A BRIEF HISTORY OF YAYASAN PENGAJIAN TINGGI ISLAM KELANTAN (YPTIK) NILAM PURI AND THE PERCEPTION OF ITS ALUMNI

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ABSTRAK

YPTIK was established in 1965 with nine objectives of historical and contemporary relevance. The institution, established under the Kelantan State Government Enactment 9/1968, was widely recognized by the universities of the Middle Eastern countries and its graduates proved to fare well in their undergraduate and postgraduate studies in those universities. The programmes offered, adapted from the curriculum of Al-Azhar University, were of Islamic Studies disciplines especially in Shariah and Usuluddin with Arabic as the medium of instruction. Laws, Economics and Sociology were also taught to expose students to contemporary issues. YPTIK had contributed significantly to the Malaysian society with its graduates serving in educational, Islamic legal and judiciary as well as economic and political sectors. The perception of the alumni is significantly high in terms of their alma mater's impact on their academic and professional success -- they feel proud to be the alumni of YPTIK.

Kata kunci: *YPTIK, Sharia, Usuluddin, curriculum, co-curricular activities*

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Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan or the Foundation for Higher Islamic Studies of Kelantan, commonly known as YPTIK, was established in 1965 to offer courses in Islamic Studies using Arabic as the medium of instruction. It was the first institution of such kind ever established under an enactment passed by the Kelantan State Assembly. YPTIK provided opportunities for higher learning in various areas of Islamic Studies to local Malaysian students as well as to those from other countries of Southeast Asia such as Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, Cambodia and Thailand. YPTIK was successful in producing notable graduates serving the country as State Muftis, officials of Shariah Courts, academics and teachers as well as corporate leaders. The institution received recognition from universities abroad especially those of the Middle Eastern countries and its graduates were accepted to further their studies at postgraduate level. Despite the fact, as an institution of higher learning established under a state enactment as opposed to parliamentary act, the recognition by the federal government agencies was of limited status. This led to its merger with the University of Malaya in 1981.

The paper attempts to have a relook at the establishment of YPTIK including the setting up of its objectives from the historical perspective and for this purpose evidences from the newly discovered documents gathered by the Academy of Islamic Studies University of Malaya (UM) and the Sultan Ismail Petra International Islamic College (KIAS) and several other sources were used. Secondly, the study attempts to evaluate the performance of the institution from the perspective of its alumni and their perception of the alma mater. To serve the purpose, a questionnaire of 14 questions was specially constructed covering variables mostly related to the alumni's experience at YPTIK and after leaving it.

The idea of the need of an institution of higher Islamic studies had been expressed in the early decades of the Twentieth Century by Muslim intellectuals. Za'aba mentioned the idea in *Majalah Al-Ikhwan* of January 16, 1927 issue inspired by the establishment of the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College at Aligarh, India. Ahmad Ismail discussed the same idea in his *AL-Hikmah* No 132 of March 25, 1937. However, the idea gained momentum after the World War II during the period of uncertainties when the Japanese left Malaya and the British returned to fill up the power vacuum. On 28th July 1946, the Pertubuhan Kebangsaan Melayu Bersatu (PEKEMBAR) of Penang in its Annual General Meeting, the idea received overwhelming support by the members as reported by *Utusan Melayu* of 20th September 1946. The paper of 23rd June 1953 also reported that the All Malaya Muslim Missionary Society led by its co-founder

Dato' Syed Ibrahim Omar Al-Sagoff had agreed that the establishment of such an institution would be the main agenda of the movement. All these contributed to the establishment of Kolej Islam Malaya (Malaya Islamic College) in 1955. However the college ceased to exist when it was merged into the National University of Malaysia on 18th May 1970 to form the Faculty of Islamic Studies.

In another development, when the Pan Malayan Islamic Party (PAS) won the General Election of 1959 and was given the mandate to form the State Government of Kelantan, the idea of establishing an institution of Islamic higher education was very much discussed by the party officials as well as Muslim scholars. The party used to strongly support the idea when it was brought up by the All Malaya Muslim Missionary Society in 1953 as mentioned above. In 1963, a group of Malay students of the Indonesian universities led by Drs. Abdul Ghani Azmi sent a memorandum urging the Kelantan State Government to set up an Islamic institution of higher learning taking State Islamic Institution of Higher Learning of Indonesia as the model using Malay as medium of instruction. The initial attempt to set up such a private institution was made in the same year by Dato' Haji Mohmmad b. Naseer, the then Deputy Chief Minister, who formed a special steering committee with the prime mover Ustaz Zulkifli Mohamad, a senior lecturer at the Kolej Islam Malaya. The committee suggested the name of the institution would be Al-Balaghul Mubin College and the suggested campus would be on a 300-acre state land in Semerak, Bachok, and Kelantan. There was not much progress made by the committee partly when Dato' Hj. Mohammad b. Naseer lost the 1964 election and appointed as a Public Service Commissioner by the His Royal Highness the Sultan of Kelantan[5].

Since the idea of establishing an Islamic higher studies institution was agreed as an item in the Pan Malayan Islamic Party (PAS) of 1964 General Election Manifesto[6], on the success of the party to retain the State Government of Kelantan in the 1964 General Election, a second committee for the establishment of such institution was immediately formed. It was chaired by Dato' Asri b. Hj. Muda, the Chief Minister,

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[5] Mohd Asri b. Hj. Muda (1993) *Memoir Politik Asri: Meniti Arus*. Bangi: Penerbit Uinversiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, p. 83-84. Aminah Mohd Noor (1988) 'Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan: Sejarah dan Sumbangan Terhadap Pendidikan Islam di Malaysia' (Project Paper, Islamic Academy, University of Malaya), p. 50-53.

