KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS FOR ISLAMIC LEGACY PLANNERS

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Abstract: Legacy planners providing Islamic legacy planning solutions that have relevant knowledge are needed to serve better the clients. These legacy planners who are termed as Islamic legacy planners require a different set of knowledge to become competent in performing their responsibilities efficiently. This paper aims to explore the specific elements of knowledge, skills, abilities and others (KSOA) required of Islamic legacy planners in performing their responsibilities efficiently. A multiple-case study involving the full-fledged Islamic trust companies in Malaysia has been conducted to gather insights on current practices of recruiting Islamic legacy planners and determine the relevant KSOA for the profession. The findings reveal that fiqh mawarith as the primary knowledge to be acquired besides knowledge in the other areas. This study finds that Islamic legacy planner must also have the willingness to learn attitude as a complementing characteristic to the knowledge and skill elements identified above, as a package required for a competent Islamic legacy planner. This research contributes to the management policy in the recruitment or training of Islamic legacy planners in the full-fledged Islamic trust companies in Malaysia.

Keywords: Knowledge, Skill, Abilities, Legacy planning, Islamic legacy planners

Introduction
The Government of Malaysia has launched the Malaysia National Strategy for Financial Literacy 2019-2023 to equip Malaysians with the right financial knowledge in making informed financial decisions and healthy attitudes towards financial management. According to Securities Commissions (2019), among priorities identified under the National Strategy to achieve is to improve access to financial management information, tools and resources via the professionals in the related industry. The National Strategy is formulated by the FENetwork to address growing concerns on the current state of Malaysians’ financial literacy which includes legacy planning (Prime Minister Office of Malaysia, 2019).

The motivation for the study stems from the fact that Islamic legacy planning should adhere with the certain competency requirements. A complete adherence to competency requirements is the only option for the industry. A proper mechanism would be able to identify and promptly
address any non-competence issues amongst the Islamic legacy planners. Islamic legacy planning is an industry, which is rapidly growing in Malaysia and are attracting more players. Nevertheless, legacy planning is not extensively practiced even though it is an important element in financial strategy (Wahab et al., 2017).

**Literature Review**

**Overview of Islamic Legacy Planning**

The increase of awareness for Islamic legacy planning encourages the need to have a robust competency framework for the legacy planners to support this emerging industry in Malaysia similar to other sectors such as takaful. Despite the importance of Islamic legacy planning, previous studies revealed that the shortage of qualified and competent Islamic legacy planners poses as one of the major challenges to drive the industry.

Many previous literature studies discuss Islamic legacy planning in Malaysia such as Talib et al. (2017), Hasbulah & Daud, (2015), Hasbullah et al. (2017), Shafie et al. (2014), Yusof & Sarip (2016), Alias et al. (2014), Isa et al. (2017), Wahab et al. (2017) and Halim & Ahmad (2017). Based on researchers’ observations, the majority of the research leads to consumer behaviour towards Islamic legacy planning instruments, issues of law used in the industry and misunderstanding of the products offered by legacy planning providers.

Apart from the awareness of technical requirements that is required in Islamic legacy planning, the significance of Islamic legacy planning was promoted by the Prophet Muhammad SAW as recorded by Jami` at-Tirmidhi,

> “The feet of the son of Adam shall not move from before his Lord on the Day of Judgement, until he is asked about five things: about his life and what he did with it, about his youth and what he wore it out in, about his wealth and how he earned it and spent it upon, and what he did with what he knew.” (Jami` at-Tirmidhi, Volume 4, Book 11, Hadith 2416)

Islamic legacy planning plays critical processes in Islamic financial planning. According to Alias (2014), the concept of Islamic financial planning includes five key elements, i.e. wealth generation (Surah Al-Jumu’ah: 10, al-Qasas: 77), wealth protection (Surah al-Hasyr: 18), wealth accumulation (Surah Yusuf: 47-48), wealth purification (Surah Al-Baqarah: 195) and wealth distribution (Surah Al-Baqarah: 180; Surah Al-Baqarah: 177, Surah Ali Imran: 92, Surah An-Nisa’: 11-12, 176). The processes of Islamic financial planning are described more precisely in Figure 1.0. The knowledge of Islamic financial planning constitutes part of Islamic legacy planning. (Hassan, 2005).
The probable situations concerning Islamic legacy planning are maybe boundless. They will vary from person to person. It may differ from one case to another (Jamaluddin, 2013), and many individuals are expecting a lasting legacy by seeking advice from Islamic legacy planners. In the process of training people, Islam believes that competency is an important element. As mentioned by Rahman et al. (2014), the significance of competency could be observed through the titles that Prophet Muhammad SAW gave to his companions; for instance, Abu Bakar 'as-Siddiq' (truthful), Umar 'al-Faruq' (one who distinguishes between right and wrong), and Khalid 'Saifullah al-Maslul' (sword of Allah SWT).

