

The Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors in Marketing the Islamic Studies Graduates of the National University of Malaysia

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Abstract: Historically, the National University of Malaysia (NUM) was established in May, 1970 with the three faculties namely Arts, Islamic Studies and Science faculties. The Faculty of Islamic Studies (FIS) offered the 4 year program for its undergraduate studies. In the 3rd year, they graduated with the general bachelor degrees of Islamic Studies and if they continued their studies in the 4th year, they could graduate with the honor bachelor degrees of Islamic Studies. Few years later, the bachelor degrees were awarded in the 4th years of studies either with the general or honor class depending on the merits and grades attained by the respective graduates. The first and pioneer batch of graduates of Islamic studies received their honor bachelor degrees in the 1974 convocation. Few years later after some of the faculty members held the doctoral degrees from the universities in Egypt and United Kingdom, the faculty began to offer the graduate programs leading to master and doctoral degrees in Islamic Studies. The first and pioneer batch of graduates received their master degrees in the 1979 convocation. After 3 decades of its existence, the faculty began to offer the 3 year program consisting of 6 semesters for its undergraduate studies and they can graduate with the honor bachelor degrees. This study focuses on the marketing graduates of Islamic studies based on the experiences of National University of Malaysia. It takes into account the intrinsic and extrinsic factors leading to the marketability of the Islamic studies graduates from the NUM.

Key words: Islamic studies, convocation, graduates, program, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

In this study, the abbreviations NUM and FIS stand for the National University of Malaysia and the Faculty of Islamic Studies, respectively and their Malay abbreviations are UKM (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia) and FPI (Fakulti Pengajian Islam), respectively. The abbreviations for the five departments of the FIS are the DS for the Department of Syariah, the DTP for the Department of Theology and Philosophy, the DAICS for the Department of Arabic and Islamic Civilization Studies, the DDLS for the Department of Dakwah and Leadership Studies and the DQSS for the Department of the Quran and Sunnah Studies.

Historically, the idea to have a university in Malaya using the Malay as its medium of instruction and its students were the Malays who completed their studies in the Malay secondary schools was advocated by some of the Malay writers, thinkers and intellectuals during the British colonial rule in Malaya. Among them were Zainal Abidin Ahmad later on known as Pendeta Za'ba

(1895-1973), Shyamala in 2009, Noor Aziera in 2011, Abdul Kadir Adabi (1909-1944), Abdul Rahman in 2004 and Abdul Razak in 2005 and 2009. Unfortunately, due to political, economic and social obstacles, the idea came to nothing during the British rule in Malaya.

After the independences of Malaya in 1957 and Malaysia in 1963, respectively the Malay intellectuals and thinkers revived the idea of having a university using the Malay language as its medium of instruction for the students who completed their Malay national secondary school system. The Government of Malaysia agreed to the idea and plan. On May 18, 1970 the NUM or UKM opened its doors in Lembah Pantai, Kuala Lumpur. The first batch of 192 undergraduates and 2 post graduates registered at 3 faculties: Sciences, Arts and Islamic Studies. The NUM remained in Kuala Lumpur before it moved to its permanent campus located in Bangi, Selangor few years later. In 1974, the NUM set up its branch in Sabah for its faculty of sciences and natural resources. Its branch in Sabah was officially closed in 1996 and its faculty members were located back to the

NUM main campus in Bangi, Selangor. Since then, the NUM has seen tremendous growth in being able to provide an increasing number of learning for the people as well as undertaking research in various disciplines and fields of study. It now has 13 faculties, a Graduate School of Business (GSB-UKM) as well as 16 research institutes of excellence in education (UKM, 2012a).