[6] Salahuddin b. Abdullah & Hydzelan b. Hashim (2010) *Sejarah PAS Kelantan 1959-1978)* Badan Perhubungan PAS Negeri Kelantan, p. 72-74.

himself, and Ustaz Zulkifli Mohammad who stood and won Bachok parliamentary seat in the 1964 General Election was still the main figure in the committee. Among others, the members of the committee were Dato' Hj. Mohammad Naseer, Dato' Hj. Hashim b. Hj. Muhammad the State Secretary, YBM Tengku Setia Utama President of the Kelantan Council of Religion and Malay Custom, Dato' Abd. Aziz b. Idris the State Finance Officer and Mr. Wan Ismail the Legal Advisor. Another important figure was Mr Murad Mohd. Noor, the State Education Officer. Other members were Ustaz Hj. Hassan b. Hj. Idris, Ustaz Wan Hussein Azmi and Executive Council members of the Kelantan State Government[7]. The membership of the committee indicated the seriousness of the government in the establishment of the institution. The terms of reference of the committee covered all aspects of an educational institution: regulation, infrastructure, administration, emolument, curriculum and student in-take. The committee, however, faced another setback when Ustaz Zulkifli Mohammad the prime mover of the idea and an experienced academician, died in a road accident few days after the 1964 General Election[8].

On 13th September 1965, the committee came into consensus that the institution was to be known as Pusat Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan (PPTIK) or the Centre for Islamic Higher Studies of Kelantan, and it was registered under the jurisdiction of Kelantan Council of Religion and Malay Custom on 18th September 1965[9]. On 1st. October 1965 the first in-take of 43 students began their enrollment as students of the Faculty of Shariah and Law of PPTIK at a site about 8 km from Kota Bharu. It was a 25-acre site donated by His Royal Highness the Sultan of Kelantan, Sultan Yahya Petra, with a palace known as Nilam Puri or Istana Nilam[10], to be used for teaching and student residential purposes, and a beautifully designed landscape[11]. It was a beautiful campus in a peaceful environment, not too far away from the busy Kota Bharu town centre, very much suitable for tertiary teaching and learning purposes. The initial

[7] Salahuddin b. Abdullah & Hydeselan b. Hashim (2010) *ibid*., p. 163.

[8] Mohd Asri Hj. Muda (1993) *op. cit.,* p. 84.

[9] A letter from the Majlis Ugama Islam Kelantan data 18th September 1965 (6) in M.I. 373/65 informing that YPTIK Nilam Puri has been registered under the institution ; in an earlier letter of 10 September 1965 (3) in M.I.373/65 the Majlis granted authority to the Administrative Committee of PPTIK chaired by the Chief Minister (See also Aminah Mohd Noor (1988) 'Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan: Sejarah dan Sumbangan Terhadap Pendidikan Islam di Malaysia', Akademi Islam Universiti Malaya.)

[10] Literarily *nilam* means sapphire and *puri* or *istana* means palace.

[11] Mohd. Asri b. Hj. Muda (1993) *op. cit*., p. 84

cost of RM79,054.00 for the establishment of the institution was provided by the State Government of Kelantan[12].

The centre as an institution of higher learning had to be independent of other authorities to ensure academic freedom and having its own legal identity. This was realized by the State Government and for the purpose, in September 1968 session, the Kelantan Legislative Council passed an enactment, Enactment Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan, No 9/I968, which received the royal consent of His Royal Highness Sultan Yahya Petra, the Sultan of Kelantan, on 10th October 1968. From then on the institution came to be known as Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan (YPTIK) or the Foundation for Islamic Higher Studies, Nilam Puri, Kelantan[13]. In 1977 YPTIK was instituted as *Badan Berkanun* or statutory body of the State of Kelantan[14].

The establishment of the YPTIK had its own objectives[15], namely:

a. To offer courses in higher Islamic Studies in an environment of academic freedom
b. To produce graduates that can actively involve themselves in the society
c. To indulge in researches and dissemination of knowledge of Islam
d. To cultivate and promote of Islamic culture
e. To be a catalyst in the development of *Shariah Islamiyyah* in the country
f. To produce graduates for the posts that is related to the administration of Islam and Muslim society.
g. To provide opportunities and facilities to secondary religious school leavers to pursue further studies
h. To provide opportunities and facilities to leavers of Arabic secondary schools to further their studies local and abroad
i. To facilitate the exchange of experts in Islamic Studies with other institutions local and abroad

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[12] Drs Abdul Ghani Azmi as interviewed by Aminah Mohd Noor on 17th June 1987 (See Aminah Mohd Noor (1988) 'Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan: Sejarah dan Sumbangan Terhadap Pendidikan Islam di Malaysia', Akademi Islam Universiti Malaya, p. 54.)
[13] The State Government of Kelantan Enactment 9/1968.
[14] State Secretary letter SUK 137/76/(3) dated 20 February 1977.
[15] Salahuddin b. Abdullah, *ibid.,* p. 161.

The above objectives of YPTIK had their historical background and the contemporary relevance of the local Muslim society. As mentioned earlier when Japan surrendered which ended World War II and the British returned as the colonial master, education especially Islamic education in the Malay Peninsular was in the period of uncertainty. The British regarded that secondary education was sufficient for the Malays and was suspicious and reluctant to provide tertiary education to the Malays especially in the light of the rise of Islam and Islah movement pioneered by Muhammad Abduh and Jamaluddin Al-Aghani in Egypt in the early twentieth century[16]. The presence of Malay intellectuals as a result of tertiary education would create popular uprising and unrest among the people in the peninsula.

