

Inclusion Of Muslim Perspectives In The International Baccalaureate Economics And Business Curriculum

Farida Salim 

Murdoch University, Australia

Abstract: *This paper deals with the idea of inclusion as a means to transform the school culture where all the pupils are cherished and fully represented in the learning experience despite their individual difference. The focus is on epistemic inclusion in the curriculum of international education (IE). The aims of IE reaffirmed by the UNESCO and the essential elements of IE are in-line with inclusive education. However, IE have been critiqued of being western in its construct. IE can neither be truly international nor inclusive if it fails to appreciate and appropriate non-western knowledge in an equitable manner. The paper is a literature review that investigates whether the current IB curriculum reflects Muslim perspectives and ways of including the Muslim perspectives of Economics and Business in the curriculum of International Baccalaureate Diploma program, which like other IE brands claims to foster International Mindedness. A thorough analysis of sources written in educational context, preferably secondary and higher educational context and articles relating to international education or Islamic education was conducted. Deconstruction of the notions of; inclusion and western epistemic dominance, international curriculum, Muslim perspectives are done followed by some proposed methods of re-creating a more inclusive and international IB curriculum. These proposed solutions include common problem-based teaching approach, linguistic considerations, teaching world religions and expansion of the theory of knowledge component.*

Keywords: international education, inclusion, Muslim perspectives, epistemology, western dominance

Introduction

Inclusion as a concept has been in the spotlight in UAE since the launch of “My community... a city for everyone” initiative in 2013, by H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. The initiative aims at ensuring equal opportunities and empowerment for the people of determination in all walks of life (Community Development Authority, 2013). This initiative also instigated re-thinking of the notion of inclusion in the educational sector of UAE. Inclusion is usually understood as mainstreaming students with learning difficulties (Astiz, 2015). However, it is far more encompassing in nature. Inclusion is a multifaceted notion and involves embracing diversity of learners’ needs and profiles in the classroom environment. This means that the learning environment is such designed that all members of school feel represented and accommodated as per their needs and backgrounds. For the purpose of this paper inclusion will be understood by the following definition by Blanco and Takemoto (2007, pp. 57): ‘The primary focus of the inclusion movement is about transforming the culture—the organization and educational practices of regular schools—to respond to the diversity of educational needs of all students, which are based on their social and cultural origins and personal characteristics such as competence, interests, and motivation.’ Thus, making a shift in perspective and culture of the learning environment. This is conceptually linked to the idea of international education and will be discussed in the succeeding section.

Ideology of International Education

The notion of embracing student diversity is central for international schools (IS). In the context of IS, not only does inclusion mean acclimating the students from various

epistemologies (Ab Kadir, 2016) but it also correlates with the idea of ‘educating for global citizenship’ as upheld by international education philosophy (Cambridge and Thompson, 2004). With the recent expansion of ISs in the non-western world, where it is least experienced (Aga Khan, 2008; Bunnell, 2011), this becomes even more significant. According to the 2015 statistics, UAE as a country had the largest numbers of ISs that offer an English-medium education. On a regional level Asia has the highest numbers of ISs followed by Africa and Middle East (UAE, 2015). However, UAE slipped to second position as China took the first place in 2017 (UAE, 2017). This means that the demographic, cultural, ethnic, religious, socio-political and linguistic contexts of the ISs clientele is greatly different than the one for whom the schools were originally conceived. It is also critical to note here that this context is neither stagnant nor homogeneous which makes it more complex for the ISs to truly systemize the notion of inclusive education. The idea of international education (IE) or international schools (IS) emerged in late 19th century (Sylvester, 2002). The terms IE and IS although used interchangeably in literature, link distinctively to ideological and pragmatic conceptions respectively (Bates, 2011; Cambridge & Thompson, 2004). IS and IE have always been contrasted on various grounds. International education, which expanded on the concept of comparative education between national curricula and later grew into an independent notion, alludes to educate for international mindedness (Cambridge & Thompson, 2004). The aim is thus to educate students to be more respectful and empathizing individuals who can demonstrate tolerance towards cultural diversity in a peaceful way. Whereas IS are categorized by a diversified student body aiming at preparing their students to be competent in working successfully in a

global market (Cambridge & Thompson, 2004). Hence, an international school may not always offer an international education, similarly international education may not always be offered in an international school. This paper focuses on international education as an independent notion and the terms IE and IS mean differently as described above. Consequently, the focus of this paper is on the notion of inclusive curriculum in the context of international education.