Since the 1970s, the NUM has experienced many phases of its historical development and achievement according to the documents displayed by the Museum Department of NUM on the first floor of the Chancellery Building of NUM in its Bangi campus as on November 30, 2012. Based on the displayed documents, the history of NUM is classified into five distinctive phases namely the 1970s was the decade of its birth and struggle to face the challenges in order to provide the proper, recognized place for the beloved national language, the Malay. It was a light of hope for Malaysian nation. The 1980s was the decade of development moving forward based on the national unity and the development of national identity. The 1990s was the decade of maturity creating successes aiming toward achieving the national goals. From 2000-2005 was the era for promoting excellences internationally and building the excellence for the future. The era of recognition, inspiring futures, nurturing possibilities and elasticity in knowledge and innovation was from 2006 until the present, 2012.

The NUM also has introduced its transformation plan to propel UKM to be one of the leading research universities in the world by 2018 and consolidating its unique role as a national university in promoting national identity and unity (UKM, 2012a).

There are four major roles or functions of universities namely as; ideological apparatuses, expressing the ideological struggles present in all societies, as selection and socialization mechanisms of dominant elites, as the generation of knowledge, often seen as their most important function and finally as the training of a skilled labour force. The fourth function of universities namely to train the skilled workers is the most traditional and today the most frequently emphasized (Brennan *et al.*, 2004).

The fourth role of the universities, i.e., to produce the skilled and knowledgeable workers to their societies has been dominant since the 20th century based on the following citation from slide showed by Bill Gates: The 20th century was the century when education became the dominant factor determining the wealth of nations and it was the century when America was first to discover that nation (Weissmann, 2012).

Bill Gates also linked education achievement or status with social mobility (Weissmann, 2012) and he

thought that the universities and colleges in the United States of America (USA) could not produce the number of graduates needed by the job markets in USA in 1918. According to Bill Gates by 2018, we will need 22 million new college degrees but will fall short of that number by at least 3 million postsecondary degrees (Weissmann, 2012).

The NUM has accepted the four major roles of universities since its establishment in May, 1970 as an ideological apparatus to the Malays and Malaysians, as selection and socialization mechanisms of dominant elites, as knowledge and skill generation and as a training institution for knowledgeable and skilled labor forces for Malaysian societies and other societies through the graduates produced by the NUM every year.

For example, in its 40th convocation held for the 3 days from 20th-23rd October, 2012, the NUM produced 7,551 graduates consisted of 384 doctoral degrees, 2064 master degrees, 185 master degrees in medicine and dentistry, 4,829 bachelor degrees and 99 graduate diplomas and diplomas. Out of the 384 doctoral graduates of the NUM in 2012, 33 of them were from the FIS consisting of Malaysians and international students; they consisted of 12 doctorates from the DS, 7 doctorates from the DDLS, 7 doctorates from the DQSS, 5 doctorates from the DAICS and 2 doctorates from the DTP (UKM, 2012a).

Out of the 2064 master graduates of the NUM in 2012, 93 of them came from the five departments of FIS consisting of Malaysians and international students and out of the 4,629 bachelor graduates of the NUM in 2012, 764 of them came from the five departments of the FIS (UKM, 2012b).

According to the two documents displayed by Alumni Relationship Office of NUM on the first floor of the Chancellery Building in the Bangi campus as on November 30, 2012, the alumnus of NUM until 2010 were 119,072 graduates of bachelor degrees, 17,472 graduates of master degrees and 1,620 graduates of doctoral degrees.

We strongly believe that the NUM and FIS are able to offer to the job markets the graduates of FIS because of their intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The intrinsic factors are the most essential factors since without them the NUM and the FIS cannot exist; these include the students, academicians, curriculums, courses, funding and physical facilities. The extrinsic factors are the essential factor assisting or supporting the intrinsic factors; these include the recognitions and approvals by the external bodies and institutions to the NUM and the FIS.