The objective to offer courses in Islamic Studies in an environment of academic freedom was an attempt to contain some differences between religious factions of the day especially the of conflict between *Kaum Tua* (Old Faction), and *Kaum Muda* (Young Faction), which took its root in the early Twentieth Century. *Kaum Tua* held the 'affirmation of traditional values within a framework of Islamic conservatism' while *Kaum Muda* was making 'an attempt to re-think Islam in terms of the demands made by the contemporary situation, to participate , as it were, in induced social change, the dynamic of which would be provided by a reformed Islamic ideology'[17]. The *Kaum Tua* found its followers among those in the traditional *pondok* system while those in the modern *madrasah* system would go to *Kaum Muda*. There were ardent discussions and debates going around especially on the issues of *ibadat* rituals though sometime trivial which arose from the differences of opinion among the local scholars or *ulamak* but unfortunately having the consequences in the division among their followers in the Malay Muslim community. An example of such an incidence was the case of '*Jilatan Anjing*' or 'dog licking', a debate that took place at Istana Sri Cemerlang Kota Bharu in 1937. Such a problem needed to be addressed wisely. To bring followers from the two such camps under one roof to study and discuss any issue on a neutral platform and academically supervised by qualified and respectful academicians would contribute to the solution of the situation.

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[16] Mohd Sarim Mustajab (1975) 'Islam dan Perkembangan dalam Masyarakat di Semenanjung Tanah Melayu 1900-1940' (Master Thesis, UKM, Bangi) p. 4 as quoted from Abu Talib b. Hamid (2001) 'Kolej Islam Malaya: Analisis Sejarah Penubuhan dan Pentadbiran Awal 1955-1965' (M Ed Thesis, University of Malaya), p. 2.
[17] William R Roff (1994) *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*. Kuala Lumpr: Oxford University Press, p. 76. See also Peter Riddell (2001) *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World*. Singapore: Horizon Books, p. 211.

In the early twentieth century *Al-Imam*, a Malay periodical, made an assertion that steps must be taken 'to remind those who are forgetful, arouse those who sleep, guide those who stray and give a voice to those who speak with wisdom' in order to eradicate backwardness, domination by alien races, laziness, complacency, acts of bickering, and the inability to cooperate for the common good[18]. These negatives attitudes were dominant among the local Muslim Malays of the time. 'The traditional practice of Islam in Malaya, adulterated by impurities of custom and belief derived from *adat* and from other religions, and inimical to progress, must be cleansed of these elements, and *ulama* who transmit the imperfections brought to a sense of their errors and obligations' and 'a reformed system of education in which, upon a sound basis of doctrinal instruction, Arabic and English and modern educational subjects should be taught'[19]. All these pointed to the need of a structured education, an Islamic institution of higher learning, which could address the situation. The subject was also discussed at almost the same time by leaders of Muslim community in the neighbouring Indonesia especially among the figures such as Satiman Wirdjosandjojo, Mohammad Natsir, Mohammad Hatta and Mohammad Roem. A concrete step must be taken to remove impediments in the development of Muslim community—Muslims should be educated. The Indonesian solution was the setting up of institutions higher learning by the Muhammadiyah movement.[20] Though what has been said above was not directly related to YPTIK but the objectives of its establishment were to address such a situation, that is, an attempt to solve the backward attitudes of the Malays as well as to address the shortage of opportunities of higher education among the local Muslim community of the country. Higher education would be an essential agent to change the attitude of the society and contribute to the solution of the problem, thus, the enhancement of the Muslim community. At the time, apart from the Kolej Islam Malaya (Malaya Islamic College) which started its programme in 1955 where the places were limited, there were no other such institutions for the local Islamic-Arabic school graduates to further their studies. They had to go to universities abroad in the Middle East, Indonesia or India and only the fortunate in limited number would be able to do so. There were other institutions of higher learning at the time, of course, such as

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[18] William R. Roff (1994) *ibid.*, p. 56. See also Abdul Aziz Mat Ton (200) *Politik al-Imam*. Kuala Lumpur DBP, p. 169-181 and 310.
   [19] See William R Roff (1994) *op. cit.*, p. 58.
   [20]M. Dawam Rahardjo (2002) *Islam Dan Transformasi Budaya*. Jakarta: The International Institute of Islamic Thought Indonesia, p. 99-106.

University of Malaya but it would hard for religious-Arabic school graduates to find their place there.

Professor Noam Chomsky speaking on 'The Function of the University in a Time of Crisis' in 1969 mentioned that university should facilitate student 'to discover and create, to explore and evaluate and come to understand, to refine and exercise his talent, to contemplate, to make his own individual contribution to contemporary culture, to analyze and criticize and transform this culture and social structure in which it is rooted ... our society must undergo drastic changes if civilization is to advance.'[21]. The focus here is the later part, i.e. 'to analyze and criticize and transform this culture and social structure in which it is rooted ... our society must undergo drastic changes if civilization is to advance' – university as an agent in the development of culture and society. This is clearly mentioned in one of the objective (d) of the establishment of YPTIK -- 'to cultivate and promote Islamic culture'. Islamic culture is universal in its character with the exception that the norms and values are guided by the Islamic Shariah -- seeking and promoting knowledge is part of the culture as enshrined in the first word of the Quran 'read' ever revealed to Prophet Mohammad (pbh) and that is the way of university life. Students are to be given opportunities to question the values and practices inherent in the traditional culture to enhance the right values and practices and to discover negative elements which stand in the way of improvement of the society, thus, paving the way for the society 'to undergo drastic changes if civilization is to advance'.

YPTIK was headed by a Principal[22] and assisted by Vice Principal, Deans of the Faculties and Supervisor of the Pre-University programme[23] as far as the academic matters were concerned and the Registrar in the general administration of the institution. General academic policy, quality and recognition were within the terms of reference of the Board of Studies, chaired by the Principal, while in the absence of the President, the Vice Principal would take over the role. The other members of the Board

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[21] Chomsky, Noams (1969), 'The Function of the University in a Time of Crisis', https://archive.org/stream/TheFunctionOfTheUniversityInATimeOfCrisis/Chomsky-TheFunctionOfTheUniversityInATimeOfCrisis_djvu.txt, cited on 4 January 2017.
[22] The first Principal was Ustaz Wan Hussain Azmi Wan Abdul Kadir(1965-1970), followed by Ustaz Mohd. Ali Hj. Harun (1970-1980) and Ustaz Mohammad Che Wok (1980-1981).
[23] Mesyuarat Majlis Tertinggi Yayasan (Council of Yayasan Meeting) 21st February 1978 Agenda/Minit 6.

were the lecturers of the institution[24]. The highest authority of YPTIK, the governing body, was the 12-member Council of Yayasan[25] appointed by His Royal Highness the Sultan of Kelantan[26] and as a normal practice the President of the Council would be the Chief Minister of Kelantan and his Deputy the Vice President. The Council had its own sub-committees which were Finance, Campus Planning and Personnel with their respective roles[27].