Even though international education claims to promote international mindedness (IM), they have been criticized of doing just the reverse. This is especially relevant for the International Baccalaureate organization (IBO) than others, as it was born on the ideological grounds of educating for international mindedness and inter-cultural understanding along with the pragmatic need for providing a universally accepted pre-university qualification (Bates, 2011). It is often claimed that the western dominated construct of the IB has led to cultural and ideological homogenization (Cambridge & Thompson, 2004; Oord, 2007) or colonizing through curriculum (Bunnell, 2006). This is a practice of exclusion rather than inclusion. Since IB is being accepted in many countries with non-western contexts, one of the challenges it faces is that of being locally relevant. Balancing the aspirations of its new stakeholders which are essentially different than the context where IB takes its roots, is a challenging task (Aga Khan, 2008). The western epistemological construct of IB, is something that both the critics and advocates of IB agree upon (Hill, 2006; Paris, 2003; Walker, 2010). However, the approach that IB takes on the matter is notable. IB recognizes its own limitation given the fact that it was born out of a specific epistemology but does not accept that this sabotages the purpose of developing IM (Davy, 2011). It seeks to make changes in itself to

ensure that the voices of all its stakeholders, one of them being their teachers, are heard and accounted for (Hill, 2006; Zsebik, 2004). IB has also acknowledged that their paradigm is shifting 'from a curriculum for international schools to an international curriculum for schools' (Peel, 1997). In order to be more inclusive in its approach, one of the most important steps for IB would be rethinking its curriculum, which shall be discussed in the subsequent section.

Role of Curriculum

Curriculum has a major role to play in realizing the philosophical goals of any educational organization. Curriculum is an overarching term which has been defined in various ways. (Print, 1993a; Webster & Ryan, 2014). Curriculum is an attestation of what counts as valid knowledge (Matos-Ala, 2017) and develops the content, skills and attitudes of its pupil (Hill, 2006). Curriculum is further defined in finer terms like the written, taught and assessed curriculum. Although, identified distinctively they are overlapping and interconnected. For the purpose of this paper, the term curriculum will refer to all of them in a uniformity. The assessed becomes the guiding parameter for what is taught (Dempsey and Litchfield, 2015) and essentially is reflected in the written. Rethinking the curriculum that encompasses all the non-western epistemological paradigms is too ambitious a task. Therefore, the paper focuses on one of these knowledge traditions that is, Muslim perspectives.

Relevance of Muslim Perspectives

Islam is one of the world's major religions. It not only provides directions about exclusive religious practices but also on worldly matters. Hence, it is a way of life (Shephard, 2004). There are several reasons as to why attention

should be given to Muslim perspectives in rethinking IE. First and foremost, is the numerical fact that the most recent expansion of IS and IE alike, have been in areas populated by Muslims. In countries like UAE, where the growth of these schools has been exponential, the IB has encountered challenges in providing quality teaching learning opportunities in Arabic and Islamic studies (Ahmed, 2013). Islam is the second largest religion in the world in terms of its followers, after Christianity (Maoz, & Henderson, 2013). This means that as the IB continues to grow, the probability is that it will encounter more and more Muslim societies, is high. Secondly, Muslim knowledge has played a major role in bringing the Renaissance for the European civilizations. Unlike the popular belief that the transmission of intellectual traditions happened vertically as Greek-Roman-Europe, Islam had a major role to play. The Muslim intellectuals, philosophers, scientist, mathematicians, and theologians engaged with the Greek wisdom and produced remarkable knowledge (Dussel, 2000; Hobson, 2015; Shah-Kazemi, 2012; Sidani & Ariss, 2015). The translation of this corpus of literature together with the Hellenic Greek philosophy led to the reawakening of the European societies which were then in their dark ages. Spain was under Muslim rule around this time and became the crossroads for this exchange (Dussel, 2000; Shah-Kazemi, 2012). Thus, reviving the Muslim traditions is also giving due credit to a civilization which was once leading the knowledge society. Another factor to consider here is the prejudice against the Muslim expression of faith, due to the recent terrorist activities. The West generally, not all but most, views Islam to be the breeding ground for these activities (Hill, 2006) and fails to see the political motives camouflaged under the guise of religion. If international education is to develop intercultural literacy (Heyward, 2002), then these misconceptions

should be deliberately and promptly addressed.

The paper strives to demonstrate how this can be done by blending the Muslim perspectives in a truly inclusive way in the IB Diploma program (DP) for selected subjects. DP is not only the pioneering program of IB, which they conceived more than 50 years ago but also is the most prescriptive in content (Hill, 2006). For the purpose of maintaining focus, the subjects of Economics and Business are selected. These subjects belong to the area of social sciences. Although they seem plain and structured at the face, they are reflective of the culture and context of a people. Hence, curriculum generalization can be a major challenge to the authenticity and in turn inclusivity of the subject. There are explicit links of the knowledge of Economic concepts, for example, to the local challenges to the learner's context (IBO, 2013). However, there exists a gap in the curricula standards which is a construct of Western notions of capitalism and related theories and IB's desire to relate to the local contexts. This paper investigates ways in which the Muslim perspective, from amongst the various non-western perspectives, can be assimilated within the chosen curricula. Consequently, the research question will be, 'In what ways can the IB DP Economics and Business curriculum be more inclusive of the Muslim perspectives of Economics and Business Ethics?' Implicit in the question, is the idea of inclusion with respect to curriculum construction and the possibility of curriculum framework to be a seamless fusion of coherent and contrasting knowledge sources.

