

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF “ISLAMIC CULTURE COURSE” IN DEALING WITH EXTREMISM: AN EDUCATIVE ANALYTICAL STUDY OF AFGHAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract	<i>This research explores the significance and background of Islamic Culture (al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah) in higher education in Afghanistan. It is important to note that teaching the course of Islamic Culture in higher education in Afghanistan has been debated since 2016. The contents of the Islamic Culture course and its impacts on students across Afghan universities are controversial. The substantial problem is the misconception of extremism and religious radicalism related to the course of Islamic Culture among university students. The research design for this study is selected as qualitative research, and the case study method is used in this research. By this method, the data could be gathered by reviewing and analysing documents and interviewing the students and lecturers at the university. Islamic culture courses have a basic role in acquainting students' thoughts about Islamization. In fact, the contents of Islamic culture strengthen the cognition of Islamic understandings, moderation, and protection of faith in students. The only means by which Afghan youth may protect their minds and spirits against the invasion of foreign cultural norms is via the teaching of the course of Islamic Culture (al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah). Overall, conducting this study solves the problems related to the course of Islamic Culture, which impact students' intellectual theories and modern educational theories, and removes the misconception of extremism and religious radicalism related to the course of Islamic culture across Afghanistan universities.</i> Keywords: <i>Islamic Education, Islamic Culture, Islamization, Moderation.</i>
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INTRODUCTION

Islamic Culture in its comprehensive sense represents one of the greatest ways to achieve the goal; given its affiliation with the only true religion revealed by Allah SWT. According to the importance of Islamic Culture; the Department of Islamic Culture ‘Seqafat-e-Islami’ was ratified in (1992) across higher education in Afghanistan for the purpose of Islamization, edification of the new generation through Islamic worldview and Islamic morals, educating students with an Islamic creed and thought, promoting the Islamic culture among students, strengthening the moral of moderation among new generation of Islamic world, defending of Islamic values, and eliminating the extreme and radical thinking. All Islamic spiritual and material values and assets are called *al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah*. This course illustrates practical and faith-related commands of Islam. The

Course of Islamic Culture has been taught in 8 semesters since 2007 at the bachelor level in Afghan Universities consistent with the ratification of the Ministry of Higher Education of Afghanistan.

The purpose of this research is to examine the role of the Islamic Culture Course in promoting moderation; to identify the misconception of extremism; and will identify whether this course encourages the students to religious radicalism or not in the higher education of Afghanistan. Likewise, the quality of the course contents and delivering of these contents among students and professors will be concluded in this study.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is important to note, that teaching the Course of Islamic Culture in higher education of Afghanistan has been debated from 2016 till 2019. In the House of Representatives, parliamentarian Abdul Hafiz Mansour said during the conversation that "Islamic Culture is now training terrorists in Afghan universities" (BBC, 2016). Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (2019) new research paper, titled "Religious Radicalism in the Higher Education of Afghanistan: Analysis of the Political System of Islam Course and its Impact of the Students". This research report claims that the teaching of Islamic Culture in other universities and training centers has caused panic and extremism (Pajhwok, 2019). Researcher Ramin Kamangar (2019) said: that such educational content at universities increases the likelihood of students joining panic groups. The study, conducted at the universities of Nangarhar, Herat, and Kabul, shows that the content of the Islamic political system, which is part of Islamic Culture, faces content problems and drives students to radical Islam (Kamangar, 2019).

According to the publication of the research, Pajhwok Afghan News agency conducted a survey regarding the findings of Pajhwok Afghan News, people were asked whether they agree with the research of Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS) or not. As a result, 10 thousand people (79%) said that the research of AISS was untrue and baseless, besides supporting the study of Islamic Culture "*al-Thaqafah -al-Islamiyyah*" in Afghan universities.

Indeed, after the published research paper of the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies and Mr. Abdul Hafiz Mansour's criticism of the contents of Islamic culture in Afghan universities, there have been relatively heated debates between proponents and opponents of this case. Some critics called this case anti-religious, while others called it organized. It is a good idea to start discussions about a course called Islamic Culture in the country's universities. In fact, discussions and research on this subject help to raise public awareness and can prevent complications and injuries. According to this case, I have been teaching this course for several years and I have more or less experience in this field, I will make some points in this regard to clarify aspects of this discussion. The contents of the Islamic Culture course and its impacts on the students across Afghan universities is still a controversial issue. The substantial problem is the misconception of extremism and religious radicalism related to the course Islamic Culture among Afghanistan university students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section illustrates the background of Islamic Culture, extremism, and moderation. In fact, there is no specific and comprehensive research about the significance of the Islamic Culture Course to support and defend this course from the challenges and criticisms it has encountered this course since 2016. Moreover, the books, research, and reports related to the importance of Islamic culture, religious radicalism, extremism, moderation, and the challenges of Islamic Culture have been reviewed for this research.

According to Berghout (2001), there are many views regarding the concept of culture. The most comprehensive classical definition of culture, which was followed by most of the sociological definitions, was provided by Edward B. Taylor as: "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom, and other capabilities and

habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Taylor, 1924). This definition concentrates more on the ingredients of culture as such and does not show the function of culture and its dynamic movement in the social life of the individual and society (Collier & Macmillan, 1986). Within this context, culture is something inherited or given to the individual as a member of society. It is clear that the term "acquired" in the above quotation hides the real meaning of culture as a process of transforming and modifying the traits and lives of people (Berghout, 2001). In another definition provided by William P. Scott, culture is "the way of life of a social group; the group's total man-made environment, including all the material and non-material products of group life that are transmitted from one generation to the next" (Scott, 1952).