On November 5th 1968, the Senate of the University of Al-Azhar, Cairo, announced its recognition of the Shariah programme at YPTIK as on par with the Shariah programme at the University[28]. This special recognition means that not only the graduates of YPTIK were eligible to pursue postgraduate studies at Al-Azhar University but also those Year One students who completed their studies successfully could continue at Year Two at the university. This was also true to Year Two students to Year Three at Al-Azhar and so forth. At the time there were many Year Three students who went to complete their undergraduate studies at Al-Azhar and thereby recognized as graduates of the university.

In its endeavour to develop Islamic Studies in Malaysia and to play a wider role to cater for the needs of the Muslim society at the time, a new programme was offered in 1974 which focused on Islamic Theology or Usuluddin and Sociology as compared to Shariah studies which focused on the Islamic Law. The new programme which received the same recognition in 1977 as stated in a letter from the General Directorate of the Al-Azhar University to the Ambassador of Malaysia in Cairo dated 27th June 1977[29]. The programme was set up with the following objectives:

a. To disseminate the Islamic faith and to be a guardian against any falsehood that may arise
b. To produce *ulamak* who are able to promote Islam and to provide them with sufficient contemporary knowledge.
c. To be effective resources in promoting Islam to contemporary society

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[24] Clause 11, Enactment 9/1968 Government of Kelantan (The Enactment was repealed by Enactment 8/1982).
[25] Among the members of YPTIK, Council of Yayasan was referred as Majlis Tertinggi Yayasan .
[26] Clause 7, Enactment 9/1968 Government of Kelantan.
[27] Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan (undated) 'Penerangan Umum'.
[28] This was stated in a letter from the Registrar General of Al-Azhar University to the Principal of YPTIK dated 12th February 1969.
[29] *Hari Penyampaian Ijazah 1400 Hijri 12 Julai 1980/29 Shaabab 1400* (1980) Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan Nilam Puri, p. 26.

d. To emphasize Islam as a religion of all age
e. To be a part in producing a firm Muslim generation which is capable of defending the Islamic faith against any falsehood

It is interesting to note that the objectives above which focused on Islam and the promotion of Islam as a universal religion were coined in 1974 in the decade which Esposito describes as the period where religious revivalism and the role of Islam becoming a major force in the Muslim politics[30]. The aspiration that transpired from the Islamic revivalism In Malaysia manifested itself in the emergence of several Islamic institutions in 1960s and 1970s and the decade after. The Pilgrimage Fund Board or Tabung Haji was established in 1963; the Faculty of Islamic Studies, National University of Malaysia (UKM), the first higher institution which uses Malay as the medium of instruction, began to operate in 1970; Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia or the Malaysian Muslim Youth Association (ABIM) which aimed to transmit a proper understanding of Islam to Muslim youth in particular and to the Malaysian public in general and it was the association that popularized the slogans of "Islamic Way of Life" and "Islamic world-view" was established in 1972[31]; Al Arqam which practiced the puritan life in Muslim community and actively involved in economic activities came into being in 1973[32]; the Kelantan Department of Religious School (JASA) the predecessor of present day Yayasan Islam Kelantan (YIK) or Islamic Foundation of Kelantan which regulated and systemized all Islamic religious schools in the state was established in 1973; and Bank Islam Malaysia Berhad (BIMB), the first Islamic bank in Malaysia, was formally set up on July 1, 1983. The programme of Usuluddin and Sociology of YPTIK was, in fact, a part of the drive of Islamic revivalism in Malaysia.

1979 witnessed another recognition by a foreign government of the programmes offered by YPTIK and this time was from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as stated in the letter from the Kingdom's Embassy in Kuala Lumpur to the Principal dated 16th July 1979. The Bachelors in Shariah and Law, and Usuluddin and Sociology were of equivalent status to any first degree of the universities of Saudi Arabia and the holders of the degrees were eligible to pursue postgraduate studies in the relevant areas in any university of the Kingdom[33]. Consequently in 1979 and 1980 six

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[30] John L Esposito (2002) *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam.* Oxford University Press, p. 84.
[31] Chandra Muzaffar (1987) *Islamic Resurgence in Malaysia.* Fajar Bakti, p. 42.
[32] Malaysian Government banned Al-Arqam in 1994
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

graduates of YPTIK enrolled at the University of Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud, Riyadh, to read for Masters in Usuluddin fully sponsored by the Saudi Government[34]. They returned successfully a few years later to serve as lecturers at the University of Malaya.

The Shariah Studies at YPTIK, mainly adapted from the Al-Azhar University syllabus[35], covered the period of four years, Year One to Year Four. The courses can be divided into three categories: traditional Shariah, contemporary and language. In the traditional Shariah there were Fiqh which covered '*Ibādat, Munākahāt, Mu'āmalāt* and *Jināyāt, Uṣūl al-Fiqh, Āyāt* and *Ḥadīth Aḥkām, Fiqh* and *Mīrāth Muqaran, Ahwal Shakhsiyyah* and History of Islam. Contemporary courses were Law which were Constitutional, Commercial, Criminal, Civil, Administration and International Laws, Economics, Shariah (Coded) Law and Contemporary Issues on Transaction such as pertaining to banking, finance and insurance. In the language category, there were Arabic, English and Malay. Lecture, tutorial and seminar were the mod of delivery where student participation was the essence[36].

