

Research Article:

Islamic Architecture Framework Towards Critical Learning

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ABSTRACT

The rapid cultural change worldwide requires an educational environment that stimulates critical learning. The COVID-19 Pandemic revealed to the world the complex issues of race, religion and social inequalities that persist within society. The pandemic also gave time and space for people to question, contest and debate histories taught in rote since early education. Following this, the paper looks into a framework to integrate Islamic Religious Education (IRE) into modern subjects in Higher Education Institutions. The paper focuses on Islamic Architecture with a position that a content framework in the syllabus can contextualise Islamic teachings and facilitate critical learning of architecture. An integrated case study and grounded theory methodology were used for data collection and analysis. A case study on the course syllabus of Islamic architecture and interviewing experts within the field were done to form the data collection set. The result is a set of inclusive content frameworks that address diverse social and cultural backgrounds to adhere to the changing world. This content framework is a strategy for expanding IRE teaching into the architecture curriculum.

Keywords: Education, history, Islamic architecture, pedagogy, religious education

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is a process of teaching Islam to the young generations, in the form of worship values, moral value and discipline (Najmi et al., 2023; Berglund, 2016). Islam is a global religion with followers residing in various cultural, social, and political contexts. These are the aspects, on top of cultural contexts, that have shaped Islamic education systems. Islamic religious education has a rich heritage dating back centuries, encompassing diverse schools of thought and interpretations. Traditional Islamic education was rooted in memorising and interpreting the Quran, emphasising the preservation of knowledge and adherence to established practices of the Sunnah and Hadith (Stimpson & Calvert, 2021; Sabki & Hardaker, 2013; Nasr, 2005; Hilgendorf, 2003).

IRE is different from Islamic Education, as the former emphasizes more on practical operational activities of religion in institutions, and the latter is more philosophical-theoretical aspect covering a wider area of study (Maimun, 2018). However in the effort to improve IRE, both theoretical and practical studies should be considered. In countries of the Islamic world, Islamic education is an integral part of the general educational process, which develops not only Islamic theoretical discourse but also praxis (Zekrist et al., 2022). As societies and cultures evolve, it is crucial to understand and adapt IRE to meet the dynamic and progressive trends in society. Research by Randa and Arsyam (2023) found that transforming IRE is necessary to face future challenges of promoting inclusivity, relevance and engagement with contemporary challenges.

Islamic teaching practices adapt to innovative changes in digital technology in the educational models of religious education and teaching practices (Zekrist et al., 2022). In Indonesia, the phenomenon of living Quran is being marketed as a new trend in Islamic education (Nurani et al., 2022), caused by parents' moral panic of modern life towards their children. Islamic educational institutions offer boarding houses and Tahfidz Centers, using the living Quran as their product brand. On a more benign aspect, there are various other models of the Islamic schooling formats that are oriented towards the philosophy of life to achieve a holistic approach to education, such as the integrated Islamic education, classic pesantren, Madrasah Diniyah, Vocational Madrasah, and State Islamic Institutes (Mohdlori, 2020; Ridwan, 2020). In the Middle East region, the institution is a divide of types which are madrasas, kuttabs and mosques (Susilawati & Muh Misbah, 2022; Miftakhu Rosyad, 2020).

In the Higher Education Institution, this transformation encompasses changes in the curriculum and aspects of religious education. the curriculum must be relevant to modernity while still addressing contemporary issues surrounding religion in the media (El-Mubarak & Hassan, 2021). Islamic education continues to evolve to meet the ever-changing trends and challenges in society, and an in-depth understanding enables us to address the needs and aspirations of Muslim communities in a dynamic world while contributing to society positively (Muhammadong et al., 2019). It is universally understood that students in higher

education institutions must be aware and able to ask difficult questions. Higher education institutions are examples of these spaces where knowledge is reassembled for active users rather than passive recipients, paving a path for societal awareness and change (Giroux, 2010; Griffin et al., 2012).

Islamic education has largely been taught using traditional methods, though now instructors are using modern technologies to enhance the instruction of Islamic education (Gyagenda, 2021). The evolving trends in IRE include the integration of modern subjects, an emphasis on critical thinking, contextualisation of Islamic teachings, inclusive education and technology integration (Aripin et al., 2022). There is also a growing emphasis on teacher training and professional development. Research are looking into madrasah to reconceptualise education for students to provide holistic development in a changing world (Uyuni & Adnan, 2020; Abu Bakar et al., 2023). These trends in IRE reflect a concerted effort to adapt to the needs of contemporary times while remaining rooted in Islamic values and principles. Architecture is a natural reflection of societal development, and it can be deduced that within Islamic community, its architecture embodies the message of Islam. Islamic art and architecture facilitates the Muslim community's realisation of the Islamic purpose and its divine principles (Omer, 2011), thus making it an important aspect to expand IRE.