There is still untapped information on what skills, knowledge, abilities and others or also called KSAOs that lead to competent Islamic legacy planers as there is limited exposure to the Islamic legacy planning literature. KSAOs is a competency model of the individual and it describes the skills and qualities needed for a particular position in an organisation as detailed by Stahl et al. (2019). To date, to the researcher knowledge, there is no specific or standardisation on KSAOs imposed for legacy planners by the full-fledged Islamic trust companies in Malaysia. The similar issues were faced by the takaful operator's way back in the early year 2000 until Takaful Basic Examination (TBE) was introduced by Malaysian Takaful Association (MTA) as the minimum standard to ensure that takaful agents manage their companies professionally and responsibly.

The industry may be put in a disconcerting situation on whether it is practical to have a dedicated professional body or industry association that responsible for solving the issue of incompetent Islamic legacy planners. This research will contribute to the trajectory movement to the establishment of a dedicated professional body and industry association in Malaysia, led by the full-fledged Islamic trust companies.

With the average life expectancy in Malaysia is increasing, legacy planning is a priority, not only among retirees but also young people. Gomez (2017) says that, it is important for people to be mindful of the geographical spread of their assets in avoiding some common legacy planning pitfalls and seeking a wholesome approach of legacy planning. Legacy planning
includes making plans for the transfer of estate after death. Barhat (2010) stressed the need for exploring a different way to engage clients while embarking upon legacy planning. According to Leslie et al. (2015), legacy planning is an important aspect of any financial planner’s job. For a more explicit comparison, estate planning involves only certain products to clients, while legacy planning includes legacy administration advice and more comprehensive legacy products.

Islamic legacy planning regarded as the final stage of planning where the distribution of wealth upon one’s death is planned according to one’s objectives and wishes using the Shariah guidelines (Wahab et al., 2019). The principles and instruments of wealth distribution are useful for pious Muslims to obtain al-Falah or success both in the worldly life and in the Hereafter (Mehwish & Nida, 2016).

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Others for Islamic Legacy Planners

The failure of Islamic legacy planners to provide knowledge and information on solutions to problems regarding legacy planning has resulted in confusion among the public (Aziz, 2018). Competency can be classified as a dimension of behaviours which are related to the superior job performance where certain people conduct better than others. In addition, competencies are also linked to technical skills and knowledge to perform jobs particularly jobs with professional element (Woodruffe, 1993).

Another interesting elaboration of the definition of competency was discussed by Hoffmann et al. (1999) study where they argued that such term was viewed differently by different professionals such as auditors, bankers, management theorists, human resource managers, or even politicians. In light of legacy planners’ competencies, as mentioned by Schnaubelt (2018), there are certainly specific competencies that need to be mastered by the legacy planners in order to ensure maximum performance can be delivered to the clients.

The lack of knowledge among the current Islamic legacy planners could be the reasons behind these situations, and they are interrelated as well. About the lack of skills, the Malaysian Muslims do not fully realize the significances (ZAR Perunding Pusaka, 2004) and methods (Hassan & Yusop, 2006) of the Islamic legacy planning. To a large extent, they are not aware of the importance of some of the tools in the Islamic legacy planning itself (Mohyin, 2004). Nordin Manan (Poh, 2009) comes up with a detailed insight in which he says that the low level of awareness in Islamic legacy planning in Malaysia is a consequence of the incompetence and low level of professionalization of Islamic legacy planners itself.