THE INTRINSIC FACTORS FOR MARKETING THE ISLAMIC STUDIES GRADUATES

The qualified students of NUM and FIS: The students of NUM and FIS have to fulfill the selection criteria before they are admitted to the university and faculty for the program of Bachelor of Islamic Studies (BIS) with honors. There are three categories of students considered eligible to apply for the admission to the BIS. The first category is the holders of the highest national secondary school certificates in Malaysia named in Malay STPM (Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia or Malaysian High School Certificate). The second category is the holder of the highest Arabic and Islamic secondary school certificates named in Malay STAM (Sijil Tinggi Agama Malaysia or Malaysian High Religious Certificate). The third category is the holders of diplomas related to the Islamic studies. All these three categories of candidates for the BIS must pass the Malay language in their examinations for the SPM (Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia or Malaysian Education Certificate).

Having passed the Malay language at the SPM is also among the requirements imposed by the Malaysian Public Service Department (PSD) for the Malaysian graduates who wish to serve in the public sector in Malaysia. In line with this the NUM and FIS require their undergraduates to pass the Malay language at their SPM. A large number of the graduates of the BIS have been serving in the public sector, especially in the Malaysian Ministry of Education as the graduate teachers for the subjects of Islamic education, the Quran, Arabic language, the Malay-Jawi language. The opportunity for the BIS graduates to serve as the graduate teachers for the Islamic religious subjects in the Malaysian primary and secondary schools has never been closed since Malaysian educational system legally or officially offers the Islamic religious subjects to all Muslim students from the primary schools for 6 years and for the secondary schools for 5 years. After the independences of Malaya in 1957 and Malaysia in 1963, respectively the Government of Malaya and then the Government of Malaysia in their Federal Constitutions have accepted Islam as the religion of the federation. Since then, it has become the duty of the Malaysian Government to spread Islam among the Muslims in Malaysia. One of the many ways to spread Islam among the Muslims in Malaysia is through the national schools under the Malaysian Ministry of Education. Hence, it has been one of the duties of this ministry to offer the Islamic religious subjects to all Muslim students for 6 years in the national primary schools from standard one to standard six and for 5 years in the national secondary schools from form 1-5.

The qualified and experienced academicians of NUM and FIS: The academicians of NUM and FIS have to fulfill certain requirements before they are eligible or accepted become the faculty members. They must hold the bachelor degrees with honors to become the tutors of the NUM and FIS. Their bachelor degrees are in Islamic studies, Arabic studies, Islamic law or Middle Eastern studies. As the tutors, they must study for their master and doctoral degrees in the fields related to Islamic studies. There are the academicians of NUM and FIS who are not from the tutors of NUM and FIS, since they have already acquired the master or doctoral degrees before they are accepted as the academicians of NUM and FIS. The minimum requirement to become the academicians of NUM and FIS was used to be the master degree holders. However, after the NUM was recognized as one of the five Research Universities (RU) in Malaysia in October, 2006, the minimum requirement to become the academicians of NUM and FIS is the holders of the doctoral degrees.

Based on their academic qualifications, experiences and contributions the academicians of NUM and FIS are classified into the posts of Professor (P), Associate Professor (AP), Senior Lecturer (SL), Lecturer (L) and Temporary Lecturer (TL). Based on these characteristics, the academicians of FIS have all those five posts in their respective departments. For the academic session of 2012/2013, the DS has 2P, 5AP, 10SL, 6L and 8TL. The DTP has 4P, 7AP, 5SL and 7TL. The DAICS has 2P, 2AP, 8SL, 5L and 2TL. The DDLS has 2P, 3AP, 4SL, 1L and 6TL. The DQSS has 1AP, 6SL, 4L and 3TL. The FIS also has 18 Arabic language teachers for teaching Arabic language compulsory courses.

The academicians of FIS graduated with the doctoral degrees from many and diverse universities and languages such as English, Arabic and Malay universities in Malaysia and abroad. For example, the academicians of the DS are 2 graduated with PhDs from University of Edinburgh, 4 University of Malaya, 1 Cairo University, 1 University of Birmingham, 1 University of Manchester, 1 International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) and 6 NUM. The academicians of the DTP are 2 graduated with PhDs from University of Birmingham, 1 University of Nottingham, 1 McGill University, 1 University of Manchester, 1 University of London, 1 University of Melbourne, 3 University of Malaya and 4 NUM.