This paper explores IRE within the framework of art and architecture curriculum in the higher education institutions in Malaysia. As the architecture field continues to generate narratives that are inclusive and critical, the paper will use the subject of Islamic Architecture as a gateway to expand IRE into the art and architecture courses. Islamic architecture played an important role in the development of Islamic religious education throughout history. The influence of Islamic architecture on the development of Islamic education in Andalusia, Spain, is found to have a strategic position in its influence and development in modern-day Spain (Hidayati et al., 2021). Religious as well as secular buildings in the Southern Spain region bore the evidence of the past empire with calligraphy and arts.

Regarding religious education, Islamic architecture can serve as a teaching tool. Research has explored various aspects related to Islamic education, including the application of behavioural architecture in Islamic boarding schools (Rahman & Winasih, 2022). This research emphasises the importance of incorporating Islamic teachings into the physical environment of educational institutions to enhance the learning experience. Understanding the historical and architectural conditions that led to the emergence of schools in Arab Islamic civilisations can provide insights into the educational function (Abu-Hussein, 2018). Studying the architectural plans and forms of schools across the Islamic world can also help us understand the functions of the spaces. The architectural layout of Islamic schools reflects their multi-functional nature, accommodating various activities beyond traditional education. These spaces may include mosques, libraries, cafés, markets, and other facilities that cater to the diverse needs of the community (Boujjoufi et al., 2021). Another aspect is that the diversity in the architectural styles across regions can illustrate how local materials, climate and culture influences the shape of educational spaces.

Nonetheless, teaching Islamic architecture and art history comes with its challenges, such as navigating through various discourses and, sometimes, the polarities in the expression of history and Islamic architecture. Discussing the beauty and sophistication of historical monuments and objects while considering present-day geopolitics is a crucial aspect of teaching Islamic history (Blessing, 2020). Generating more critically engaged participants can be achieved by altering the traditional education landscape to include the understanding of diverse cultures and indigenous ways of knowing and to engage with socio-historical constructed power relationships while acknowledging personal biases (Griffin et al., 2012; Kincheloe, 2007; Lukinbeal & Allen, 2007; Kupiainen et al., 2007). A critical perspective on historical context examines the factors that contributed to current situations, especially those marked by disparity, discrimination or stigma (Given 2008).

Islamic architecture is deeply intertwined with religious symbolism and sacredness. A transformative approach to understanding Islamic sacred buildings sheds light on the symbolism and geometry employed in classic Islamic architectural design (Nasser, 2022). Mosques, madrasas, and other Islamic architectural structures are designed to create a sense of awe and reverence in the hope of facilitating a spiritual experience for worshippers in prayer spaces and schools. For example, Iranian architecture reflects historical grandeur, devotion, and a commitment to religious education (Kamal & Nasir, 2022). This commitment is also evident in the design and structure of Islamic educational institutions such as pesantrens and madrasahs in other Asian countries. Similarly in Malaysia, the evolution of mosque architecture demonstrates a blend of traditional, global, and eclectic influences (Sojak, 2023). Islamic architecture also reflect the diverse regional and cultural contexts in which it developed. The elements of Islamic architectural heritage were shaped by various factors, including psychological, social, environmental, and religious forces and constraints (Ashour, 2018). By learning the design principles and motifs, students can gain insights into the historical, social, and cultural context of the Islamic civilisations, promoting a nuanced and contextualised understanding of religious teachings (Rabbat, 2021). For example, Islamic architecture heritage, influenced by Persian, Indian, and Central Asian styles, reflects a blend of diverse cultural elements including regional economies (Ayoubi & Demirkol, 2021; Sintang et al., 2020).

Integrating Islamic architecture in religious education spaces contributes to the preservation and conservation of architectural heritage. It reinforces the value of architectural traditions and encourages the maintenance and restoration of historic structures, which has been appreciated by Muslim and non-Muslim scholars (Fathebaghali et al., 2013). This preservation effort ensures that future generations have access to and appreciation for the architectural achievements of the past. Islamic architecture also provides a platform for interdisciplinary learning. Its study involves elements of history, art, mathematics, geometry, engineering, and religious education. For example, the intricate geometric patterns in Islamic architecture, such as the girih patterns, are based on tessellations of equilateral polygons, showcasing the mathematical sophistication achieved in medieval Islamic architecture (Datta et al., 2011). The architecture not only focuses on aesthetics but also embodies a rich cultural heritage such as art, calligraphy and medicine (Pio &

Syed, 2017). Here, students can explore various subjects through a holistic and integrated approach, fostering critical thinking.