Hassan & Yusop (2006) propose that the attainment of a complete understanding and success of the Islamic legacy planning relies on the combination of the following knowledge components; understanding of Shariah and civil law pertaining to the inheritance and financial planning. Interestingly, in Malaysia, civil law regulates the procedures of legacy administration and settlement, which brings significant impacts on legacy planning. As highlighted by Laldin (2011), there is a need for an adequate of competent talent to uphold the authenticity of Islamic products and services and Islam emphasizes the need and importance of competencies in all areas of life, including managing an organization. All Muslims need to achieve the highest performance in everything they do where ihsan and itqan as the formulas of competencies. Allah SWT says;
“And you see the mountains, thinking them rigid, while they will pass as the passing of clouds. [It is] the work of Allah, who perfected all things. Indeed, He is Acquainted with that which you do.” (Surah An-Naml: 88).

Indeed, the scarcity of professionally equipped with the requisite knowledge, and skills-set would impede the industry determinations to have a reliable and recognized solution for Islamic legacy planning. Therefore, it is pertinent to develop a competency framework for Islamic legacy planners in Malaysia and eventually to uplift the professionalism agenda for Islamic legacy planning industry. Hence, this research is very significant and has the potential to be a substantial reference by industry practitioners in developing the competency framework for the industry. One aspect in disseminating right knowledge and information to the community is the need to have competent human capital and competency need information and skills, which is the result of education, training and related experiences.

There is still untapped information on what skills, knowledge, abilities and others or also called KSAOs that lead to competent Islamic legacy planners as there is limited exposure to the Islamic legacy planning literature. KSAOs is a competency model of the individual and it describes the skills and qualities needed for a particular position in an organisation as detailed by Stahl et al. (2019). Oxford University Press (2019) highlighted that KSAOs needed for a specific job would be identified by a formal process of job analysis and itemised in a personnel specification.

There are two major categories of KSAOs namely technical and behavioural. Knowledge in accounting, database or information technology and other hard skills are considered as technical KSAOs. Communication skills, problem solving, and other soft skills are in the category of behavioural KSAOs. Technical and behavioural KSAOs are important for Islamic legacy planners in Islamic legacy planning industry.

Information acquired through formal or informal learning process is referred to as knowledge in the context of KSAOs. Information, which are generally facts of the matter are essential for successful performance. When someone applies knowledge to solve a problem then it is termed as skill. Skills are usually a competency which is a combination of knowledge and technical know-how; for example, knowing when to use a particular instrument or tool (Hoffman et al., 2010).

Skills are usually acquired by training. Repeating a particular task will improve the relevant skill. Abilities are enduring capacities that facilitate learning and successful task performance. When compared to skills, abilities tend to be more innate. Other than abilities, a few characteristics that are relevant to increase successful job performance may include attitude, interest and values (Hoffman et al., 2010).

There are many challenges that must be tackled especially when putting together education and training to the requirements Islamic legacy planners and also to rationalise the standards between the academic and industry professional. Academic programmes have more audience of future practitioners, but it lacks industry participation when compared professional-based and certification programmes. To make the gap smaller, collaboration between the academia...
and industry must materialise in this current situation (Aziz, 2014). The variation mentioned hampers practical training and knowledge transfer.

Research Methodology

The main purpose of this research is to have an in-sight into ‘knowledge’ as an element of competency for Islamic legacy planners. To achieve this, a multiple-case study has been performed through in-depth interviews session amongst the representatives from the full-fledged. There are four full-fledged Islamic trust companies currently operated in Malaysia and all companies agreed to be the participant for this study. Details of the respondents are in the table below;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Trustee Company</th>
<th>Designation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>as-Salihin Trustee Berhad</td>
<td>Chief Marketing Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>MyAngkasa Amanah Berhad</td>
<td>General Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wasiyyah Shoppe Berhad</td>
<td>Chairman, Technical Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Amanah Warisan Berhad</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In this study, participants are selected based on purposive sampling. The small sample size of respondents is considered normal in a qualitative study as they are selected based on the criteria that they would provide insights and useful information of the phenomenon under investigation. The respondents are purposely selected because they are the actual individuals involved in the subject matter of the study. Since all the interview sessions are conducted using the same interview questions, hence, all the responses are analysed together using the thematic analysis method that focuses on coding.

Coding involves identifying themes across qualitative data by reading and rereading (and rereading again) transcripts until the researcher has a clear idea about what themes emerge. Esterberg (2002) describes coding as a multistage process. Esterberg suggests that there are two types of coding: open coding and focused coding. The objectives of focused coding are to identify recurrent patterns and multiple layers of meaning, and to delineate variations and interconnections among sub-themes within the general topic. The themes were organized into a thematic map which was refined through consultation with the research team to ensure homogeneity within each theme and heterogeneity between themes.