Berghout (2001) expresses however, that this definition does not tell us about the position and role of the individual in the cultural context nor does it show the methods and channels of the transmitting process of the values of culture from one generation to another. It just provides a superficial description of the act of transmission of cultural values. In other words, Berghout (2001) states that culture has to do with human activity and behavior, which means that it has a function and role in the life of a group and society as well. In many other definitions, there is a greater emphasis on the components and channels of culture, rather than its functions and operational patterns. For example, in some sociological definitions culture could be defined as "the languages, norms, values, beliefs, knowledge, and symbols that make up a way of life, also it is the understanding of how to act that people share with one another in any stable and self-reproducing group" (Craig et al., 1990). Accordingly, Bennabi defines culture as: "the total sum of ethical characteristics and social values attained by the individual since his birth, as a primary resource within the environment in which he was born. Culture is the living environment and milieu in which man acquires and formulates his habits and personality" (Bennabi, 1981).

The book entitled '*Lamahat fi al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah*' (Profiles in Islamic Culture) by Umar Uoda Al-Khatib (1979), enumerates the pillars of Islamic culture and its general characteristics, as well as expands on the battle of Islamic culture with the Orientalist movement, the plans of the missionaries and the colonial powers that focused their attention to undermining our nation by questioning its culture, weakening it, or stealing it in order to eliminate the strengths and fortresses of confrontation. Since each culture has its own foundations on which to base its movement and direction, the Islamic culture is its religious reference that depends on the guiding certain facts, then it follows the divine approach that is in harmony with the innate nature of man. The integrative philosophy that characterizes our Islamic culture made it a human necessity, even a justification for its sovereignty, which made it the first goal of all the hostile powers, east and west, disguised as science, culture, and economics (al-Khatib, 1979).

The book entitled '*al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah wa al-Tahdiyyat al-Fikriyyah al-Mu'asirah wa Huquq al-Insan*' (Islamic Culture, Contemporary Intellectual Challenges, and Human Rights) by Abu-Ghudah (2014) examines three issues that have occupied the minds of contemporary researchers and intellectuals, which are: Islamic culture, contemporary intellectual challenges, and human rights. The definition of Islamic culture with a human tendency, its foundations, its sources, its characteristics, its objectives, its results, and the related words and terms are concluded in this book. It clarifies the position of Islamic culture towards other cultures, the contemporary intellectual and movement challenges, and its ways to confront them; such as globalization, secularism, orientalism, freemasonry, Zionism, existentialism, and democracy. Moreover, it includes an introduction to human rights, their importance, and their sources in Islam and international conventions (Abu-Ghudah, 2014).

The book entitled '*Kitab al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah: Ta'rifuhu - Masadiruhu - Mujalatuhu - Tahdiyatu*' (The book on Islamic Culture: its definition, sources, fields, and challenges) by Muslim and al-Zoghbi (2007) deals with the sources of Islamic culture distinguished from other cultures by linking the world to religion, and working to project

the features of that culture on the lived reality, as this book achieves the objectives of identifying the sources of the original Islamic culture from the Holy Qur'an, the Prophet's Sunnah, Ijma', Qiyas, and dependency sources such as history and civilization, and also paying attention to belief so that the student realizes his doctrinal principles properly, as well as linking the Islamic culture with the practical aspect of it, which are the pillars of Islam with forgiveness for the individual and society (Muslim & Al-Zoghbi, 2007).

The book entitled '*al-Sahut al-Islamiyyah Bayna al-Jamud wa al-Tatarruf*' by Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, states in his book that: the term "religious extremism" is still used to create a state of terror and intellectual terror to paralyze the Dawah to Allah SWT, to question its means, and to surround it with an atmosphere of terror to disrupt its path. The Islamic Dawah is subject to disciplined temples and legitimate means from Allah SWT, and it is compulsory for humans. Much has been written about it, but these writings lacked the owner of the sharp scholarly pen, and the true Islamic behavior, so it was necessary to purify the cultural reality of some aspects of Islamic work, and correct the perception, which may have been similar to something because of the reactions, and taking the Muslim generation and rationalizing it to adhere to the Islamic analogy in judging things and how to deal with them (al-Qaradawi, 1402H).

In this thoughtful and important book (Islamic Awakening: Between Rejection and Extremism), Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi (1991) examines the worldwide revival of interest in Islam and attempts to explain why this interest has led so many among the younger generation of Muslims to tread the path of intolerance and rigid interpretation. An older and more experienced voice, he articulates the wisdom brought on by maturity, sound scholarship, and a deep understanding of both the letter and the spirit of the Quran and the Sunnah. Looking for answers in a world marked by enormous volatility, pressure, and political and economic corruption, Muslim youth are an easy target for extremist movements. Sheikh Qaradawi traces the complex roots of these views, and examines in-depth the many uses of the path to intolerance, offering a variety of remedies and cures. Perhaps more relevant today, given our troubled climate, than at any time in the past, the work introduces readers to a subject of great significance and wide ramifications (al-Qaradawi, 1991).

In the book entitled '*Maqalat al-Ghulwa al-Dini wa al-La Dini*' (Articles of Religious and Non-Religious Extremism) by Dr. Muhammad Amara (2004), the author discusses the exaggeration that occurs by some people in religious matters. The author believes that extremism is not only from the direction of excessive and strictness but also from the direction of neglecting the application of Sharia orders and rulings. The author discusses this topic in all its aspects.