Islamic educational institutions, such as madrasahs, play a pivotal role in nurturing civil society by instilling moral values and promoting community-based social systems. In parallel, Islamic architecture plays a vital role in developing schools and mosques for religious education on top of religious rituals (Asadi & Majidi, 2015). There is a shift in Islamic architecture towards the 'value emphasised' theory as central to learning the subject. Value is essential as the ground of analysis as it is embedded in the architecture, society, ritual activities and culture (Abu Ghazze, 1997; Gürel & Anthony, 2006; Ameri, 2008). Islamic architecture also has critical perspectives in shaping religious education. Scholars such as Çelik and Kenney (1990) and Warren (2016), among others, have raised concerns about the impact of religion and architecture in reinforcing gender and power hierarchies in some cultures. Islamic architecture shapes and matures from religious, civilisational, and climatic tributaries and symbolises the essence of Islamic culture (Fathebaghali et al., 2013).

In Malaysia, the popular method of teaching Islamic architecture is through history courses that commences with a chronological survey of key periods of the golden civilisation before branching into a detailed typological approach or an architectural detail analysis of forms and elements (Hasnan et al., 2020). In the architecture curriculum, the subject is often found within the history course as a small topic, sandwiched between the other global architecture histories. The format of classes emphasises the use of visual aids. These visual aids utilise dramatic maps and images to describe traditional forms and limited "actors" or architecture. Aides are dated and follow the same chronological survey. Nonetheless, there are many syllabi course of this subject, found in public repository of syllabus, that follows a more thematic structure. A thematic approach allows learning to be more natural and less fragmented (Varun, 2014). Study also suggests that thematic approach can generate forms of agency such as progressive, oppositional, and bridge-building (Annala, et al., 2023).

Islamic architecture narrative often takes the position of a universal aspect to maintain the status quo and the trend of a globalised connection. However, this practice pushes the discourse into a distant concept with little comprehension of cultural interactions between regions and crossing time. This reduction erases the fact that Islamic architecture develops from interactions of the surrounding geo-socio-political environment, complete with the complexities of cultural identities that are always contested. Islamic architecture continues to modify and express itself through changing times and space, but this is rarely reflected in the education scene. Such a dry exercise severely limits students' exposure to and understanding of Islamic architecture. On top of this, due to institutional and industry requirements for accreditation, the curriculum design is rarely relevant to global factors, nor does it address its plural societies.

Passively teaching history gives no room for analytical or critical reflection, evaluation or long-term synthesis: without any queries on the information, there are possibilities of

accepting texts that propagate false, Eurocentric or mythologised views of history (Loewen, 1995; Foster & Padgett, 1999; Savich, 2009). Various approaches and disciplines have been employed to discuss the topic further. There are attempts to include the Quran, Sunnah and hadith in the learning of this discourse. Another approach is centring it on the notion of the sacred and secular further divides the consensus on whether including non-religious buildings in the inventory of religious buildings is considered blasphemy. The subject continues to be debated among academia and practitioners of Islamic architecture due to the lack of consensus on the fundamental meanings of the term itself (Rasdi, 2008).

Islamic architecture has the potential to shape religious education. Its elements reflect various forces and constraints, and it has influenced designing buildings in other cultures. However, in teaching Islamic architecture, it is important to consider present-day geopolitics and promote a nuanced understanding of the subject. This paper aims to design a set of inclusive content frameworks that address diverse social and cultural backgrounds that adhere to the changing world. This content framework is a strategy for teaching a critical History of Islamic Architecture for the future of IRE.

METHODS

The study is qualitative research that combines a case study and grounded theory methodology. Grounded theory can be used to analyse hybrid data collection from surveys, interviews and case studies (Glaser, 1978). However, care was exercised so that case study research does not cripple the emergence of theory generation within the grounded study method (Glaser, 1998). The research explores the motivation and development of pedagogical practices of Islamic architecture and how they play a role in the expansion of IRE in higher education institutions. This exploratory approach justifies the use of a grounded theory methodology. The study follows a two-part data collection of interviews and a case study of syllabi on Islamic Architecture found in an online repository.

As the study is looking at the subject's state in Malaysia, interviewees for this method were selected based on their known expertise in Islamic architecture and history theory. They have amassed a huge collection of literature on Islamic architecture and decades of teaching experience. The teaching experiences of participants are essential to establish validity and reliability in the findings. All the interviewees have established background in teaching history theory courses and Islamic architecture, amounting to several decades, proving them suitable to provide insight into Islamic architecture.