The four-year courses in Islamic Theology, which was also adapted from Al-Azhar University syllabus, began its first in-take of 69 students in 1974/75 academic session, were also of three categories. The traditional courses were *Tafsīr* and *Uṣūl Tafsīr, 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, Manhaj al-Mufassirīn, 'Ulūm* and *Muṣṭalaḥ al-Ḥadīth, Rijāl Āthār, Aqā'id, Tarikh al-Da'wah wa al-Du'ā', Manṭiq, Taṣawwuf, Akhlāq, Falsafah,* Islamic History, Comparative Religion and *Fiqh al-Islam.* While the contemporary courses were related to Human Sciences: Anthropology and Sociology which specifically emphasized on Social Change and Ethnic Relationship in the context of local relevance. There were also Psychology, Politics, Economics, Research Methodology and Introduction to Constitutional Law. As in Shariah, in the language category there were Arabic, English and Malay while the mod of delivery was lecture, tutorial and seminar[37].

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[34] The YPTIK graduates were Johari b. Mat, Abd Aziz b. Mohd Zin, Zakaria @ Mahmod b. Daud, Syed Abdul Rahman b. Syed Hussein, Fauzi b. Deraman and Abdul Aziz b. Awang Kechik.

[35] Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan Nilam Puri (1973) 'Laporan Ringkas Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan, Nilam Puri, Kota Bharu, Kelantan'.

[36] For more information see Aminah Mohd Noor (1988), *op.cit.,* pp 63-86 (Original syllabi can be found at the Library of Academy of Islamic Studies, Nilam Puri).

[37] For more information see Aminah Mohd Noor (1988), *op.cit.,* p. 87-116 (Original syllabi can be found at the Library of Academy of Islamic Studies, Nilam Puri).

Arabic which was the medium of instruction of the two programmes of studies was intensively taught by Arabic native speakers or teachers trained in Arab countries . The Arabic courses covered all aspects of its grammar and language as traditionally taught in Arab countries, i.e, *Naḥw, Ṣarf, Balāghah, Nuṣūṣ*, and Poetries. The students were expected to master the knowledge and be proficient in the use of the language for them to understand the original sources of Islamic teaching, i.e. the Quran and Traditions as well as the classical works in Arabic without much difficulty. The essential of such Arabic courses is ironically analogized by Dr Abdul Fatah Haron as a person reading Arabic texts of the Golden Age of Islam without sufficient knowledge and skills in *Naḥw, Ṣarf* and *Balāghah* is like a person going to war armed only with a hoe.[38]

A special preliminary two-year programme was introduced together with the Shariah programme in 1965 with the purpose to keep a constant enrollment and to provide opportunities for candidates who were not eligible for degree programmes such those graduated from the traditional *pondok* system. The programme was called *Da'wah wal Imamah*, however, in 1970 it was reconstructed to a pre-degree one-year programme. The curriculum of the programme undergone evaluation and revision several times to ensure its suitability and effectiveness and in 1974 it became established and having its own coordinator, previously, it was under the office of the Dean of Shariah. The main objective of the programme was to equip students with relevant skills in Arabic that they could follow degree programmes with ease and effectively. The subjects taught were of three categories: Arabic Language: *Naḥw, Ṣarf, Balāghah, Insyā', Muṭala'ah* and *Nuṣūṣ*; Islamic religious subjects: *Fiqh, Mīrath, Tafsīr, Ḥadīth, Usūl al-Fiqh, Tawḥīd, Manṭiq* and History of Islam; and languages: English and Malay[39].

Table 1: Student Enrolment of YPTIK (1965-1980)[40]

Acad. Session	Dakwah / Pre - degree	Shariah					Usuluddin					Total Degree Students	Total Students
		I	II	III	IV	Total	I	II	III	IV	Total		
1965 (1966/67)	79*	43	-	-	-	43	-	-	-	-	-	43	122
1967/68	145*	44	39	-	-	83	-	-	-	-	-	83	228

[38] Abdul Fatah Haron (2017) *Restu Ibu*. Shah Alam: Grup Buku Karangkraf, p. 145.

[39] For more information see Aminah Mohd Noor (1988), *op.cit.*, p. 181-188.

[40] Adapted from *Hari Penyampaian Ijazah 1400 Hijri* 12 Julai 1980/29 Syaaban 1400H. Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan p. 22.

1968/69	155*	66	61	32	-	159	-	-	-	-	-	159	314
1969/70	56	105	51	57	32	245	-	-	-	-	-	245	301
1970/71	45	105	51	49	47	252	-	-	-	-	-	252	297
1971/72	11	31	65	66	36	197	-	-	-	-	-	197	208
1972/73	92	115	51	57	10	233	-	-	-	-	-	233	325
1973/74	138	46	183	55	30	314	-	-	-	-	-	314	452
1974/75	139	139	92	47	13	291	69	-	-	-	69	460	499
1975/76	119	136	108	61	12	317	60	43	-	-	103	420	539
1976/77	124	147	111	89	24	371	104	42	35	-	181	552	676
1077/78	50	72	125	98	45	340	82	73	33	25	213	553	603
1978/79	52	65	63	121	31	280	67	79	40	20	206	486	538
1979/80	50	82	59	78	40	259	87	63	41	23	214	473	523

*2-Year Programme

Note: 1979/80 was the last academic session of YPTIK before its merger with the University of Malaya as the Islamic Academy. Those who completed successfully the pre-degree progamme proceeded to First Year at UM and those who completed the First Year at YPTIK would be absorbed into the Second Year, while the rest were allowed to complete the syllabus and graduated as YPTIK graduates (Budiman 15 March 1981, Tahun 6 Bil:13 p 4). Those YPTIK graduates were encouraged to continue their studies at UM, however, they have to wait three years after the establishment of Islamic Academy (*Laporan Pengajian Mengenai Nilam Puri*, Universiti Malaya, 1980)