The book of articles on religious and non-religious extremism, Muhammad Amara, an extremism, a currency with two sides; an excess and a religious negligence, and since the emergence of the phenomenon of religious extremism that started from the claims of the absence of divine governance from our Islamic societies and the ignorance of these societies, at the same time, the phenomenon of non-religious extremism - which was taken from the absurd interpretation; A way to empty the religion from the reality of religion.

With a scientific method and a short distinguished investigation, the book is divided into two parts. In the first part, the author reviews ideas and principles that dominate and direct a broad sector of the political Islam current and refutes them, and criticizes the extremism that dyed them and the intolerance of a broad sector of Islamists who considered them, with their interpretations, an authentic aspect of religion, and these principles deal with the ruling clerics, the Jahiliyyah, the surviving group Atonement. In the second part, the author presents two examples of non-religious extremism represented in the absurd and secular interpretation that transcends logic and reason until it reaches immorality in vision and thought (Amara, 2004).

The research of Shamlan (2017) aims to identify the most critical challenges faced by Islamic culture from the point of view of faculty members at the faculties of education, Sanaa University, and to explain the role of university education in confronting them in

terms of the following areas: Identifying Challenges - Explaining the Role of University Education in fighting them. For this purpose, the researcher prepared a questionnaire consisting of (26) individuals divided into two areas. The researcher used the descriptive approach. The research sample consisted of (12) individuals represented by faculty members at the Department of the Holy Quran and its Sciences in the faculties of Education (Sana'a and Mahwit) at Sana'a University. The results showed that the evaluation estimates for the first area of challenge fell within a high level, with repetitions of (1455) and a percentage of (81%). The second area is the role of university education in confronting it, which fell within the high level, with a frequency of (1403) and a percentage of (84%). There are no statistically significant differences at 0.05 level between the views of faculty members attributed to the variable and the college. (Shamlan, 2017).

Publication of a book entitled 'The Battle of Culture in the Roam of Thought and the Uproar of Extremism', with the efforts of Farhad Sajoodi (2016), deals with the views on and against the issues raised by Abdul Hafiz Mansour on the themes of Islamic Culture in the House of Representatives in 2016. Part of the book - Pages 18 to 24, which is actually Mr. Mansour's statement in the House of Representatives, addresses the contents of the Islamic political system. The book is a collection of lectures, conversations, journal articles, and Facebook articles, rather than scientific research (Sajoodi, 2016).

On 24 November, 2016 BBC Persian released a report entitled: 'Journalists and Internet Users React to Afghan MP's Speech on Extremism and Role of Educational Institutions.' A number of journalists and writers on social media have welcomed parliament member Abdul Hafiz Mansour's criticism of the existence of religious extremism in Afghan training centers and the government's and parliament's inability to contain it. Parliamentarian Abdul Hafiz Mansour, a prominent figure in Afghanistan, has criticized the country's non-security and defense ministries for failing to combat terrorism. In the House of Representatives, yesterday Mr. Mansour said during the conversation: "A young Afghan, 18 or 20 years old, who has committed terrorist acts, has come to believe in our own school, university, and media." Mr. Mansour warns that "Islamic Culture is now training terrorists in Afghan universities". Mr. Mansour also said that "if you want to stop this story, you have to ask the Parliament's Committee on Cultural Affairs to put forward plans to fight this issue by holding a special session." (BBC, 2016).

A study entitled 'Trends in Student Radicalization across University Campuses in Afghanistan' by Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies by Zaman and Mohammadi (2014), it aimed to examine the trends in student radicalization across eight university campuses character of protests across campuses that the extent of student radicalization varies. In concerned over prospects of post-graduation follow-on careers than ideological ambition.

The relatively more aggressive response to both the policies of the Afghan government and the armed international intervention exhibited by students from universities in Kabul, Kandahar, and Nangarhar suggests differentiated patterns across university campuses, with these campuses suggestive of a stronger tendency toward radicalized views. Finally, as an institution, the university does not play a strong role in the radicalization of its students. Rather, a charged political climate and the readily available opportunity to mobilize quickly enable students to stand in protest rather easily. However, findings also suggest that it is this same easy access to mobilize in protest that seems to attract several external groups. Moreover, it is these protests that seem to encourage polarization and consequential division on campus which increasingly resemble the practice of *Takfir*. Referring to the practice of excommunication wherein one Muslim declares that another Muslim has abandoned Islam, *Takfir* is in direct competition with the more tolerant teachings common to the characteristically liberal curriculum of public universities (Zaman & Mohammadi, 2014).

Regarding religious Radicalization, Mehran (2018) finds that in different words, most respondents defined radicalization as 'crossing limits' and showing a lack of tolerance for other people's ideas, behavior and beliefs. Religious radicalization was

reported as a common form of radicalization in universities. According to the interviewees, groups such as Hizb-ul Tahrir, Jami'at-e Eslah and Jama'at Tablighi are very active in both Kabul and Herat Universities. Furthermore, political and ethnic extremism is prevalent in universities. Political parties such as Afghan Melat, Hizb-e Islami, and Jami'at-e Islami were mentioned as the most active ones (Mehran, 2018).

Radicalization and extremism "include the assumption of a radical perspective that is rejected by standard society and that considers the use of cruelty as a strategy to bring about cultural or political change to be real" (Hafez, 2015). The complexity and disparity of these papers suggest that scientists are unlikely to agree on how to demonstrate radicalization and extremism. In both cases, there is a general belief. Each model represents a person who obscures and reinforces his relationship with a fanatical philosophy. This internal interaction is strongly influenced by external relationships with militant psychological groups and organizations. This isn't exactly a straightforward process, but differentiated models help us understand someone's movement toward cruelty. At the end of this interaction, the individual can make a brutal demonstration (Hardy, 2011).