The use of interviews in this research is essential in understanding the practice of the syllabus, especially concerning Islamic architecture. Interviews also emphasise the social situatedness of the research data (Kvale, 1996). The interview was a one-on-one and face-to-face session, with the interview venue decided by the interviewees. The chosen method of interview is a semi-structured interview. Questions were divided into four (4) sections

for the semi-structured interview. The first section aims to reveal the teaching experiences of the interviewees and the criteria for them in designing their syllabi.

The second part of the questions examines their views of Islamic architecture and how it impacts the architectural discipline. The third section aims to gain the interviewees' opinions on critical thinking and the effects of contemporary issues on the discipline of architecture. The fourth is critical dialogue and how course contents can facilitate critical learning. The case study's research design relies on data from semi-structured interviews and trends in the Islamic architecture syllabus. In this design, the case study is employed as data, not just a research design described by Yin (2003). Eisenhardt (1989) states that there are many major strengths in using case data to build grounded theory due to the close connection between theory and data. The critical implication for using this combined method is that case study is the 'object of study' while grounded theory is used as research design and data analysis mode (Eisenhardt, 1989; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The grounded theory method not only offers many major strengths in using case data due to the close connection between theory and data but also provides useful strategies that enhance researcher's theoretical analyses by helping synthesise data and move beyond description (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021; Charmaz, 2003; 2006; Lawrence & Tar, 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The approach to developing the course syllabus involves several steps, where data is collected from syllabuses that explicitly teach or implicitly relate to the subject matter. The coverage of syllabus tries to cover many regions; however, many syllabi collected were repetitions from the same standard issue of the Islamic architecture syllabus. To avoid repeated findings, the researcher widened the scope and found the syllabus most relevant to Islamic architecture, Islam, and contemporary issues.

The syllabus was then grouped following whether Islamic architecture was taught as a core subject or topic. The data were then structured according to pedagogical strategies, issues addressed, and content trends. The data analysis was conducted using the grounded theory methodology. The steps taken for this method are identifying codes, developing patterns or concepts into categories and summarising the emerging themes into a theoretical framework. Vigorous analyses of empirical data can be developed into tentative categories.

Further data collection was made through the case study of the syllabus. The analysis process follows the steps guided by both the findings from the literature review and the interviews. This method allows for a rigorous but flexible process of analysis.

Table 1. Example answers from the semi-structured interviews

Q2	On the method of teaching and learning Islamic architecture
	<i>"Value system and religion shape the culture. If we ignore that, architecture is like a container that is empty." (IE)</i>
	<i>"Most people who teach Islamic architecture would go on a typological description. They make sense of the spaces and describe the spaces. All ornaments are geometrical. I don't do that. Typology tak cukup (not enough). It is a quick fix, but creativity can only come from seeing in and not seeing at, for example, seeing in its look beyond the mosque and see Islam itself." (ID)</i>
	<i>"The problem with our education is our syllabus is modelled after the Western schools of architecture." (IE)</i>
Q5	On criteria of Islamic architecture to encourage critical thinking
	<i>"Value system and religion shape the culture. If we ignore that, architecture is like a container that is empty." (IE)</i>
	<i>"Most people who teach Islamic architecture would go on a typological description. They make sense of the spaces and describe the spaces. All ornaments are geometrical. I don't do that. Typology tak cukup (not enough). It is a quick fix, but creativity can only come from seeing in and not seeing at, for example, seeing in its look beyond the mosque and see Islam itself." (ID)</i>
	<i>"The problem with our education is our syllabus is modelled after the Western schools of architecture." (IE)</i>
Q5	On criteria of Islamic architecture to encourage critical thinking
	<i>"... philosophical construct is important... So in our field, it's about thoughts, philosophy and attitude. You must understand the value of Islam. Sunnah in our life. (ID)</i>
	<i>"Islamic architecture cannot be without understanding the various socio-political ideology. Learning is a long process. Information is endless. Ignorance is a problem." (ID)</i>
Q6	On whether real world event are taught during the events
	<i>"Now we have a global village. People are connecting easily with social media. You need to open up this exposure to the students." (IA)</i>
	<i>"I am against the universalisation of architecture. That is the problem of globalisation. If it is about enriching diversity – then that is fine. But [not] if it's about uniformity." (IE)</i>
	<i>"Does architecture occur in a vacuum itself? No. It depends on socio-political aspects of the space. You must understand different scenarios." (ID)</i>

The interview and case study data go through a rigorous process of coding system and analysis, where the categories are thematically and conceptually grouped into sub-themes. These sub-themes are then comparatively analysed to generate the final themes that support the theory that selective content can encourage critical learning for students in class. Changing the course from an object-oriented to a value-centred study expands the intellectual sources to which to refer. The Quran, Hadith and Sunnah are among the resources that support or reject ideas about Islamic architecture. The notion of universal

characteristics also expands to include the understanding of theology. It is understood that Architects are stewards of society. Thus, the responsibility of value and ethics is pertinent in developing the term. Strong philosophical constructs should be embedded in the syllabus.