When YPTIK ceased its operation in 1981 to be merged into the University of Malaya as the Akademi Islam Universiti Malaya (AIUM)[41], there were 523 students enrolled in all of its programmes at the time, i.e. an increase of almost 77% from the first student in-take of 1965. 259 (49.52%) were in Shariah and Law, 214 (40.92) in Usuluddin and Sociology while the rest (9.56%) were at the pre-degree programme. It is interesting to note the flow of students from Year One to Year Four. A year after the Al-Azhar University recognized the Shariah programme in 1968, in 1969/70 academic year there were 105 students in Year One, however, in the academic year of 1972/73 only 10 remained to complete their Year Four studies. The rest left for Al-Azhar University to complete their studies. The Al-Azhar University recognized the Usuluddin programme in 1977 and at the time there were 104 students in Year One but four years later in the 1979/80 academic session only 23 students left to complete their Year Four. In this case, recognition by the local

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[41] AIUM was the predecessor of Akademi Pengajian Islam Universiti Malaya (APIUM) which was set up as a merger of AIUM and the Department of Islamic Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, in 1996 (see Statut Universiti Malaya (Statut Pemansuhan XLII (Siri Baharu) Akademi Islam) 1996.

government plays a significant factor. If the students were to complete their studies at YPTIK they were only given a graduate status, that is, of lower status compared to the graduates of the fully recognized universities such as Al-Azhar University.

YPTIK used to offer *ad hoc* programmes for specific purposes. The Certificate in Education in 1971 in the collaboration with the University of Malaya for 26 potential school teachers[42], Arabic Intensive Course in 1967 to prepare O-level students for various Science programmes at the University of Al-Azhar and the University of Baghdad with 20 students. Ten students left for the University of Baghdad at the end of the year but those opted for Al-Azhar University couldn't make it because of the Arab-Isreali War[43]. In 1976 the Al-Azhar again offered 22 places to Malaysian students to study at her Faculty of Medicine, and for the purpose, a special intensive Arabic programme was designed to train O-Level students to master the basic skills in Arabic communication as a prerequisite to read for Medicine at Al-Azhar. The programme was offered in collaboration with the Malaysian Department of Public Services[44]. All of them including ten female students left for the University a year later.

As of the 1976/1977 academic session there were 42 academic staff members including 29 lecturers and 13 tutors specializing in Shariah, Usuluddin, Sociology, Laws, Economics and Arabic, English and Malay Languages. There were six international lecturers, two from Egypt who were seconded from the University of Al-Azhar and four from Indonesia[45]. The total number of YPTIK students of the academic session was 552 (Table 1) making the ratio of teaching staff-student 1:13 which is indeed a convenient teaching-learning situation.

Co-curriculum is an integral and a significant part of higher education process as curricular activities develop students' knowledge, intellectuality and academic literacy while co-curricular activities develop soft skills such as leadership, teamwork and entrepreneurship as well as expose and give them personal hands on experience in volunteer activities in local community such as welfare work in old folk homes, schools,

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[42] Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan Nilam Puri, *Laporan Tahunan 1970-1971*.

[43] The writer was one of the participants of the programme.

[44] Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Nilam Puri, *Laporan Tahunan 1977-19818*.

[45] The number was based on the invitation letter of Fourth Board of Studies Meeting 1974/1975 Academic Session. ((48) dlm YPTIK 2/71/BH.IV)).

kindergartens and involvement in emergency operations such as during flood catastrophes. Debate, public speaking contests and essay writing competition were common activities organized by student societies. All such activities especially in organizing and executing the programmes train the students to be independent and self-confident and contribute to the process of maturation preparing them to be useful members of their community after their tertiary education. A research by Bharati Rajendra Dhanmeher on impact of co-curricular activities concluded that 'co-curricular activities have been perceived as axle of holistic development. They enable the students to develop their life skills and a rich character to succeed in society'[46]. Stirling and Kerr added that in co-curricular engagement 'it is important to balance all four learning modes of experience, reflection, conceptualization and experimentation'[47].

YPTIK observed the significance of co-curricular activities in developing students preparing them for their future carrier. Most of the activities were entrusted to and organized by the Persatuan Siswa Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan (PSYPTIK)[48] (The Foundation for Islamic Higher Studies Kelantan Student Association) and the affiliated societies such as Debate and Public Speaking Society and those societies based on students' state of origin such as Thai Student Association[49]. The activities of PSYPTIK were centred on community services, *dakwah* activities, leadership training, organizing seminars and annual orientation programme for new intakes[50]. *Nilam* was the periodical of the association which provided a medium for the students to express their idea on contemporary issues of the time. When describing the activities of Thai students at YPTIK, Taweeluck Pollachon[51] wrote,

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[46] Bharati Rajendra Dhameher (2014) 'Impact of Co-Curricular Activities on the Non-Academic Development of Junior College Students' (MPhil dissertation submitted to the DY Patil University), p. 165.

[47] Ashley E. Stirling and Gretchen A. Kerr (2015) 'Creating Meaningful Co-Curricular Activities in Higher Education' *Journal of Education & Social Policy* Vol. 2 No 6 December 2015.

[48] A tribute to Presidents of PSYTIK: Mahmud Zuhdi b. Hj. Abd Majid (1965/66-1968/69), Ibrahim b. Abd. Rahman (1969/70), Mohd Kamil b. Hj. Abd Majid (1970/71), Wan Muhammad b. Wan Yunus (1971/72), Suguib@Semangun b. Hj. Harun (1972/73 & 1974/75), Mohd Zaki b. Hj. Ibrahim (1973/74), Mukhtar b. Salleh (1975/76), Mohd Mansoruddin b. Ismail (1976/77), Mohamad b. Abdullah (1977/78), Mokhtar Mohd Salim (1978/79), Mohd Isa b. Husin (1979/80) and Abd Rashid b. Ab Rahman (1980/81).

[49] Fatimah Ali, interviewed on 19th January 2017.

[50] *10 Tahun Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam* Kelantan (1977), p. 26-27.