Ramin Kamangar (2019) new research paper of the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS), is titled 'Religious Radicalism in the Higher Education of Afghanistan: Analysis of the Political System of Islamic Course and its Impact on the Students'. The study, conducted at the universities of Nangarhar, Herat, and Kabul, shows that the content of the Islamic political system, which is part of Islamic Culture, faces content problems and drives students to radical Islam. The reason for this claim was the poor quality of the content and the misinterpretation of Islam among university students and professors. According to this study, more than 35% of students are in favor of the KHILAFAH system and insist that relations with other countries in the world should be similar to the KHILAFAH system that existed centuries ago. On the other hand, 75% of students believe that their KHILAFAH system should be extended to other countries of the world. Researcher Ramin Kamangar said such educational content at universities increases the likelihood of students joining panic groups (Kamangar, 2019).

Shirani and Rashed (2019) express in their research that; the recent study of the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS), which was conducted in Kabul, Nangarhar, and Herat universities and stated that the study of *Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah* - 'Seqafat-e-Islami' subject causes radicalization in Afghan universities is unacceptable finding. In fact, it is a way to diverge people from the main causes of extremism. The accusation of Seqafat-e-Islami as a source of radicalism has more of a political and emotional aspect rather than a result of academic study. Some criticisms on the content of the subject or any modification in the content by some lecturers could be true due to personal or political tendencies. However, similar errors are also prevalent in other subjects of modern studies. However, without logic and reasoning, accusing the curriculum of the subject is nothing, but a systematically planned initiative for defaming Islamic values. Since extremism does not have a specific definition, thus, the situation has allowed everyone to define it as he/she wishes. AISS believes that loyalty to one religion is radicalism. However, the truth is, the distortion and rejection of religious values of the Islamic society is the true radicalism and extremism. The real objective of such studies apparently is to hide the roots of real terrorism and extremism. However, radicalization is to destroy your own true religious values for the sake of other's cultural and intellectual values (Shirani & Rashed, 2019).

On Apr 07, 2019, in a poll conducted by the Pajhwok Afghan News Agency, out of 14,000, ten thousand (79%) supported the teaching of Islamic Culture in universities. Meanwhile, the Center for Strategic Studies in Afghanistan, last week, released a research report claiming that the teaching of Islamic Culture in other universities and training centers has caused panic and extremism.

The research, conducted by Ramin Kamangar and published in book form, has surveyed (373) students in some universities. In this study, it has also been claimed that

lecturers of Islamic Culture are often taught themes about the Islamic KHILAFAH and the Emirate of Islam. Over the past (24) hours, about (14,000) people have voted, according to Facebook data, about 10,000 people (79%) disagree with the research and nearly (4) thousand (21%) percent agree. University professors and scholars disagree with the findings of this study and believe that teaching Islamic Culture in universities is needed (Pajhwok, 2019).

On 17 April 2019, the Killid Group published a report entitled: 'Ministry of Higher Education to Evaluate Universities Nationwide' The Country's Higher Education Minister Najibullah Khwaja Omari said at a meeting the curriculum for more than twenty (20) fields in Afghan universities has been reviewed, with regards to the needs of educational requirements.

According to the Minister of Higher Education, the quantity gives no concern; but the quality of education must be under consideration which leads to many challenges. Ministry of Higher Education has launched a procedure to evaluate all private and public universities. In the meantime, he denied reports on the impact of teaching *al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah* (Islamic Culture) on an individual's attitude, adding that a study of the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies is incorrect in this regard. It comes after the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies conducted research on the implementation of *al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah* at several universities in the country, which found that religious studies are dynamic factor for inappropriate approaches and ill-natured behaviors (Sheva, 2019).

METHODOLOGY

The research design for this study is selected as qualitative research. The case study method is used, which is valuable and can describe the solution to this research problem. Specifically, a qualitative approach is warranted when the nature of research questions requires exploration (Stake, 1995). Qualitative research questions often begin with how or what, so that the researcher can gain an in-depth understanding of what is going on relative to the topic (Patton, 19887) (Seidman, 1991). Qualitative case study research served as the main methodology for this study. Stake (1995) described case study methodology as a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in-depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. Furthermore, by this method, the data is gathered by reviewing & analysing documents and interviewing the students and lecturers of the university. By case study method the thoughts and behaviours of the students are well explored, specifically the students who have been studying the course of Islamic Culture throughout Afghan universities.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