This paper attempts to highlight two areas of significant gaps in the current academia around the issue. First is the lack of non-western sources available to the modern academia, especially the ones from non-English origins. This is critical, especially in the context of both IE and IS. An education

aimed at a diverse student body spread widely across a non-English speaking background, cannot be devoid or ignorant of access to their local knowledge. Second is the lack of critical analysis of subjects like Economics and Business from a non-western perspective. Most comparative studies that came across during the course of research for this paper are either focused on language teaching or pedagogical challenges of western trained teachers in non-western contexts. Hence, there is a clear gap in scrutinizing the inclusiveness of education for critical subjects that address the social and cultural context of a people from various epistemological perspectives.

Methodology

The research was conducted by deconstructing the various concepts from the research question. These are: inclusion in education, history and purpose of IE and IB, western domination of academia and Muslim perspectives of business ethics. The key words were refined after a few trial-and-error attempts. The final list of key words used were 'international education', 'western and non-western epistemologies', 'Islamic views of Economics', 'Islamic views on business ethics', 'non-western perspectives to learning' and 'western domination of education'. The search was conducted from the online library of Murdoch university, although Google Scholar was also used occasionally to gain numerical data. The abstracts of the articles were skimmed to look for the following inclusion criteria; articles written in educational context, preferably secondary and higher educational context and articles relating to international education or Islamic education. The area of Islamic ethics although is very rich but few scholarly publications in English within the western academic circles were available. Hence, exception to the

inclusion criteria were made in this area. Other than these the IB curriculum documents were also reviewed. Additionally, three books also become the basis for the research. These are; Curriculum Development and Design by Print Murray (1993), Schooling Internationally edited by Richard Bates (2011) and Islamic Thought in Twentieth Century edited by Suha Taji-Farouki and Basheer M. Nafi (2004). The primary source of Muslim discourse, the Quran, was also referred for relevant discussion. In totality 67 different sources were reviewed and referred to write this paper.

Discussion and Analysis

The notion of international education has been around since 19th century (Sylvester, 2002) but with the recent expansion of IS and IE across the globe, it has come up against yet new challenges that it must respond to swiftly and wisely. In this section, various notions within the research question are deconstructed and analysed to form the basis for concrete and informed solutions. Firstly, the idea of inclusion as opposed to the western epistemic hegemony in international education is discussed. Next, the role of curriculum in fostering IM is analysed with IB DP Economics and business curricula as case study. Third, the Muslim perspectives of Economics and Business ethics are discussed and contrasted with the Western notions reflected in IB DP.

Inclusion And Western Epistemic Hegemony

Inclusion is a complex notion which demands re-shaping policy, curriculum, pedagogy and assessment elements of education. Inclusion in education presents the eutopia where every student would not only be physically present but emotionally, culturally and linguistically represented as a cherished member of the school community.

Inclusion is achieved when all the students with their different cultural, epistemological and ideological backgrounds are represented and respectfully engaged in all aspects of the educational process (Government of Alberta, 2019; Rasi, Hautakangas & Väyrynen, 2015). Developing this sense of belonging in education then leads to the construction of an inclusive society (Polat, 2011). Although theoretically very pleasing, is it actually possible to achieve such teaching practices guided by comprehensive curricula frameworks that not only accommodates but represents different and often contrasting perspectives and epistemologies? This is a complex task and can be quite different from the current ground realities.

At present the academic world exhibits clear hegemony of western thought that leads to a curriculum design that eventually translates into promoting a homogenous educational context under the claim of international education (Ab Kadir, 2016; Bunnell 2006; Cambridge & Thompson, 2004; Hill, 2006; Mast, 2016; Matos-Ala, 2017; Oord, 2007; Paris, 2003; Stein, 2017; Sun & Roumell, 2017; Zsebik, 2004). This translates into domination of western pedagogy and uniform expectation of students' behaviour and achievements (Anderson, 2014). The tendency to categorize 'West and the rest' (Sun & Roumell, 2017) promotes the idea of west being a superior perspective and recognizes the rest as a homogenous non-significant other. Students who enter this environment from any other epistemology or indigenous tradition feel excluded and marginalized. This leads to social inequality (Cech, Metz, Smith & DeVries, 2017). The western epistemic supremacy has its own roots in the colonial times. Modern educational institutes in various countries were established during colonial times by growing European powers for economic and epistemological purposes.

America followed suit when it came in a position to do so. This has delegitimized the native knowledge systems (Kaya & Seleti, 2013; Stein, 2017). Thus, exclusion is rooted in the colonial social imaginary (Taylor, 2002, pp. 107 defines social imaginary as 'a moral or metaphysical order, in the context of which the norms and ideals make sense') which perceives the non-western knowledge systems as the irrational inferior other (Wynter, 2003). With the growing power of the western civilizations (the term civilizations is used in plural on purpose, as the west is too often viewed as a singularity of traditions, which is too simplistic a generalization), and the tendency of globalization to converge to a homogenous world culture (Paris, 2003; Sun & Roumell, 2017), the educational sphere is also forced towards this convergence. The last three decades have seen a speedy expansion of internationalizing western higher education (Stein, 2017). The outcome of this is that in low-income countries either local universities are colonial legacy or campuses of international university that offer the most recent education. This on the one hand equips students with the language competency, technology and skills to work in a global market, but on the other hand disconnects them with the local society they belong to. Although equipped with global perspectives, they cannot relate to the immediate community they belong to and its challenges (Kaya & Seleti, 2013). Students, educators and parents believe that various international curricula need to revise themselves as they emphasize on the western values more than providing opportunity for students to engage with their own cultures (Zsebik, 2004). There are several reasons for this outcome. First there is a difference in the worldview and knowledge sources of the various cultures of the world. For example, the African knowledge systems are based on oral elderly knowledge of nature (Kaya & Seleti, 2013), the Western world considers scientific

