the Holy Al-Qur’an for people with special needs (Blind is a model)*) shed light on the reality of the category of the blind in learning the Holy Al-Qur’an and the methods of memorizing it throughout the ages. The article examined the teaching competencies that should be available in the Holy Al-Qur’an for people with visual impairment and reviewed the methods of blind people in preserving the Holy Al-Qur’an in the past and modern. This article also concludes that the blind excelled in distinctively memorizing Holy Qur’an through the power of memory, the heart, and the speed of memorization.

Hence those discussions led to the credence of balanced growth of human beings following Maqasid Syariah. Solving the society's problems and matters arises within the stance and emblem of fiqh al-maa'lat, uruf and maslahah as well as the concept of harmony in society, hence, all Muslims activities, primarily HEI's are geared towards Maqasid al-Syariah and in achieving Mardhatillah.

In summary, the collection of articles in this special issue underscores various aspects of academic discourses that focus on the issues, the problem arises and implementation, especially to the regional Higher Educational Institutions. With the hope that there will be a continuation of discourse on the subject matters in the future collaborations between HEIs, may the intellectual output could be adequately dispersed and well-received by the public. Indeed, the unity of Ummah by using intellectual abilities would able to churn a society that can move forward dynamically and able to face a very challenging age. Allah SWT says:

“Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. If only the People of the Book had faith, it were best for them: among them are some who have faith, but most of them are perverted transgressors” (ali-Imran, verse 110).

Wallahu a’lam.

May the Truth Reveal

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