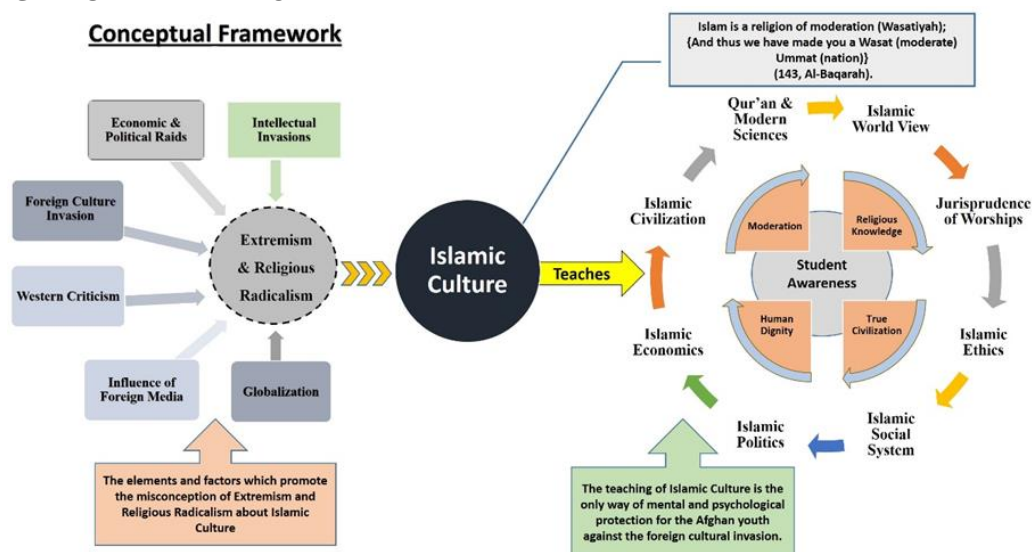


Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework of the Study

RESULTS

1. Islamic culture course has a basic role in acquainting students' thoughts for Islamization, by all means, the contents of Islamic culture strengthen the cognition of Islamic understandings, moderation, and protection of faith in students.
2. To point out, during the teaching of Islamic culture, lecturers deliver Islamic thoughts, comparisons of religions, and Islamic spirituality among students.
3. According to the contents of the political system of Islam, the result of the findings clarifies that the main contents include; human relations, Islamic government, social justice, and the relationship between Islam and politics. With this in mind, 85% of the respondents reject the concept and idea of extremism related to the course of Islamic culture.
4. Related to the inclusion of the political system of Islam, 88% of the respondents agreed to be concluded it in the curricula of Islamic culture.
5. In the final analysis, 93% of the respondents considered Islamic culture as a requisite course in the curricula of higher education in Afghanistan.
6. Related to Islamic Culture, accusing a curriculum of being a systematically planned initiative for defaming Islamic values without logical reasoning can be a hasty and unfounded assertion.
7. The Afghan Institute of Strategic Studies considers that faithfulness to one religion is radicalism. But, the truth is, that misinterpretation and rejection of religious values of the Islamic society is the real radicalism and extremism.
8. The course of Islamic culture, which is taught in most Islamic countries, including Afghanistan, in terms of content, creates and strengthens the spirit and the thought of moderation in the young generation of the country.

DISCUSSION

Focus Groups Discussion Analysis

The contents of Islamic Culture cover Islamic values, civilization, Islamization, moderation, and life path of a new generation. Islamic culture has a role in strengthening students' thoughts on psychological and intellectual security, reformation, and intellectual colonialism. In addition, the lecturers of the Islamic culture course deliver the ideas of Islamic thoughts, Islamic spirit, and Islamic morality. Important to realize, that Islamic teachings and the concept of Islamic rules and Islamic governance never give the idea of extremism. Moreover, it is necessary to add more content to the course of Islamic culture such as ideological studies, administrative system, and other religions and sects. The course of Islamic culture has direct effects on students' behaviors to be well civilized, moderated, and willing of Islamic understanding. Indeed, the course of Islamic culture delivers the concepts of moderation among the students and rejects extremism and negligence. Together with, Islamic culture is a requisite course at universities.

Figure 1, illustrates the response to the question "In your opinion, what terms and ideas does the course of Islamic culture contain?" 15% of the responses indicated Islamic values, 13% indicated life path and ethics, 20% indicated belief, 10% indicated civilization, 18% indicated moderation and 25% indicated Islamization, which shows the inclusion of terms and ideas related to the course of Islamic culture.