Table 2. Example of selective coding from the interviews and case study collection of course syllabus into categories

Selective coding	Categories and criteria
'Historical survey' 'chronological'	<p>Evolutionary The understanding that Islamic architecture follows a chronological review and changes in relation to time, context, external influences, political power, societal needs and cultural influences.</p>
'Social media' 'Internet mass communication' 'Paradigm shifts in history' 'vast geography'	<p>Dynamic & Ever-Changing The advent of the internet has changed the concept of Islamic architecture to be susceptible to aesthetical changes. Exposure of Islamic architecture through many media confirm to this adaptability. The idea of the concept is not static and pervades globally as to how the Muslim populace has so too. Shifts in world history also affect the viewpoints towards Islamic architecture.</p>
'Intellectual sources of Islamic theories' 'value-centred discourse' 'Universal characteristics' 'Architects as stewards' 'Philosophical construct'	<p>Grounding Discourse to Theories Changing the course from an object-oriented to a value-centred study expands the intellectual sources from which to refer. The Quran, Hadith and Sunnah are among the resources that support or reject ideas. The notion of universal characteristics also expands to include the understanding of theology. It is understood that Architects are stewards of society. Thus the responsibility of value and ethics is pertinent in the development of the Islamic architecture. Strong philosophical construct should be reflected in the framework</p>
'Adapting differently to context' 'Nature driven' 'Climate, environmental and cultural'	<p>Contextual The architecture relates to the site, denoting function and efficiency as important aspects. The Spirit of place should be visible in the architecture, which includes intangible aspects such as culture and social behaviour. Aesthetic differences or decisions of the form should adhere to the demand of its surrounding.</p>

(Continued on next page)

Table 2 (*Continued*)

Selective coding	Categories and criteria
'Politics' 'Economy' 'Global Religion' 'Culture connects' 'Ideological influences' 'Social values'	Social-Politics Islam is a global religion that is not only connected by faith but also by social values. Politics affects Islamic architecture as much as culture and economy. In some places, ideology influences the built environment, putting values, freedom and lives at stake.
'Regional' 'Heritage' 'Nusantara'	A Nusantara Model Another classification that is specific to the region of Southeast Asia is the Nusantara Model. The idea of the vernacular underlies the aesthetical decision of the model, though race plays a role in this narrative.
'Different perspectives' 'Aspirations' 'Improvement and benefits' 'Ways of seeing' 'Sources of knowledge' 'Polemics of theory' 'Insights into different scenarios'	Perspectives There are many approaches to describe Islamic architecture. The differences between the approaches are perspectives or ways of seeing. These perspectives could be parallel in their meaning or even conflicting. The variety of sources available also affects the points of view. Differences in points of view also facilitate the drive of dialogues, allowing insights into different scenarios for those involved in the discussion.
'Everyday life' 'Form follows ritual' 'Privacy' 'Moral ethics'	Activities/ Rituals Activities of society dictate the spaces designed. The design of mosques supposedly follows the ritual of daily prayers. Spaces of mosques must also cater to the community it serves for activities other than praying.
'Connecting past with present' 'Dichotomy of sentiment'	Points of Rupture Within the discourse of Islamic architecture, there is no continuity of past design & form to contemporary problems. Dichotomies between concepts of Islamic and non-Islamic and Western & Eastern histories should be present in the course content.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The generated framework from the research is a pedagogical tool for instructors in higher education institutions to facilitate critical learning within the class. With the framework,

the history of Islamic architecture is no longer focused on buildings for answers but on creating a connection to the past that is relevant to today's present issues. It addresses the conflicts of the past, the complexities of the present and the ambiguity of the future.

The framework emphasised the use of the Quran, sunnah and hadith as reliable sources to be included in the reading requirements. It is found that these sources convey values and historical narratives that address the distinct set of rituals and experiences but also differences of values towards diverse interpretations. Additionally, the framework reveals Islamic architecture as a dynamic subject of routes, influences and adaptations, allowing questions to be framed around culture, values as well as typology. It also acknowledges the biases of a Eurocentric narrative that relegates Islamic architecture to an essentialised form of work. The proposed framework can be implemented into the course syllabus as points of reference.

This discussion section will describe each topic within the framework to explain its scope and criteria.