reasoning and logic to be the basis of valid knowledge while the Muslims consider the physical and metaphysical – spiritual world and derive their knowledge from scripture, tradition (Etherington, 2016) and intellectual endeavours.

Second, there are differences in the way education is perceived, in various cultures, as a process and the values that govern them. For example, the Confucius tradition based Chinese society sees knowledge accumulation as very important for the preservation of the wisdom of the elders (Mast, 2016). One needs to acquire knowledge of certain standing while the meaning making process happens when one becomes an adult. The value of society and family identity is of prime importance (Mast, 2016; Sun & Roumell, 2017). This is different to the western approach of meaning making process from early on and less focus on rote learning. There is a stress on individual identity (Mast, 2016) and the values of freedom, independence, autonomy and democracy are central to western conception of education (Kaya & Seleti, 2013; Sun & Roumell, 2017, Walker, 2010). Due to these divergences, the way educational process is perceived varies greatly. For example, the western view sees education as a school-based process with compartmentalized subject areas whereas the indigenous African societies see education as a community-based process with wholesome knowledge learned from tradition and practice (Kaya & Seleti, 2013).

With these contrasting philosophical orientations that define the epistemological and ontological standpoints, is it possible to have a standard model that guarantees inclusion in education? The above discussion exemplifies how attaining inclusion in education can be a challenge. However, numerous attempts have been made and each one has had its own merits and limitations. Various approaches to

inclusion of epistemologies in education are largely categorized in four broad categories which are overlapping in nature. These are: thin inclusion, thick inclusion, institutionalized inter-disciplines and alternative institutions (Stein, 2017). Thin inclusion refers to superficial inclusion of various texts and scholars from other epistemologies while thick inclusion questions the process of knowledge development across traditions. Provision of specific subject areas in universities for exploring indigenous knowledge refers to institutionalized interdisciplinary, like department of African or Eastern or Islamic studies. Finally, alternative institutions are rooted in another epistemology altogether but suffers from lack of recognition and funds. These approaches are important for discovering a possible way of achieving inclusion as none of them independently offer a sufficient answer. IE, of all the stakeholders, will have to address this issue because it is rooted in philosophy for developing IM in students (Cambridge, 2011; Davy, 2011).

Role Of Curriculum In IE

IE is defined in ideological terms, in contrast to its counterpart IS which is defined in pragmatic terms. IE seeks to expose students to a world where variation is a norm and promotes the idea of global citizenship and world peace (Bates, 2011; Davy, 2011). Global citizenship is instilling open mindedness towards others (Marshall, 2011). However, it is also a fact that IE began as a response to the needs of a globally mobile class (Bates, 2011). Thus, the tension of balancing the pragmatic and the ideological attitudes is at its core. This is manifested in the multiplicity of the ISs that now exists. They are so diverse in their forms, construct and promised outcomes that it is classified as a continuum rather than a single entity (Fail, 2011; Zsebik, 2004). However, some features are common to the

majority of the institutions that claim to be offering IE, including the IB programs. They vastly offer an English -speaking program taught by mostly native English or Western trained teachers (Bates, 2011; Fail, 2011). They are, more often than not, accredited by western institutions (Bates, 2011) and their philosophy and curriculum are products of the western humanist approach (Bates, 2011; Hill, 2006; Mast, 2016; Paris, 2003; Walker, 2010). As the clientele of the IE and IS change rapidly, the need for making it relevant to non-western contexts in which it has been adapted becomes crucial. To deliberate on what should IE look like is essentially re-evaluating the purpose of IE and more broadly education. If the purpose of IE is to offer a qualification which gives access to leading universities, which also are mostly western, then inclusion of other epistemologies is not a priority. There are studies that show that the way IS advertise themselves and the aspirations of students in low-income countries to join these schools, are actually for achieving this end (Marshall, 2011), however these studies are either weak in their methodology or conducted only in specific areas of the world and cannot be generalized. On the other hand, if the purpose of IE is to prepare the students to be successful in global market or to enable them to be part of a new kind of transnational ruling class (Brown &Lauder, 2011), then the whole of IE has to be recreated every time there is a global change of economic power. The shift of economic power to China and the emergence of economic giants like India in Asia (Brown & Lauder, 2011; Hobson, 2015) is an indication of the change in demands of the job market. Conversely, if the purpose of IE is to educate for IM, then IE has to be in principle truly inclusive of various traditions of knowledge regardless of who is leading the economic scape. This may be extremely ideal and difficult to sell as a product. Thus, IE must have a fine balance of these perspectives, with

their merits seamlessly blended in one.