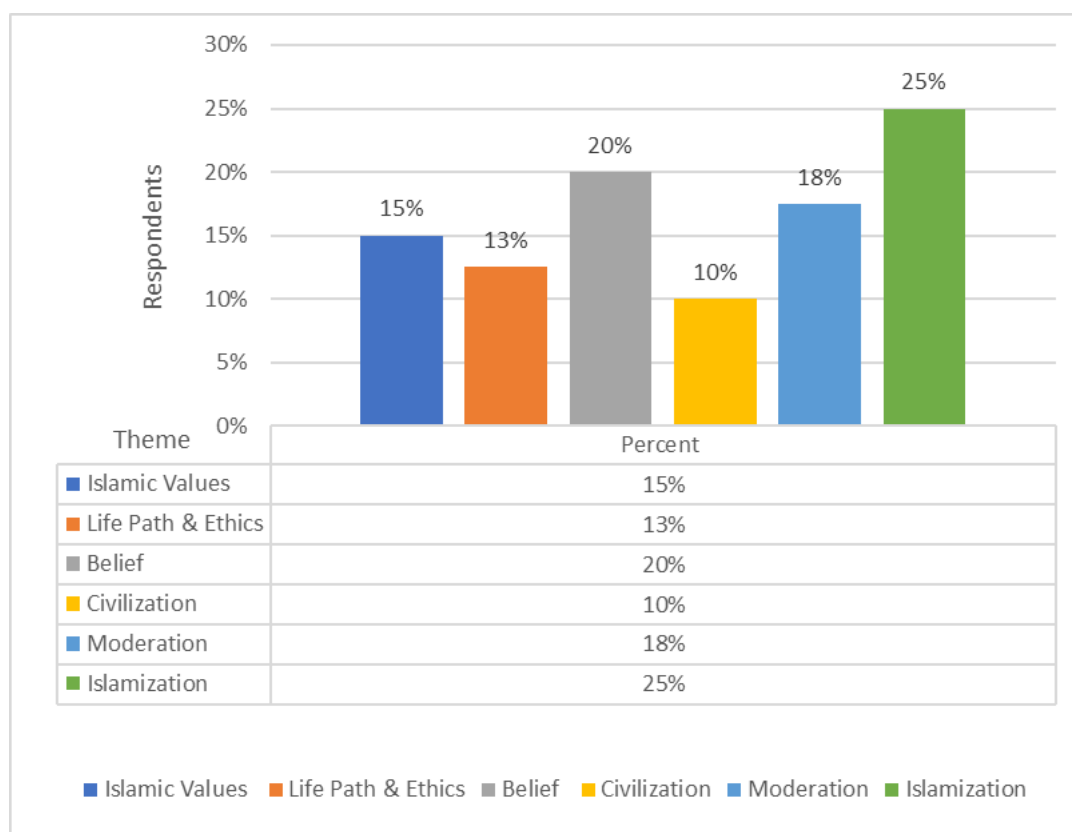


Figure 1: Included terms and ideas in the contents of Islamic Culture

Figure 2, clarifies the response to the question "What is the role of the course of Islamic culture in forming the students' thoughts and Islamization?" 30% of the responses indicated reformation, 13% indicated psychological and intellectual security, 23% indicated divine and religious rituals, and 35% indicated intellectual colonialism, which shows and clarify the impact and rolling of making students' thoughts related to the course of Islamic culture.

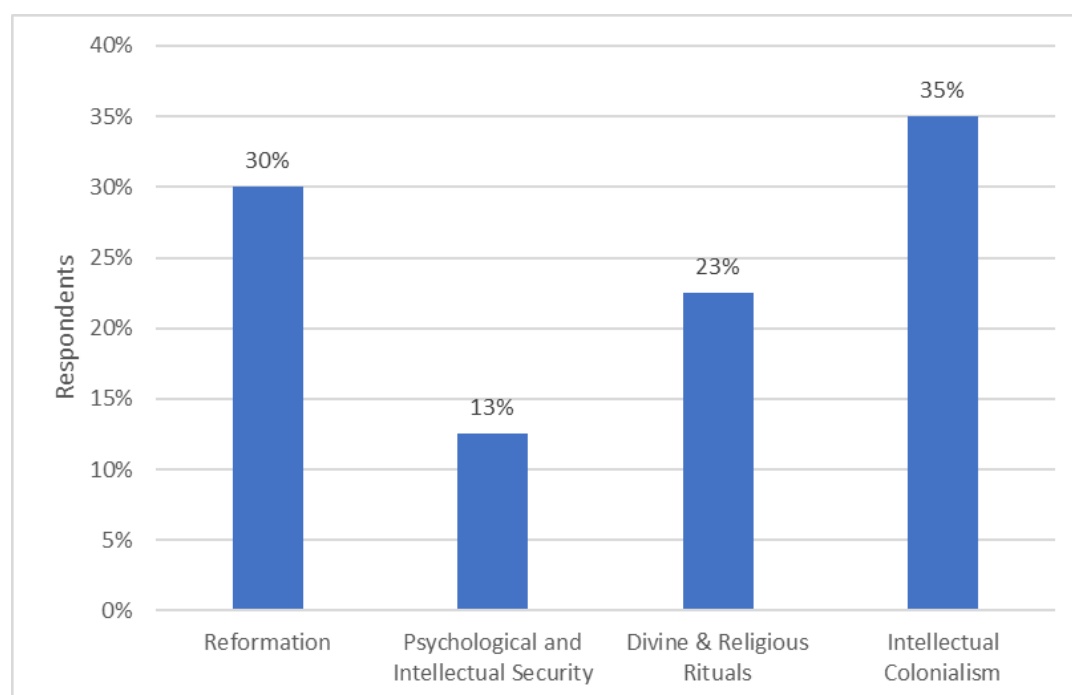


Figure 2: The Role of Islamic Culture in Making of Student Thought

Figure 3, shows the response to the question “Do you think, giving ideas and concepts related to Islamic rules, Islamic thoughts, Islamic teachings and Islamic government gives students the idea of extremism?” 85% of the respondents gave a negative answer, 3% answered positively, and 13% answered don’t know.