[51] Taweeluck Pollachon (2014) ' "Uneducated Mother" or "Modern Mother" : The Construction of Religious Education Women's Role in Public Space in the Three Border

> "They organized the activities for dakwah Islamic knowledge and circulated Islamic doctrine in rural Malay communities. They also organized dakwah courses and the training for the members and general students during holidays every year. They focused on social engagement such dress, food, and behavior more than spirituality in order to embrace Islamic values … every ends of semester, they came back [to Thailand] to organize Islamic religion camp, to teach religious practice [among] young students by repeating women's role and duty in Islamic principle."

A study on the alumni of YPTIK[52] was conducted in early 2017 for the purpose of investigating of what they were doing during student days, what they are doing and their perception their alma matter after leaving it more than 30 years. The alumni involved were randomly selected from those who attended the reunion of 30th April 2017 at Alor Setar TH Hotel and the others were randomly approached based on the addresses given by their colleagues. The 30th April 2017 reunion was the second of such gathering, the first was held on 5th December 2015 at the former premise of YPTIK , Nilam Puri, Kelantan, currently occupied by the Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya. Each of the participants was given a questionnaire in a return stamped envelope. 125 of the alumni returned the questionnaire. Their age range as of 1st January 2017 was from 51 to over 70 years and most of them (84%) are of 61-year and above age group (Table 2).

In the analysis of the responses from the questionnaire, there is a problem that has to be entertained, i. e, some participants left some of the questions unanswered due to the difference of time between the information asked and what actually happened especially with regard to their activities at YPTIK 30 years or more ago. For the analysis purpose the number of 'no response' is still kept obvious to maintain the number of the participants of the study.

Provinces of Thailand ' (Paper presented at the 12th International Conference on Thai Studies organized by the University of Sydney, 22-24 April 2014.

[52] An alumnus of YPTIK is taken to mean a person who used to study at YPTIK whether completed his studies there or at any other institution.

Table 2: Age of Participants

Age (Years)	Frequency	%
51-60	20	16.0
61-70	77	61.6
Above 70	28	22.4
Total	**125**	**100**

The composition of the participants as indicated in the table below (Table 3) roughly corresponds to the pattern of student population of YPTIK of 1976/1977 session (See Table 4) assuming the academic session as representing a general student distribution of population of the institution. Table 3 shows that 7.2% of the alumni were from Singapore and Thailand while the Malaysian alumni 80% of them were from Kelantan, Kedah, Perak and Selangor. These are the areas where most of the religious schools are in Malaysia as well as in earlier days.

Table 3: Alumni's Country/State of Origin

Country / State of origin	Frequency	%
Singapore	6	4.8
Thailand	3	2.4
Johor	2	1.6
Kedah	20	16
Kelantan	60	48
Negeri Sembilan	2	1.6
Pahang	4	3.2
Perak	11	8.8
Perlis	3	2.4
Pulau Pinang	3	2.4
Sabah	1	0.8
Serawak	1	0.8
Selangor	9	7.2
Total	**125**	**100**

Table 4: 1976/1977 YPTIK Student Population According To State of Origin[53]

Country/State of Origin	No	%
Kelantan	287	42.96
Trengganu	12	1.80
Pahang	35	5.24

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[53] Yayasan Pengajian Tinggi Islam Kelantan, *Laporan Tahunan* 1976-1977.

Johor	28	4.19
Melaka	3	0.45
Selangor	77	11.53
Perak	57	8.52
Kedah	73	10.93
Perlis	8	1.20
P. Pinang	12	1.80
Sarawak	10	1.50
Singapore	28	4.19
Thailand	35	5.24
Uganda	1	0.15
Indonesia	1	0.15
Germany	1	0.15
Total	**668**	**100**

Table 5 below shows that most of the alumni enrolled in the Shariah and Law Programme at YPTIK, only 24% were of the Usuluddin and Sociology while Table 6 shows that 56.8% of the alumni completed their studies at Al-Azhar University, Cairo. Only 29.6% remained to be first degree graduates of YPTIK, and eight students or 6.4% went to the University of Malaya. These eight students were probably from the 1979/1980 session who were absorbed into the University of Malaya when the university took over YPTIK. Most of the alumni went to Al-Azhar University when the university recognized YPTIK on par basis in 1969, i.e. on the completion of Year One the students were to continue to Year Two at Al-Azhar and so on while those who successfully completed the four-year programme at YPTIK were to enroll at postgraduate studies programme.

Table 5: Alumni's Course Attended at YPTIK

Programme	Frequency	%
Shariah & Law	95	76
Usuluddin & Sociology	30	24
Total	**125**	**100**

Table 6: Institution First Degree Completed

Institution	Frequency	%
YPTIK	37	29.6
Al-Azhar University	71	56.8
University of Malaya	8	6.4
Other universities	9	7.2

Total	125	100

Table 7 below shows that only 32% of the alumni chose themselves to be satisfied with their first degree qualification, the others pursued and completed their postgraduate studies at postgraduate-certificate (47.25), Masters (17.6%) and PhD (3.2%) levels. Table 8 indicates that almost 50% of the alumni were active members of YPTIK Student Association while Table 9 elaborates their various co-curricular activities.