The academic programs of FIS: There are three academic programs offered by FIS of NUM. The first one is the undergraduate program and its graduates are the holders of bachelor degrees named Bachelor of Islamic studies with Honors in their respective departments. The second academic program is the graduate program for the master

degrees named Master of Islamic studies. The third program is the graduate program for the doctoral degrees named the Doctor of Philosophy.

The courses for the undergraduate program are offered by the five departments of FIS and there courses are classified into the university courses, the faculty courses and the department courses in addition to the compulsory and elective courses. To successful graduate with the bachelor degrees from the FIS, the registered students must complete and pass 120 credit hours or units during their 3 years study duration or during 6 semesters. The combination of the courses and extra-curriculum credited activities is 120 units or credits must consist of 10 credits from the centre for general studies of NUM, 8 credits of human development, 2 credits of entrepreneurship and innovation, 8 credits of Arabic language, 4 credits of English language, 24 credits of fundamental Islamic Studies courses, 2 credits of research methodology and 2 credits of industrial and practical training and 60 credits from the courses offered by their respective departments. The students must register and pass and obtain the 120 required credits within the duration of not <5 semesters and not >10 semesters. The grading system used by the FIS for the required courses is indicated by A and A- pass with excellence, B+, B and B- pass with honor and C+, C, C-, D+ and D- pass and E- fails.

The study done on the perception of the undergraduate students towards the program learning outcome of FIS the findings of that study show that 100% of respondents are at good to excellent levels in terms of HP8 (the awareness of the importance of in-depth knowledge and life-long learning) (Sidek *et al.*, 2012). The same study has also demonstrated the good perceptions of the undergraduate students to other HPs of FIS.

The abbreviation HP stands for the Program learning Outcome (PO). For the undergraduate program, the FIS has 9 POs for its students to become the graduates of FIS. The 9POs are listed in the guide book for the undergraduates. PO 1 is having faith, piousness, ability to acquire and put into practice fundamental knowledge for Islamic studies. PO 2 is having ability to acquire deeper knowledge in their department courses of studies. PO 3 is having ability to identify the problems related to Islam and to solve them. PO 4 is having ability to plan and do research in the field of Islamic Studies. PO 5 is having ability to play good and effective roles in individual and collective leadership. PO 6 is having ethics and responsibility in the nation development. PO 7 is having ability to communicate effectively. PO 8 is having awareness of the importance of in-depth knowledge and

life-long learning. PO 9 is having knowledge to get involved in the fields of administration, management and entrepreneurship.

The FIS of NUM offers the master and doctoral programs to the eligible graduates who wish to graduate with the either one or both degrees. The graduates of FIS who obtained the bachelor degrees in Islamic Studies with average good accumulative grade value or from other higher learning institutions recognized by the Senate of NUM are eligible to apply for the admission to the master program. The graduates of bachelor degrees considered at par with the Bachelor of Islamic studies and have other qualifications and experiences recognized by the Senate of NUM are also eligible to apply for the admission to the master program.

For the admission to the doctoral program, the graduates with master degrees from the FIS or other higher learning institutions recognized by the Senate of NUM are eligible to apply for their admission to this program. The graduates who have the other master degrees considered at par with the master degree of Islamic Studies recognized by the Senate of NUM are also eligible to apply for the admission to the doctoral program offered by the FIS of NUM.

There are the prerequisites imposed on the candidates for the master and doctoral programs. The first is the Arabic language requirement. The candidates must show their ability in reading and understanding Arabic sources by sitting for the Arabic placement test held by the FIS during the 1st or 2nd week of their registered programs. If they pass the Arabic placement test, they are exempted from taking the Arabic courses for the graduate programs. If they fail in the Arabic placement test, they are required to register and pass the Arabic courses for the graduate programs. This Arabic placement test is for the non-Arabic speakers only.