The curriculum reflects the purpose and philosophy of the education one is offering. It is an instrument in shaping the form of society (Marshall, 2011). The curriculum has multiple layers from written, taught, assessed to null and experienced (Cambridge, 2011; Print, 1993). This includes everything from the learning objectives to activities and assessments, but also details of how and to what extent the community is involved in achieving the desired goals. Thus, all that encompasses a curriculum then are tools to achieve those intended ends. Engaging in any discussion related to curriculum is a value-laden task. The relationship of values and intended outcomes are subjective to local traditions and cultures. Hence, curriculum is much broader than just syllabus and subject matter, rather relates to the notion of cultural preservation and of currere (Print, 1993). The essential nature of curriculum is that it shapes the structure of the school's management, teaching learning practices and the practices of inclusion (Rasi et, al., 2015). The convergence of curriculum on a certain epistemology then governs the convergence of pedagogy that corresponds to it (Cambridge, 2011).

The following two examples will show how the IB curriculum manifest this dilemma. One of the attributes of the IB learner's profile (IBO, 2009), which is at the heart of the IB program and its curriculum is of 'Thinker', which reflects the possession and use of critical and creative thinking skills. The skill of critical thinking is embedded in the notion of western scientific reasoning (Ab Kadir, 2016). This is not to say that the non-western traditions are devoid of critical thinking altogether, but they prioritize the acquisition of knowledge and preservation of elderly wisdom. This is the cause of western educated teachers facing a difficulty in engaging students in places where the students belong

to the non-western traditions of knowledge (Deveney, 2007; Mast, 2016). Another aspect of this issue is in the way critical thinking is developed. Critical thinking is not only the ability to reason and analyse but also to seek truth and understanding. Critical thinking should be attached to standards of some sort (Ab Kadir, 2016). These standards of knowledgeable context belong to a tradition. Critical thinking in one cultural tradition may be very different from another. When developing critical thinking in IE, whose standards are being used? Perhaps some more research is required to scrutinize this matter.

The second example that manifests the shortcomings of IE from being truly international is the creation of a 'value vacuum' (Fail, 2011). The reluctance of IE curricula to address the subject of value education explicitly creates this vacuum (Fail, 2011). It is a challenge for IE to address the subject of common values that are acceptable to the different cultural contexts of their multinational clientele. Thus, value education happens primarily outside of the school, depriving the students to learn to peacefully engage in discussions about contradicting values.

Thompson (1998) as cited in Cambridge (2011), defined the typology of development of international curricula as: exportation, adaptation, integration, and creation. A possible solution to creating a curriculum that is capable of equitably recognizing and representing various epistemologies is to create a new curriculum from first principle (Cambridge, 2011; Davy, 2011). The first task is then to deliberate on the intentions, values and attitudes that govern the selection of content, pedagogy, and assessments. Similar to the idea of curriculum presage (Print, 1993), the important thing is to re-think the notion of IE and decide on the essential elements of curriculum (Print, 1993) before the actual

curriculum is developed.

Since, the voices from within and outside of the IB accept the western domination in the construct of its program (Hill, 2006; Paris, 2003; Walker, 2010), IB has devoted some thought in balancing the voices from outside of the Western world. The most convincing of these efforts is the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) component of the IB DP program. The TOK offers students the platform to move between subjects and epistemologies in order to analyse the underlying knowledge and values behind decision making (Hill, 2006; IBO, 2016a). Another provision in the IB DP is of making the local school authorities and teachers responsible to foster a local school community which enables learners to relate local perspectives with their studies (IBO, 2009).

In the subjects focused for this paper, the IB DP curricula guidelines makes provisions for making the learning experience of the students holistic. The courses of Economics and Business Management, both fall under the group 3 subjects of the program. The aims of the group 3 subjects reflect the ideological goal of IE with stress on values like; appreciation of the ways of knowing of diverse cultures, appreciation of the diversity of human beliefs and attitudes, understanding how nations undergo change as they develop (IBO, 2013, pp. 6). However, when compared to the contents of the syllabus and the assessment objectives (IBO, 2013 and 2016a), the balance leans towards the western epistemic supremacy. The theories used in all the sections of the IB DP Economics for example are deeply embedded in capitalism, an approach to economic governance in stringent contrast of Communism, is a construction of the west (Ali, Al-Aali, & Al-Owaihian, 2013; Simons, 2013). Capitalism is often criticized for being driven by personal good of the owners at the expense of public

welfare and being inconsiderate of ethical values (Abeng, 1997; Simons, 2013; Wilson, 2004). Including the theories originating from a single source of this stature is contentious for IE.