Table 3. Generation of themes (framework) from the categories

Categories	Emerging themes
'Theories construct'; 'Nusantara model of Malaysian context'; 'Perspectives'; 'Historiography'; 'Malaysian context'; 'Idols & representation'	Perspectives and multiple discourses
'Contextual'; 'climate & environmental'; 'urban architecture'; 'space planning'; 'art & geometry'; 'decorative & ornament'	Typologies and aesthetics
'Ceremony & rituals'; 'the Mosque'; 'decorative & ornament'; 'symbols & signs' 'social aspect'	Ritual and activities
'Evolutionary history' 'antiquities' 'colonialism' 'empiricism'	Timeline – Gaps between modernity and antiquity
'Theories construct'; 'dichotomy'; 'point of rupture'; 'memory & imagination'; 'narratives'; 'orientalism & occidentalist'; 'women & space'; 'varying interpretations'; 'the afterlife'; 'reinvention of traditions'	Complexity and narratives
'Social'; 'political'; 'empires & dynastic rule'; 'expression of power'; 'politics & ideologies'; 'spaces of resistance'	Crisis and conflict
'Value-centred discourse'; 'intellectual traditions'; 'religious values'; 'traditions & texts'	Value and intellectual traditions
'Cultural aesthetics'; 'routes & influences'; 'fringe communities'	Dynamism and mobility

The generated framework from the research serves as a pedagogical tool for instructors in higher institutions, facilitating critical learning within the class. With this framework, the History of Islamic Architecture subject shifts away from merely seeking answers from buildings to establishing connections to the past that are relevant to today's present issues. It addresses the conflicts of the past, the complexities of the present, and the ambiguity of the future. The themes are described as follows.

Perspective or Multiple Discourses

This theme play a crucial role by highlighting the multiplicity of viewpoints, thus providing space for students to form questions. These differences in perspectives are shaped by a person's culture, heritage, physical traits and personal experiences to cover multifaceted concerns such as personal, social, political, aesthetics, buildings, paintings, drawings, and photographs. Here, viewpoints can be set up as problems posers that relate course contents to real-world issues while also challenging hidden cultural and societal dynamics that create imbalances of power (Kincheloe, 2007; Lukinbeal & Allen, 2007; Freire, 2000).

Typologies and Aesthetics

The framework also emphasises typologies and aesthetics in academia's approach to Islamic Architecture. It focuses on typologies and aesthetics that embody societal functions such as the palatial, commercial, industrial, residential and landscape. This approach influences the profession, where adherent professionals imitate the forms of the past or emphasise elements of traditions. At times, the divide between religiosity and secularism is based on the function or form of the building. Features have become fixed and eternal making them a basis of architectural roots and identity of those who are looking for it (Omer, 2011). Critical reflection on the issues of typologies and aesthetics gives space to question culture, politics and religious institutions.

Ritual and Activities

Furthermore, the framework includes the aspect of ritual and activities. It acknowledges the experiences of both collective and individual perspectives (Finch, 2000). For example, a mosque is a place for Muslims to offer five prayers throughout the day, enabling them a holistic break from the world. Additionally, temples, shrines and mosques were not constructed in isolation. Thus forms of rituals should extend as community centres to serve the community. Another example is to look at ritual drives the built environment of Mecca, Saudi Arabia, where the Haj shaped the function, space and meaning of the city. The ritualistic movement of the tawaf that encircles the Ka'aba collectively suggests a reflection of the embodiment of the cosmos. The ritual of the hajj and umrah are clearly, represented in their design and form and has since changed to intercept the millions of visitors that visit Makkah. The safety of visitors has become an issue due to the number of cases of people being trampled has risen due to the increase of visitors. Also, the recent

COVID-19 pandemic has raised issues of safe distancing among visitors. Tall buildings, enveloping shopping malls and 5-star hotels outline the boundary of the Great Mosque. This capitalist practice has created a disparity between the rich and the poor. The idea of rituals also begets the question of territory, capitalism and religion and how these forces converge in the most sacred of places for Muslims. The built environment of Makkah also caters significantly to tourists and visitors, leaving locals with dwindling spaces and rights. Historic buildings are demolished, and lands are acquired by the government for more hotels (Al-Adawy, 2013). Questions concerning the contradiction of Islamic values as collateral to a vital ritual begin to rise, giving an opportunity for further discussion.

Cultural displacement felt by Muslims in the West makes them seek cultural expressions and aesthetics as forms of self-identity. An example can be seen in the Diyanet Centre of America in Maryland, built by Hassa Architecture, based in Istanbul. The attempt was to project an authentic tradition not corrupted by 'Western' influence. However, the project stands out of its surrounding context as a borrowed image of another context, people and time. Contents can also include crises and narratives. Architecture as a political entity is a critical discourse to have due to the rising tide of international political instability around the world. The role of architects and architecture in addressing the crisis of disasters or war in rebuilding communities is ever more urgent. Places of devotion, such as mosques and churches, have been utilised as emergency shelters during disaster periods, serving as transit facilities for the affected communities (Utaberta & Asif, 2017). Collaboration with communities and local aid agencies is also needed to build more long-term housing. Displacement and exodus due to conflict and persecution should be addressed. Recent times have shown that those displaced are people from the Middle Eastern areas who bring with them culture, tradition and faith. The struggle to host refugees presents other issues of socioeconomics and the basic needs of shelter and infrastructure. Ignoring the histories of the marginalised is no longer possible when considering the circumstances of confronting crises. Other issues to consider are livelihoods and education. Addressing these issues in the classroom would also allow students the ability to be inclusive in their design and begin questioning the ideals of Islamic architecture when it comes to the issues of refugees.