Table 7: Postgraduate Certificate Acquired

Certificate	Frequency	%
PhD	4	3.2
Master	22	17.6
Postgraduate Certificate	59	47.2
(First Degree Holder)	40	32.0
Total	125	100

Table 8: Position Held in PSYPTIK

Position Held	Frequency	%
President	3	2.4
General Secretary	3	2.4
Head of Bureau	17	13.6
Committee Member	38	30.4
Ordinary Member	64	51.2
Total	125	100

Table 9: Activities at YPTIK

Activities	Frequency	%
Social Welfare Services (family adoption, organizing children activities, conducting tuition classes, disposing rubbish, etc)	36	28.8
Dakwah Camp (leadership training, self-appraisal seession, edurance game, *qiam al-lail* (midnight solat), talk, etc)	39	31.2
Public Speaking and Debate	10	8
Sports and Games	8	6.4

Nasheed Group	3	2.4
Event Man ager	4	3.2
Essay Writing	1	0.8
(No response)	(24)	(19.2)
Total response	**101**	**100**

Table 10: Highest Position Held by YPTIK Alumni
(Present or Past)

Position	Total	%
Counselor	1	0.8
Legal Profession (Judges and lawyers in Shariah Courts)	6	4.8
Librarian	1	0.8
NGO Leadership	4	3.2
Owner of Business Enterprise (Corporate Leadership)	6	4.8
Political Position (Member of Parliament or State Legislative Council)	2	1.6
Private College CEO	3	2.4
Public or Military Religious Officer	12	9.6
School Teacher	71	56.8
Shariah Advisor (Bank and other financial institutions)	3	2.4
State Mufti	2	1.6
University Lecturer	14	11.2
Total	**125**	**100**

Table 10 above gives the general picture of the types of profession or involvement of the products of YPTIK. Most of the alumni are or were in teaching profession including 56.8% school teachers and 11.2% university lecturers but the most influential of them are the State Muftis whose words are obediently heard by the government and Muslim people at large. Quite a number of them are public and military religious officers, officers in legal profession, and in corporate and NGO leadership. Another noted achievement of the alumni is CEO's of private colleges and Shariah Advisors in Islamic financial institutions such as banks and insurance companies. The other important professions which YPTIK can

take pride of its alumni are counselor and librarian, and even in political leadership.

Table 10 also shows that many of the alumni hold or used to hold challenging positions such as State Mufti who has to make solutions on religious matters which sometime can be spontaneously, Members of Parliament and State Legislative Council who must have the guts to face political challenges at any unexpected time, corporate leaders who must always be alert and able to make quick and precise decisions on business matters almost all the time with obvious risk, and members of legal profession whose role is to uphold justice in whatever situation they might find themselves in. Variables 3, 4 and 5 might be the explanation and the contributing factors in producing such respectable personalities. Variables 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 shed light on why these alumni were able to hold two reunions successfully in the recent years – their comradeship and the sentimental connection with YPTIK -- they make all afford to be together after all these years of separation, even after their alma mater ceased to exist. Some of them attended on wheelchairs escorted by their spouses or children.

The final part of the questionnaire is an attempt to assess the participants' affiliation with and the perception of YPTIK and the relationship among the alumni. The means of the responses as indicated in Table 11 below shows that the alumni have a high esteem of their alma mater -- they took pride of themselves as the alumni of YPTIK. Variable 1 and 2 could be the explanation of why more than 60% of the alumni pursued their post graduate studies (Table 7) – YPTIK provided them with dependable basics in their discipline of studies, thus, they feel that they have confidence in themselves to pursue further studies.

Table 11: Descriptive Statistic

	Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
1	Knowledge gained at YPTIK provides dependable basics of discipline of my studies	125	0.00	4.00	3.4640	1.10383
2	Knowledge gained at YPTIK encourages further enquiry	125	0.00	4.00	3.4480	1.15323
3	Experience at YPTIK gives confidence in my	125	0.00	4.00	3.3680	1.08907

	carrier					
4	Experience at YPTIK gives confidence in my social services	125	0.00	4.00	3.3920	1.09173
5	Co-curricular activities at YPTIK contribute to my leadership experience	125	0.00	4.00	3.0240	1.08853
6	I always get in touch with other YPTIK alumni	125	0.00	4.00	3.0160	1.09238
7	YPTIK was successful in creating sense of brotherhood among its students	125	0.00	4.00	3.2240	1.15608
8	YPTIK was successful in establishing student-staff close relationship	125	0.00	4.00	3.2640	1.11546
9	I feel sentimentally connected with YPTIK	125	0.00	4.00	3.2320	1.17182
10	I feel proud to be an alumnus of YPTIK	125	0.00	4.00	3.3600	1.22079

In the light of the objectives of its establishment as stated somewhere above, there is no indication that YPTIK failed to offer courses in an environment of academic freedom and to provide and facilitate for the enhancement of the Islam Studies discipline. Students came all over the country as well as abroad, even from Africa and Europe (Table 4), and from diverse background to pursue their studies in a peaceful environment. Table 10 clearly indicates that YPTIK alumni are actively involved in the society holding various positions to contribute their services and play active parts in the administration of Islamic institutions including as CEOs of private colleges, Shariah Courts, and corporate bodies. A high percentage of them are in the teaching profession, school teachers as well as university lecturers, promoting the knowledge of Islam. As lecturers, in particular, it is their academic obligation to conduct researches and disseminate knowledge. However, It is beyond the scope of the current study to evaluate the achievement of YPTIK in the cultivation and promotion of Islamic culture. Another

specific study is required using cultural variables to elaborate such an objective.To conclude the study, the establishment of YPTIK was found not only to cater for the contemporary needs but it was part of the educational development process of the Malay Muslim community of the Malay world which began in the early 20th century. During the time the call for an establishment of an Islamic higher learning institution for the community echoed in Malay periodicals as well as in meetings of nationalist movements that gained momentum after World War II. YPTIK was also a part of the Islamic revivalism movement of the 1960s and 1970s with the aim of promoting Islam as a living system. The period saw the rising up of many Islamic institutions in Malaysia such as the Tabung Haji (Pilgrimage Fund Board), the Faculty of Islamic Studies UKM and the Bank Islam Malaysia Berhad (BIMB). The study also found that YPTIK was instrumental in producing resources to serve the society in various areas especially in the disseminating and teaching of Islamic knowledge and the administration of Islamic institutions. The high regard and confidence in their alma mater of those surveyed can be perceived in their pride to be the alumni of YPTIK (n=125, mean 3.36 of 4.00 maximum score, SD 1.22079).

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