The Economics curriculum deals extensively with the concept of demand and supply. This concept, which arguably forms the basis of economic theory, is a construct of the western understanding of consumer behaviour. However, consumer behaviour or consumption trends are not devoid of the social and cultural context of the consumer (Jafari, Firat, Süerdem, Askegaard & Dalli, 2012). Hence, the theories cannot be simply univocally applied across the board. Teaching consumer behaviour for example without grounding it into various culture sensitive market models is being ignorant of the ‘invisible half’ (Jafari, Firat, Süerdem, Askegaard & Dalli, 2012) of the modern western educational content.

Similarly, modern western Economics that underline the DP curriculum encourages the fulfilment of both consumer needs and wants. Extensive market growth is dependent on consumer wants being identified and satisfied to create and maintain demand of existing and new products. Conversely, Muslim perspective would discourage excessive wants of material goods rather to be content by fulfilling one’s needs. Focusing on the good of others in society with one’s resources beyond one’s needs (Zaman, 2012). Hence, there are several issues which are approached differently by the Islamic discourse than the western discourse w.r.t economic theory. Some of these are interest-based banking systems, profit maximization, land ownership, welfare state policy etc. (Furqani, 2015). Most of these topics in IE curriculum including the IB DP course is addressed from the western economic perspective.

The Business curriculum is a bit more

embracing in its approach. The curriculum aims to develop well-informed business decision with cultural, theoretical and ethical understandings (IBO, 2016a and 2016b). The six areas that underline the curriculum mention culture and ethics explicitly, although there no explicit course contents for the same. This is surprising as another leading international curriculum, the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGSCE) business syllabus includes ethical decision making explicitly in its curriculum (UCLES, 2019). In addition to the TOK component, the business course requires students to write an extended essay based on research (whether primary or secondary) which is inter-disciplinary in nature and should relate to some issue that they may wish to explore further (IBO, 2016a). This element does provide a window of opportunity for researching matters of diversity of thought. There is also a certain degree of freedom for teachers of the subject to choose case studies which are of relevance to the local context of the pupil (IBO, 2016a). However, the curriculum guide for the subjects has certain parameters which can be challenged to be limiting the subject from being inclusive of other traditions. For example, the guide states that, ‘The role of businesses is to produce and sell goods and services that meet human needs and wants by organizing resources.’ (IBO, 2016a, pp. 6). This definition lacks the acknowledgement of the Muslim understanding, for example, which considers business as a means of self-reliance, service to the community and possibly as an act of worship (Abeng, 2004; Ali et al., 2013).

Although there is criticism on the curriculum and its claim to be a perfect example of a global citizenship curriculum, it is also true that IB is a pioneer of the field, whose philosophical basis has been an inspiration for others to follow (Davy, 2011). It

is also a fact that the expansion of IB programs in non-western contexts is very recent and yet very rapid (Bunnell, 2011). Hence, now is the optimal time for the IB programs to respond to the challenge of integrating and appreciating a local context which is very different from its western roots, to reflect on ways in which its written, taught and assessed curriculum can foster IM without delegitimizing any local value systems. One such value system being that of the Muslims.

Muslim Perspectives On Economics And Business Ethics

Islam is a way of life (Shephard, 2004) and does not view the worldly life separately from the spiritual one. This is in contrast to the separation of Church and State view which dictates that religion is a private matter (Rice, 1999). Islam recognizes human beings as the khalifa, vicegerents or guardian, on earth (Quran 6:165, Oxford World's Classics edition) whose responsibility is to use the resources of the earth in the best possible way without exploiting them. Hence being accountable for their actions and executing the principles of faith (Abeng, 1997; Rice, 1999; Wilson, 2004). Consciousness of Allah (piety) is an essential element of all that a Muslim does and therefore, any act that is done with pure intention and to please Allah is an act of worship (Qur'an, 9: 34, 21: 107, 34: 28, 48: 28, 61: 9, Oxford World's Classics edition). Thus, business or any other means of earning profit can be an expression of faith if done within the ethical premise of Islam (Ali et al, 2013; Beekun and Badawi, 2005). Quran sets out clear injunctions regarding lawful and unlawful businesses as well as business ethics (Ali et al., 2013; Quran, 2:282; 4:29; 17:35; 83:1-4, Oxford World's Classics edition). It also outlines process of wealth redistribution and stresses on ensuring that every individual in society has basic rights to access resources

to be able to support themselves (Abeng, 1997; Rice, 1999). The Prophet of Allah (sallahu alyhi wa aalehi wa sallam) was a businessman by profession for most of his life (Abeng, 1997) and so his life (Sunaa) along with the Quran informs the various aspects of enterprising as an activity.

Knowledge of religion and understanding of the ethical principles have been considered essential to business activity. Thus, the obligation of allowing only religiously learned to operate businesses in the early days of Islam (Ali et al., 2013). As a matter of fact, it was the exemplary trade customs, in light of Muslim business ethics, that compelled people to accept the faith of Islam (Rice, 1999).