Gaps in the Timeline between Modernity and Antiquity

Addressing the gaps in the timeline between modernity and antiquity is another key aspect covered in the proposed framework. This involves shifting from a linear method to address the gaps or ruptures in the chronological timeline of Islamic civilisation. An example for this theme is the many ruptures is the break of the Islamic empire into states of dynastic powers. The modern progress of the built environment and contemporary thought could overcome the current historicist approach to encourage a conscious, critical and constructive way of learning history. To learn of ruptures in history is not only to find the origin or causes of past events but to show that history itself is contingent, ambiguous and interpretive. Western colonialism and imperialism, in other ways, influence many of the Muslim lands. While some nations found it necessary to abandon the old cultural past, some previously colonised nations found it vital to root them on the stable ground of the

past in order to forge a national spirit and release the deep resentment towards the colonist in the form of spiritual and cultural synergy. The Makkah clock tower was modelled after Dubai's Burj Khalifa and London's Big Ben, an imitation of architecture not indicative of local architecture. What is known is the Western influences on other states and cultures. However, less is known about the transmission of classical science and ideas to the West that was instrumental in the development of modern European society. Significant events also affect history and ruptures in the evolution of Islamic architecture that happened between the past and times of modernity. The Western break from the past was their Enlightenment, a break from the dependence on authority (Borradori, 2003; Iribarnegaray & Jenkins, 2016), making the beginning of modernism. The basis of the Enlightenment is the values of freedom of thought and individualism for the benefit of society. In contrast to this are Islamic values that are articulated on sets of beliefs.

Complexity

In terms of complexity, there is a tug and pull between sacred and secular, as well as a struggle for authenticity, to fill the discourse of Islamic architecture. The fight over whose subscriptions, or which conception of Islamic architecture is proper and takes precedence, is something that Islamic architecture seems to go through. As found in the findings, the architectural achievements of Islam cover both religious in its formation, while domestic structures, palaces and other infrastructures are considered secular. However, this separation of religiosity and secularism is troubling as it undermines the Muslim's view of Islam as a way of life, thus never separated. One example for complexity is the conflicts existing from within the faith itself. Saudi Arabia's tension with Iran has existed since the seventh century, and since then, no effort of reconciliation has been made. Saudi's revivalist Wahabbi movement has destroyed the sanctuaries and architecture of the Shias branch of the majority of Iranians. Another complexity comes from the term Islamic architecture itself. All interviewees insist on a basic understanding of the term in the finding. However, none of the descriptions provided agrees with one another.

A term used by Banister Fletcher in his early edition of comparative architecture is Saracenic which is a pejorative term previously used by Christian Crusaders to describe Muslim Arab tribes during the Crusades negatively. Fletcher's "Tree of Architecture" puts Islamic architecture as a timeless branch next to Western architecture tradition (Necipoglu, 2015). Although the word has fallen to disuse in the Modern English language, the term has persisted in the description of the architectural style used by the British in 19th-century India. The style known as the Indo-Saracenic style would later be adopted in Sri Lanka and Malaysia, then the Federated Malay States (Westfall, 2010). This style continues to be used to describe colonial architecture in Malaysia imported from India. Identity is another complexity dominating Islamic architecture.

Crisis and Narrative

The value-centred discourse and intellectual tradition were unanimously picked up during the interviews. This shift presented several changes in the method of learning the history of architecture. First is the inclusion of traditional intellectual sources of the Quran, Hadith and Sunnah as references. While most scholars agree that there is an absence of religious regulation towards artistic expression, there is persistence in basing elements of Islamic architecture on the principles prescribed by Islam. The Syariah regulates the daily life of Muslim individuals and communities by setting limits and guidelines, and these religious precepts cannot be the sole source for interpreting architectural forms. The only direct dictations are the restrictions on using idols and avoiding human and animal replications (Kuban, 1990). Some scholars insist on a holistic overview to include the Islamic way of building as prescribed by the Sharia law. But is there an aesthetic prescription for building specifically in the law of jurisprudence? It can perhaps direct the action of individuals and lay grounds for her ethical decision makings, but it certainly cannot dictate visual aesthetic of the architecture. It should also be noted that the synonym of 'values' differs in the ideal of Islam. It is only through the inclusion of the sources can the 'value' definition be expanded. Value can longer be seen as an intangible element in architecture as it influences the conception of the construction and, later on, the usage of the foundations for a stable social existence (Jacob & Nasari, 2012). With this understanding, value plays a central role in describing Islamic architecture.