In brief, all companies have their internal procedure when recruiting legacy planners. Based on the interviews, the companies will conduct the filtering processes before one is appointed as their legacy planners. The findings are similar to Gusdorf (2009) when she mentioned the need for employers in conducting careful consideration when hiring new employees. Interviewees acknowledge the role of knowledge for creating a companies’ dynamic capabilities as suggested by Burke & Cooper (2006). The companies incorporated necessary training structures as a critical component to managing the flow of their legacy planners’ knowledge to serve the companies better.

The interviewees emphasised on the knowledge in technology as additional requirement for the newly appointed legacy planners. According to Chang & Chang (2018), knowledgeable
workers or employees would create a competitive edge for the companies and utilise information and knowledge to work. Although considered as one of the lowest things on the priority list of most companies as suggested by Copra (2015), from the interviews, most companies regard knowledge of the new appointees are essential. Additionally, technology-savvy is also the additional characteristics to contribute to the advancement of the industry.

A glance shows that the highest concentration goes to product knowledge, knowledge of legacy planning and mastering *fiqh mawarith*. The legacy planners also need to know the basics of Islamic financial planning. This research does not suggest that ‘knowledge’ is the only important component of competency. Other elements of competency such skills, abilities and other characteristics also need to be considered.

Hence, the newly appointed legacy planners will gain access to the experts and experienced legacy planners that allow them to transcend the industry boundaries within the companies through training. Burke & Cooper (2006) also supported that a good training structure will enhance the knowledge of the employees in meeting the industry expectations. The knowledge, skills, abilities and others consummate competency that needs to be fulfilled by the legacy planners in disseminating the correct information to the public. Nevertheless, the full-fledged Islamic trust companies only provide unstructured training for its legacy planners. The proposed competency based on the findings is depicted in table 1.3:

**Table 1.2: Summary of the KSAOs within the full-fledged Islamic trust companies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Competency</th>
<th>Company 1 (C1)</th>
<th>Company 2 (C2)</th>
<th>Company 3 (C3)</th>
<th>Company 4 (C4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
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<td>Shariah (<em>Fiqh Mawarith</em>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Islamic financial planning</td>
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<td>Law and regulations</td>
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<td>Products</td>
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<td>Mathematics</td>
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<td><strong>Skills</strong></td>
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<td>Problem solving</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
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<td>Negotiation skills</td>
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<td>Presentation skills</td>
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<td>Writing</td>
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<td>Technology</td>
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<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide solutions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Abilities and others</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Willingness to learn</td>
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<td>Persuasive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good attitude</td>
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<td>Committed</td>
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<td>Integrity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethics and confidentiality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impart knowledge</td>
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Limitations/Implications
The multiple-case research methodology has its limitation as the method lacks a basis for scientific generalisation due to its small sample size. Nevertheless, the notion is being the uniqueness of the method as it presents an information-rich and brilliant opportunity to study the phenomenon in depth and permit the researcher to retain relevant characteristics of real-life (Yin, 2009). On the issue of generalisation, this method is more particularisation instead of generalisation where the researcher takes a particular case and immerse into the case and emphasise on understanding the case itself.

For this research, the small size can be argued to be understandable since the population of the research itself is small in nature. Data saturation can be claimed to be achieved as the researcher has gained representative for each full-fledged Islamic trust companies for analysis under the present research. The inclusion of a small sample size from each company under this research is considered sufficient to provide comparative data to generate a theory.

Conclusion
Concisely, the interviewees agreed that a competent legacy planner must be knowledgeable. The knowledge is beyond their understanding of products. They also need to be fluence of all processes related to legacy planning and to comply with the Shariah within the planning process. With the knowledge, the legacy planners are expected to provide accurate advice with the various clients. As for the analysis across the four companies, none of the interviewees disregards the importance of knowing Shariah (Fiqh Mawarit), law and regulations as well as products.

Moving forward, in verifying the wasiyyah documents in the Shariah court could be done through digital verifier and documents relating to Islamic legacy planning are kept in the blockchain. The technical knowledge of the industry here can be interpreted as the most crucial areas to the legacy planners within the full-fledged Islamic trust companies.

References