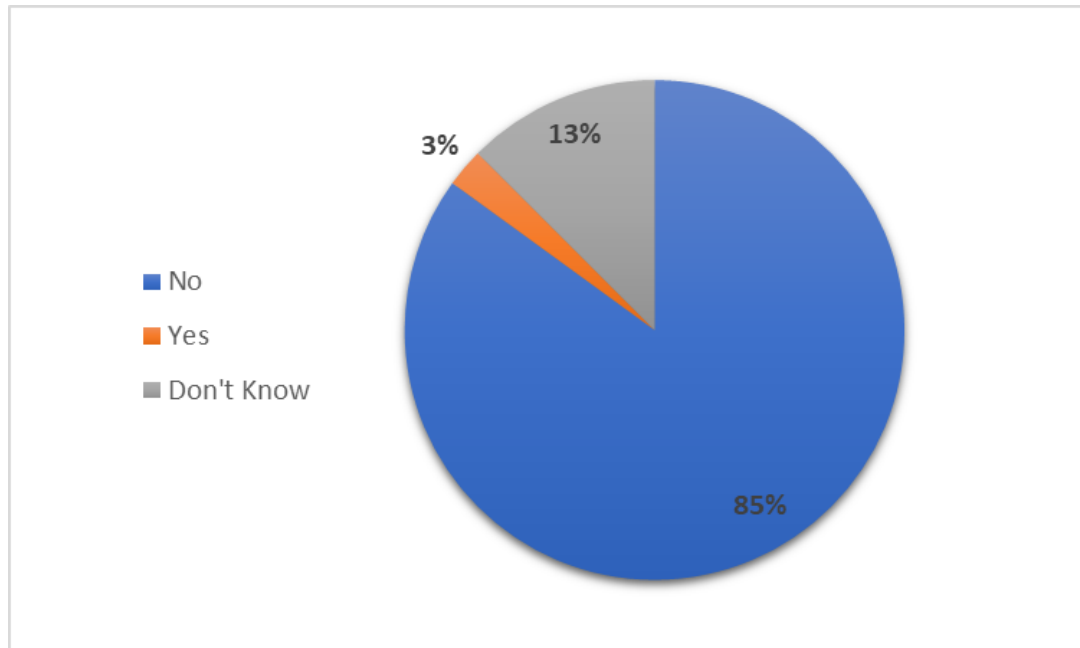


Figure 3: The Concept of Islamic Teaching related to Extremism

Figure 4, explains the response to the question “What is the effect of the contents of Islamic culture on the behaviors and actions of the students?” 23% of the responses indicated good manners, 25% indicated moderation, 8% indicated civilization, 18% indicated protection of faith, and 28% indicated Islamic understanding, which demonstrates the effects of Islamic culture contents on students’ behaviors and actions.

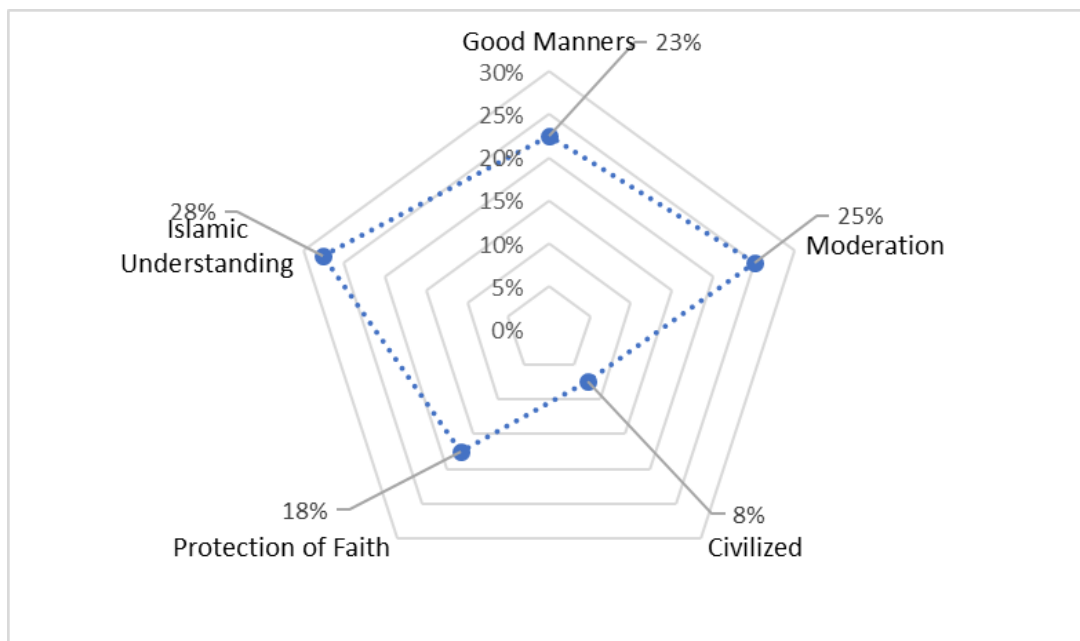


Figure 4: The Effects of Islamic Culture on Students

Figure 5, clarifies the response to the question “Do you think that the course of Islamic culture delivers the concept of “moderation” to the students? If your answer is “Yes”: based on what reasons?” 63% of the responses specified that the course of Islamic culture is consistent with the Quran and Sunnah, 18% indicated rejection of extremism, 13% indicated rejection of negligence, and 8% answered don't know, which clarifies the concept of moderation in the course of Islamic culture.