Dynamism

Finally, dynamism is encouraged through interactive learning using visual aids of maps to complement the chronological narrative of history any time the evolution of plastic borders of Islamic civilisation. Maps can visually indicate the dynastic area of administration and the groups or races of people and cultural backgrounds. At the same time, maps also present the interactions and mobility of the civilisation with the broader world. Maps could also show the isolation of indigenous cultures. A parallel study of historical buildings with contemporary issues could facilitate discussions on forming and developing architectural traditions. An example of the issue raised during the interview is the dynamic use of buildings. The appropriation of churches into mosques or other buildings of religious intent could begin by answering whether buildings are inherently Islamic.

Critical dialogue allows one to extend the discourse of Islamic architecture beyond various buildings, contemporary or recent past or whether the expression is sacred or religious. It allowed the questioning towards the term itself and whether it incorporates a broader volume of vocabularies, structures and designs. Another outlook for this is the destabilisation of form appropriation onto the faith while looking at the possibilities of understanding Islamic architecture to its essential essence. Imposing forms can be sidestepped for a more critical dialogue of the subject.

The overall function of the above framework for the expansion of IRE is to provide a comprehensive educational experience that prepares students not only to appreciate the aesthetic and functional aspects of Islamic architecture but also to understand its role in shaping social and religious identities, supporting the development of a well-rounded understanding of Islamic culture and its contributions to global heritage.

The framework is structured into thematic modules that cover different eras, regions, and styles of Islamic architecture. Each module is designed to explore specific themes, such as the evolution of society and Islamic architecture and the influence of the context, people, and environment on its architecture. The framework addresses the evolving societies and cultures and how IRE can meet the dynamic and progressive trends in society by incorporating insights from history, art, theology, engineering, and current events to provide a holistic view of Islamic architecture. This viewpoint helps students appreciate the architectural achievements within broader cultural and religious contexts. The framework is also designed to encourage students to analyse structures with unique features and evolution patterns to understand cultural exchanges and mutual influences. They should engage with the material through dialogue and critical analysis, shaping their own learning journey.

CONCLUSION

An expanded understanding of Islamic architecture holds significant implications for the future of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in higher education institutions. Expanding IRE into modern subjects presents a bridge between world knowledge and religious studies. The paper proposes a content framework for the architecture course syllabus to foster critical learning of Islamic architecture. This framework is grounded in the philosophy of lifelong learning and offers inclusivity and dialogue-inducing elements. The framework aims to nurture informed, critical, and reflective individuals well-equipped to expand IRE into contemporary discussions about culture, religion, and history.

The framework demands a significant shift in teaching methodologies from passive reception of information to active learning processes. The pedagogical implications are that it will diversify the learning experience, fostering an environment of critical inquiry, dialogue, and engagement, which are crucial for nurturing deep and meaningful learning. Adopting this framework implies a transformation in the role of the instructor from a traditional disseminator of knowledge to a facilitator of learning. Instructors must cultivate an environment where students feel empowered to share their insights, challenge existing narratives, and explore new ideas. This involves developing open, respectful, and intellectually stimulating classroom dynamics. This innovative framework is not just a set of guidelines but a dynamic, interactive, and multidisciplinary approach. It transcends traditional lecture formats, creating an environment where students are not passive recipients of knowledge but active participants. The framework also necessitates rethinking assessment strategies to align with its interactive and analytical nature. Traditional exams might be complemented

or partially replaced by project-based assessments, presentations, and reflective essays. It challenges traditional pedagogical norms and requires a comprehensive reassessment of how Islamic architecture and, by extension, Islamic culture and history are taught.

While the proposed framework holds promise, it's important to acknowledge its limitations. One such limitation is the need to fully capture the practical challenges of implementing the framework in diverse contexts. The adaptability and scalability of the framework across institutions may vary due to differences in cultural contexts and resources. To address this, pilot programs are essential to test the framework's applicability and effectiveness in real-world scenarios. Additionally, the development of appropriate methods to evaluate the outcomes of the framework is a challenge that needs to be overcome.

Future research should focus on developing strategies to address the challenges of creating adaptable syllabus templates and devising innovative, context-sensitive assessment methods. Additionally, further studies should explore the impact of this pedagogical shift on student outcomes across various settings to refine and enhance the framework's effectiveness.

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