The recent emergence of the field of Islamic Economics in late 19th century (Wilson, 2004) was an attempt at the revival of the Islamic tradition of over 1400 years to reconcile faith with the customs of modernity. Yet, a clear articulate theory of business is yet to be constructed which would enable the Muslims to face the challenges posed by globalization and modernity (Abeng, 1997; Beekun & Badawi, 2005). Not only there is a variety in defining the scope of Islamic ethics for businesses but also there are a variety of approaches to its construction (Rice, 1999; Sidani & Ariss, 2015; Wilson, 2004). Ummah, the Muslim community, is not a uniform group of people rather a collection of various schools of interpretation that understand and practice the faith of Islam differently. Leading to a lack of unanimous definition of business ethics and Economics in a strict sense (Beekun and Badawi, 2005; Sidani & Ariss, 2015). Nevertheless, Muslims do draw on some general principles from the Quran and the tradition of the Prophet (sallahu alyhi wa aalehi wa sallam), which are the primary sources of knowledge and guidance for all Muslims (Shephard, 2004; Sidani & Ariss, 2015). In addition to these primary sources,

there is a large corpus of literature developed by Muslim philosophers and scholars over the 14 centuries of Islamic tradition, that remains unacknowledged by the western academia but influences the various Muslim interpretations of business ethics (Sidani & Ariss, 2015; Wilson, 2004). One reason for the lack of access of Muslim literature, is its existence in languages like Arabic, Urdu, Malay (Wilson, 2004) which are incomprehensible to the English based academia.

For Muslims, the understanding of economic activity and business ethics, like every other aspect of life, is based in the concepts of tawhid (belief in unity of the essence of Allah) and the trusteeship of humans on earth (Rice, 1999; Wilson, 2004). Furthermore, in the domain of economic activity and business there is consensus on the principles of; trust, justice, equity, responsibility and transparency. These principles are rooted in the principle of Ihsan, meaning benevolence and compassion. Ihsan, means to go beyond the prescribed limits of kindness. In business it may mean that one may give more than what is required to give in a just manner (Abeng, 1997; Ali, Al-Aali, & Al-Owaihian, 2013; Beekun & Badawi, 2005; Sidani & Ariss, 2015). Al Ghazali, a well-respected early Muslim philosopher, theologian and mystic has expounded on six explicit implications of Ihsan on business dealings (Sidani & Ariss, 2015). However, the following anecdote from early history of Islam exemplifies one such implication of charging fair profits even when the buyer is ready to pay more. A merchant bought a flask of almonds for 60 dinars and decided to sell it for 63 dinars. However, the price increased before he could sell it. An auctioneer offered him 70 instead of 63 dinars but he refused explaining to him that the profit margin would be high. The auctioneer persisted on the prevailing market price. No transaction took

place as both thought that their respective offer was fair and that accepting his counterpart's offer would be unfair and unjust (Ali et al., 2013). This tenth-century narrative conveys that both market agents were driven by moral and ethical principles and did not like to be exploiters, though they were transparent.

Despite the fact that, the scope and depth of Islamic Economics and business ethics is quite widespread, it is important to note here only key distinct features. Islamic Economics is seen both as a system and as a science (Wilson, 2004). Meaning that there is a proposed structure, yet the notion of adaptability in response to current context is very much present. The Islamic economic system remains mostly theoretical and Muslim societies are alleged of being unable to implement it (Wilson, 2004) Islamic Economics and business models stress on: value maximization as opposed to profit maximization, competence as best practice on part of both employee and employer, consideration of wealth and capital as a trust to be used for productive service to community rather than a factor of production (Beekun and Badawi, 2005), the use of ethics as moral filter along with price mechanisms for business activity regulations (Rice, 1999). These are quite contradictory to the notion of capitalism and free-market economy which is at the heart of the modern Economics and business curriculum, including that of IB DP. Although, it is worth noting here that Islamic Economics does not reject the models of capitalism and there are several parallels between them like the right to own private property and regulation of businesses and markets a social responsibility (Wilson, 2004). Furthermore, the development of Islamic banking and finance has been quicker compared to other sub-branches of modern articulation of Islamic Economics, which is still in its infancy (Wilson, 2004).

Findings

The paper conducted an extensive literature review and comparative analysis to answer the question: 'In what ways can the IB DP Economics and Business curriculum be more inclusive of the Muslim perspectives of Economics and Business Ethics?' The paper used interpretivist and transformative paradigms to conduct and analyse the topic. The key findings of the paper are as follows:

1. A major finding of the paper is the dominating western construct of the IB DP curriculum, based on the case study of the Economics and Business courses. This finding relates to the claim that IE can truly be fostering IM in its pupils whilst being exclusive in its content construct. Yet, it is also very important to note here that neither can 'western' theories of Economics and business be unified under one umbrella, nor is there a unified theory of the Muslim approach towards the same. Believing in such a situation would be extreme over-simplification of the subject matter.

2. Secondly, the paper presented a detailed analysis of the current Muslim approaches towards Economics and Business studies. It highlighted the absence of any centralised theory per se rather the fluid nature of the outlook based on some fundamental principles of understanding. This is critical to understand as a reality of an alternative approach to social sciences. One which defines principles rather than frameworks, the latter being more convenient from the point of curriculum design.