The second is the English language requirement for the international or foreign candidates. They must have scored the minimum of 550 of TOEFL or band 5 of IELTS to indicate their English proficiency. If they score below the stated scores, they must sit for the English placement test administered by the NUM and if they fail the test, they have to study English courses at the NUM until they pass them. However, the Senate of NUM has the author to exempt certain candidates from the English courses.

The third is the Malay language requirement for the foreign or international candidates. They must register and pass the Malay language course offered by the NUM. The Senate of NUM has the authority to exempt certain graduates from the Malay language course.

The fourth is the research methodology requirement. The candidates in the master and doctoral programs must register and pass the course for the research methodology in their programs, respectively. If they are the graduates of master degrees from the FIS, they are exempted from the methodological research course in the doctoral program.

The fifth is the proposal requirement. The candidates in the master and doctoral programs by thesis must write their these proposals under the supervision of their supervisors and submit them to their respective departments. The departments allocate the date, time and room for the presentation and discussion at the department level for the submitted thesis proposals. If their thesis proposals are approved after their presentations and discussions, the candidates are eligible to continue writing their theses, respectively. If their proposals are rejected in the presentations and discussions, the candidates must improve their thesis proposals and resubmit them to their departments for another day and time of presentations and discussions. In short, the candidates must get their thesis proposals approved by their respective departments before they can continue on their thesis.

The sixth requirement is the doctoral qualifying examination that must be taken by the doctoral candidates at the end of their 1st semester. If they fail, they are given the second chance in the 2nd semester to retake this examination. If they fail again in the second examination, they are fired from the doctoral program. If they pass the doctoral qualifying examination, they are eligible to write their thesis proposal under the supervision of their thesis supervisors as mentioned in the proposal requirement mentioned earlier.

For the master program by course-works and dissertations, the candidates must pass the required course-works before they are eligible to write their dissertations. The required master courses are determined by the respective departments. For the DS, the compulsory master courses are three namely PQ6043 Philosophy of Islamic Law, PQ6053 Islamic Business Transaction Law and PQ6063 Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence. There are seven elective master courses offered by the DS.

For the DTP, the three compulsory master courses are PQ6013 Methodologies of Muslim Theologians, Philosophers and Sufis, PQ6033 Methodologies of the Contemporary Exegetical and Tradition Studies and PQ6073 Study of Religions. There are six elective master courses offered by the DTP.

For the DAICS, the three compulsory master courses for the Arabic studies are PQ6083 Arabic Language Research Methodology, PQ6093 Arabic Linguistics and PQ6103 Arabic Literary Genres. There are three compulsory master courses for the Islamic civilization

studies namely PQ6023 Methodology of Research in Islamic History and Civilization, PQ6113 Textual Study in Islamic History and PQ6123 Major Sources in Islamic History and Civilization. The DAICS offers nine elective master courses for the Arabic studies and five elective master courses for the Islamic civilization studies.

For the DDLs, the three compulsory master courses are PQ6133 Contemporary Dakwah Organization, PQ6143 Dakwah Methodology to Muslim Community and PQ6153 Dakwah Methodology in the Quran. There are seven elective master courses offered by the DDLs.

For the DQSS, the three compulsory master courses are PQ6033 as offered by DTP, PQ6163 Study of the Exegesis of the Quran and PQ6173 Study of the Prophetic Tradition. There are four elective master courses offered by the DQSS.

The theses for the master and doctoral programs are written in Malay but the candidates may apply to the Senate of NUM if they plan to write their master and doctoral theses in Arabic or English depending on their proficiency in English or Arabic. The master dissertation is not >30,000 words, the master thesis is not >60,000 words and the doctoral thesis is not >100,000 words. The duration of study for the master program is between 2 and 4 for the full time candidates and between 4-10 semesters for the part time candidates. The duration of study for the doctoral program is between 6-12 semesters for the full time candidates and between 8-14 semesters for the part time candidates.