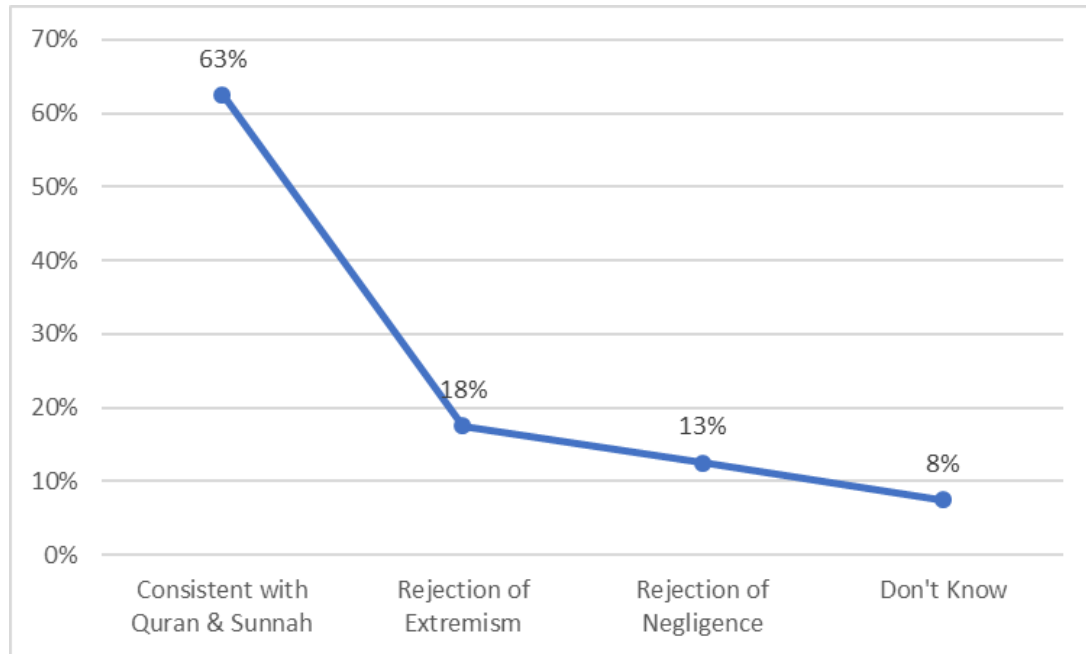


Figure 5: The Concept of Moderation in Islamic Culture

Refutation of the ‘AISS’ Survey that was Done Against the *al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah* Subject

On 4 April 2019, Mr. Abdul Matin Shahidi, a professor at Kabul University, who participated in the unveiling ceremony of the study ‘Rooting Religious Radicalism in the Higher Education of Afghanistan’, says that “this research is not comprehensive, but it is the personal view of some people. When we raise the Islamic caliphate and talk about it, it is not the personal view of a Muslim person to accuse him of being extremist, it is the wish of every Muslim that Muslims have an Islamic caliphate, we must distinguish between two things. There should be a difference between what Islam presents as the Islamic caliphate and what we get from extremist groups”.

It is challenging to trust the findings that show a link between *al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah* subject and religious extremism because the survey done by the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies had a lot of mistakes. Below, we present a few illustrations of the errors:

First: The response to the query, "If Islam has a political system, then which system is Islamic?" Considering them Islamic, 45.4% of university students in Nangarhar called them "Emirates" and 9.3% called them "Caliphate." Do you believe that Afghanistan's present governmental system is Islamic, though? A survey conducted at Nangarhar University found that 81.4% of respondents claimed the country was Islamic, 15.5% stated it was somewhat Islamic, and 3.1% disagreed. As a result, the question that arises is, "How is it possible that 54.7% of students at Nangarhar University regard "Emirates" and "Caliphate" as Islamic systems yet 81.4% of students at the same university consider the current government to be an Islamic system?"

Similar problems were found when they surveyed Heart University. "Caliphate" and "Emirates," according to 55.5% of Herat University students, are Islamic states. Nonetheless, just 14.3% of students think that the present administration is not Islamic.

Second: When students are asked, "If you do not consider the current administration to be Islamic, and do you want change in the political system?" the survey's poor standards are shown further. If so, what kind of political system are you interested in? For two reasons, we view the survey question as being non-standardized. First of all, most students won't respond to the question. Hence, if we are trying to accept the premise of survey creators that *al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah* subject leads to religious extremism, a small sample size cannot be regarded as proof or evidence. In all, 75% of respondents left the question unanswered. In the universities of Nangarhar and Herat, 84% of respondents did not provide a response. As a result of the aforementioned question's answers contradicting those of other questions, the survey is also not standard. For instance, 8.3% of Nangarhar University students don't think the present administration is Islamic. In addition, 55% of them view the terms "Emirates" and "Caliphate" as Islamic. In the meantime, 80% of students at the same university believe that the present administration is Islamic.

How can someone believe in the existing political system as Islamic if they only regard "Emirate" or "caliphate" to be Islamic? Moreover, when asked "If you do not consider the existing administration Islamic, do you desire change in the political system?" some respondents said that they did. Some said that the "emirate" or "caliphate" is Islamic. If so, what kind of governmental structure do you favor?

There are many more inaccuracies in the Afghan Institute of Strategic Studies (AISS) survey that are comparable to the ones stated above in addition to the ones already highlighted. As a result, their statement and assertion is ignored (Shirani & Rashed, 2019).

CONCLUSION

This research clarifies that *al-Thaqafah* 'Culture' is a compilation of the experiences, material, and spiritual accomplishments of human society. The term '*al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah*' refers to all spiritual and material values and possessions in Islam. The subject serves as an illustration of the practical and religious commandments of Islam. As an Islamic nation and as Muslims, we must arrange our lives in accordance with all of the moral principles of our faith and Islam. Likewise, it is identified that the contents of Islamic culture have no radical and extreme terms but it delivers Islamic thoughts, Islamic morality, Islamic spirit, and the concept of moderation. Moreover, 93% of the respondents consider Islamic culture as a requisite course in the curriculum at higher education and 84% of the respondents point out the concept of moderation in Islamic culture course and reject the concept of extremism.

In an era of globalization, Afghan society is now dealing with major intellectual and cultural invasions in addition to economic and political invasions. The only means by which Afghan youth may protect their minds and spirits against the invasion of foreign cultural norms is via the teaching of the course of *al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah*. The only way to keep the young generation mindful of their religious knowledge and obligations is through this.

Islamic culture emphasizes moderation and human solidarity. Islam is the only religion that guarantees human dignity, guides people on the correct path, and lays the road for real civilization. As a result, those who criticize Islam and Islamic culture are also attempting to harm it, in addition to those in the West. The people who are deeply involved in corruption and inhumane actions are the ones who have the most to worry about Islamic governance and the application of its teaching. They constantly attempt to critique Islamic principles, as well as Islamic institutions of higher education, mosques, and the political system of Islam. With such a situation, Muslims need, especially their young university students, a sound intellectual protection, a sound increase in knowledge and integrated vision, that guides thought, directs consideration, and immunizes the mind from being caught by incoming doctrines, stray ideas, or conflicting philosophies.

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