3. The paper observed that although charming, the idea of epistemological inclusion in the context of IE is far from reality and a mammoth task to achieve. Designing a curriculum which is inclusive and reflective of

various epistemological roots deems it to be fluid. It also means that teacher's knowledge of the subject and willingness to keep current becomes more crucial than ever before.

4. Lastly, there is a clear gap in the current literature about the impact of teaching curricula which are pre-dominantly western in their construct to non-western clientele. The research in this area needs to be expanded in various subject areas and more contexts.

Recommendations

The following are possible ways that can be used to achieve a more inclusive DP curriculum for the chosen subjects in particular. However, similar methods can be used for a greater range of subjects.

Adding more contents is not feasible as an option as the IB DP curriculum is already very rigorous. Also, this would not respond to issue of developing IM but would only be a manifestation of thin inclusion (Stein, 2017). One approach in this regard, is of using global issues of common human interest (Walker, 2010). By presenting a common problem and the possibility to answer it from various standpoints would lead to constructive debates of how different knowledge and value systems would respond to the same problem, developing tolerance towards diversity of cultural perspectives (Davy, 2011; Walker, 2010). Such discussions would also lead to some understanding of cosmopolitan ethics (Lakhani, 2016) which would be a remedy to value vacuum. Hence, the arena of IE and IS would then truly be inductive of creating internationally minded students who can work towards a more peaceful world, by providing a space where the East and West can dialogue and mutually learn from each other (Sun & Roumell, 2017). Creating a space for dialogue can be done more actively via technology.

Using collaborative classrooms where students interact with other students or business owners or other market stakeholders from various cultural settings can also be an approach. Instead of doing case studies passively only, students can interact with active agents of markets operating in multi-national settings making the ground reality clearer for the students.

Another consideration would be of language. The provision of bi-lingual or multi-lingual teaching learning across the IB programs (Anderson, 2014; Walker, 2010) is one aspect while the other is developing 'communicative competencies' (Sun & Roumell, 2017 p.185), that relates to the need for educators and pupil to be multi-lingual with an understanding of the social contexts of these languages. In the case of Muslim perspectives, much more of the literature is available in non-European languages and thus including multi-lingual contents would be significant. Although IB stresses on acquisition of additional languages across the programs (Davy, 2011), modifying the language of instruction in most subjects to bi-lingual could also be considered.

The expansion of the TOK from an independent course to a mandatory element in all subjects would also broaden the scope of inclusion. Broadly, it would mean that the teachers must include a TOK components which would compare and contrast the global and local in all the subjects. These should also be assessed to ensure that they are taught (Dempsey and Litchfield, 2015). Imperative here would be including the widely agreed upon principles of Muslim perspectives discussed above. Following the same logic, world religions should also be added as a subject in the IB curriculum. Unlike the Western separation of Church and State, various other cultures drive their knowledge

from their religious aspirations (Etherington, 2016). Hence, true global citizenship would be incomplete without the appreciation of these traditions (Walker, 2010).

Although, for the sake of simplicity the paper used stereotypical conceptions of East and West, one should refrain from overarching generalization about both the east and the west (Walker, 2010). Not all of the Western knowledge is reason driven and not all of the East is unanimous on rote learning. Islam, which is often understood as a religion driven by authoritative knowledge only, stresses on intellectual endeavour. One manifestation of that has been the Mu'tazilah thought in Islamic tradition, which emphasized the intellectual capabilities of human beings (Sidani & Ariss, 2015). Another example is of Ijtihad, using human deliberations for re-interpreting faith, as an accepted form of knowledge acquisition in Islamic jurisprudence (Wilson, 2004). Inclusion can be further explored for analysing the integration of other non-western and western epistemologies that are currently not reflected in various subjects of the IB DP.

Another key area of research will be analysis of pedagogical orientations like the one done for curriculum, especially in the IB Primary Years program which is dominated by the inquiry approach. The voice of the teachers in curriculum development for global education is another essential area as they not only teach but re-create curriculum in their classrooms (Print, 1993a). Further studies should also focus on school setting as most of the studies found for this paper were on higher education context.

Conclusion

The paper investigated the various notions

related to inclusion of epistemologies in IE and a curriculum design that reflects the values of IM. IB DP Economics and business curricula were taken as a case for the IE whereas the Muslim perspectives were taken as a case for non-western epistemologies. The research question was, 'In what ways can the IB DP Economics and Business curriculum be more inclusive of the Muslim perspectives of Economics and Business Ethics?'

This paper attempted to explore the integration of one epistemology in the IB DP curriculum for making it more inclusive and international. The propositions are based on rigorous literature and would provide a basis for doing similar analysis for other subjects and other epistemologies. True inclusion in respecting all these traditions and learning from all of them on equitable grounds.

The findings of this paper will assist educators, curriculum designers and policy makers in re-thinking inclusion in terms of epistemology and designing and delivering more balanced, inclusive and international curriculum without overloading the students with additional content. It will also lead to make curricula more fluid and responsive to the global milieu of cultures which are now accessing uniform curricula approaches in order to get in better universities.

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