The financial and physical facilities of FIS and NUM: The NUM has been one of the public universities in Malaysia since it opened its doors to its first intake in May, 1970 into its three faculties namely; Science, Arts and Islamic Studies. As one of the public universities, the funding for the NUM comes every year from the Government of Malaysia. The NUM has received the sufficient annual budget every year from the Government of Malaysia since 1970.

The NUM has many buildings for its many faculties and centers. The FIS has its own building near the roundabout and the University Mosque in the NUM main campus in Bangi. The building has three stories and the five departments of FIS and their academic and administrative staff are in this building. It has two lecture rooms and many tutorial rooms. The students of FIS and its academicians are permitted by the NUM to use other lecture rooms in other buildings if they need to use them. The NUM has many libraries for its students and academicians. The main library is called Perpustakaan Tun Sri Lanang and other libraries are the libraries for the Malay studies, the legal studies and the medical studies located in their respective faculties. The students of FIS and its academicians are permitted to get access to all these libraries.

The NUM also has many sport and recreational facilities for the students of NUM including the students of FIS to play football, tennis, softball, badminton, pin pong, etc.

The NUM has the hostels for its students including the students of FIS during their academic sessions to stay in the campus. The main campus has bus services from and to all faculties. The NUM also provide medical service and treatment to all its students at its students' medical center in the main campus. If they need further treatments, the students of NUM can go to the NUM Medical Center located in Cheras, Kuala Lumpur.

THE EXTRINSIC FACTORS FOR MARKETING THE ISLAMIC STUDIES GRADUATES

The intrinsic factors include the recognitions and approvals by the external bodies and institutions to the NUM and the FIS and the status of Islam in Malaysia.

The recognitions and approvals for the NUM: According to "UKM, A Reflection", published in the NUM official website, UKM was appointed as one of the four research universities of Malaysia in 2006 based on its excellent record in research for 40 years. In the same year, the NUM received the Prime Minister Award 2006, a recognition of its excellent achievements in the academic and management fields. In January, 2012, the NUM has been conferred the status of an Autonomous University (UKM, 2012b).

According to the VC of NUM in her convocation speech in October, 2012, the NUM has succeeded to make the Malay language as an academic language and the NUM has attained the statuses of Research University and the Self-Accreditation University. In early 2012, after undergoing the stringent and rigorous governance auditing, the NUM succeeded in getting the status of Autonomous University. The NUM has been ranked at to 3% university in the world. For the university ranking and recognition in Asia, the NUM is among the top 70. This is a great success for the NUM as a young university <50 years old. According to Ranking QS for the young universities <50 years old, the NUM is at 31 in the world and the only university from Malaysia.

In November, 2008 in the Malaysian Parliament, the Minister for the Ministry of Higher Education, Mohd Khalid Nordin, refuted the accusation made by Lim Kit Siang, the leader of Democratic Action Party (DAP) that the universities in Malaysia were worse than the universities in Indonesia. The Minister replied that the University of Malaya and the NUM were in the 4th and 5th ranks, respectively after the two universities in Singapore and one university in Thailand. The two

universities in Singapore were National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University. Chulalongkorn University was the university in Thailand that scored the 3rd rank of the two universities in Singapore scored the 1st and 2nd ranks among the universities in Southeast Asia. The universities in Indonesia were below the universities in Malaysia in that ranking status. According to the same Minister, the Times Higher Education-QS World University Ranking (THE-QS-WUR), the five universities in Malaysia including the NUM were among the 500 top universities in that world university ranking.

The Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education declared the NUM as a research university on October 11, 2006. Since, achieving research university status, UKM has succeeded to a large extent in enhancing the quality of its core processes of research, education and service. The same ministry in 2007 launched the National Higher Education Strategic Plan (NHESP or in the Malay PSPTN) to transform the higher education landscape to meet the challenges of globalization and the transition to the knowledge economy. The NUM has responded positively to the NHESP and to the National Transformation launched by the present Prime Minister of Malaysia, Najib Tun Razak and his other initiatives such as the National Key Result Areas (NKRAs), the use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Government Transformation Plan, Economic Transformation Plan (ETP), New Economic Model, 10th Malaysia Plan and Entry Point Projects. Various challenges for universities have also been outlined in the 10th Malaysia Plan. These are aligned to the UKM transformation Plan (UKM, 2012a).

The NUM has obtained the recognitions from the Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA) and SIRIM Berhad for her academic programs and services including the academic programs offered by the FIS (Abu Bakar and Mohamad, 2012).

The status of Islam in Malaysia: The Federal Constitution of Malaysia has stated the status of Islam in comparison with other religions in Malaysia. The Article 3(1), Islam is the religion of the federation but other religions may be practiced in peace and harmony in any part of the Federation. Although, DAP and Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PMIP) or PAS in the Malay language rejected the declaration made by Dr. Mahathir Mohamed on 29th September, 2001 that Malaysia is an Islamic State, the status of Islam in the federal constitution is not rejected by DAP and PMIP.

On that historic day, September 29, 2001, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dr. Mahathir Mohamed publicly announced: UMNO wishes to state loudly that Malaysia

is an Islamic country. This is based on the opinion of ulamahs who had clarified what constituted as Islamic country. If UMNO says that Malaysia is an Islamic country, it is because in an Islamic country non-Muslims have specific rights. This is in line with the teachings of Islam. There is no compulsion in Islam. And Islam does not like chaos that may come about if Islamic laws are enforced on non-Muslims (Thomas, 2005).

The abbreviation UMNO in the cited statement by Dr. Mahathir mentioned earlier stands for the United Malays National Organization, the majority Malay-Muslim based political party in Malaysia and the backbone for the National Front, the ruling political party in Malaysia since her independence. The reasons for the DAP and the PMIP to reject the declaration made by Dr. Mahathir Mohamed that Malaysia is an Islamic state are due to their political factors and aims rather than the elements of an Islamic State (Abu Bakar, 2011).

With the recognized and legal status of Islam in the Federal Constitution of Malaysia, it provides the Government of Malaysia to recruit the graduates of Islamic studies including from the FIS of the NUM to become the public servants as teachers as well as officers in the federal departments and ministries. There are Islamic religious departments and institutions in the federal and state levels in Malaysia; they all open the jobs to the graduates of Islamic Studies including from the FIS of the NUM. For examples, there are Malaysia Department of Islamic Development located in the Prime Minister's Department and the Islamic Affairs Division at the Prime Minister's Department. There are Islamic courts throughout Malaysia.

There are Islamic banks and Islamic financial institutions in Malaysia; they are the job markets for the graduates of Islamic Studies dealing with Islamic banking and finance and Malaysia is moving towards making Malaysia as a hub for Islamic banking and finance. There are job markets in education in Malaysia for the graduates of Islamic Studies related to Islamic education system and institutions. In Malaysia, the government promotes and sponsors Islamic education in the national primary and secondary school system. The salaries of the teachers who teach the Islamic education subjects are monthly paid by Malaysian Ministry of Education. The Ministry also develops the curricula for the Islamic education subjects and produces the textbooks for them. (Zain *et al.*, 2012).

CONCLUSION

With the existence of the intrinsic and extrinsic factors presented in this study, these factors greatly contribute to finding employments or jobs for the

graduates of NUM including the graduates of FIS. There are four intrinsic factors namely the qualified students, the qualified and experienced academicians, the academic programs and the financial and physical facilities. The two extrinsic factors are the recognitions and approvals of the external bodies or institutions to the NUM and the status of Islam in Malaysia; these intrinsic and extrinsic factors have opened an easy path for the graduates of the NUM and the FIS to find the employments in Malaysian employment markets and for the international graduates of NUM too when they go back to their home countries due the intrinsic factors and the recognitions granted to the NUM.

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