

# Sharing Perspective on Career & Da`wah

**Muhammad Haniff Hassan**

Fellow

S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies  
Nanyang Technological University

[ismhaniff@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:ismhaniff@ntu.edu.sg) / [www.haniff.sg](http://www.haniff.sg)

# Objective

- Sharing personal perspective on
  - Muslim and career
  - Career as an ibadah
  - Career as da`wah
- Guide participants (undergraduate young or new graduate asatizah) to enter career life
- Help participants to balance between career and da`wah

# Muslim and Career

- No Man can live without work
  - work is necessary for Man's survival (to eat, maintain family and have pleasure)
- For Muslim
  - not just for survival
  - don't work for the sake of work, or "just follow" mentality
  - God creates Man not without purpose / in vain / for idle play
    - > see Al-Mu'min, 23:116; Al-Qiyamah, 75:36
  - Man is created with mission = Muslim has mission in this life
    - > to be God's khalifah (Al-Baqarah, 2:30)
    - > to fulfill ubudiyah (Al-Zariyat, 51:56)
    - > will be accounted for our mission (Al-Mu'min, 23:116)

# Career as Ibadah

- Minimum in career choice
  - ensure it's an ibadah, do it as an ibadah to God (Al-An`am, 6:162)
  - an obligation, not an option
    - > duty to God as His khalifah, to perform ubudiyah
    - > duty to self
      - ~ an important means to salvation
      - ~ work/career takes much of Man's life
      - ~ life is a farm for Afterlife
      - ~ wrong/right choice = big impact on Afterlife
    - > duty to others (each of us owes something to somebody in this life) = duty to return the kindness
      - ~ parents, siblings and society
  - = be serious with career choice, plan seriously

- Career as ibadah
  - do it for the sake of Allah i.e. to perform what is commanded to us as Muslim
  - do it in a manner that pleases God i.e. in accordance to His religion
- Minimum = to seek nafkah for self
  - self reliance is a virtue (Al-Baqarah, 2:273)
  - being liability to others without reason is deplorable (Al-Nahl, 16:76)
  - a giving hand is better than a receiving hand
  - God loves strong Muslim

# Career and Da`wah

- Da`wah is obligatory to all Muslims (Al Imran, 3:104, 110; Al-Nahl, 16:125)
  - part of being khalifah
  - important part of ubudiyah to God
  - not all be asatizah, but all must do da`wah
- Many ways of da`wah
  - career is just one way
- All work/career must be an ibadah
  - but not necessary a direct da`wah

- Life of Muslim is not just about personal choice/ambition, but also about serving others
- Types of career vis-à-vis da`wah
  - a) career that has direct contribution to da`wah = career da`wah, da`wah via career
    - > career that has direct relation to 3:104, 110 = al-amr bi al-makruf wa al-nahy `an al-munkar
    - > by conveyance i.e. MROs, YDOs, teacher (madrasah and national school), executive imam, counsellor, SWOs
    - > service/action/direct support i.e executives at MMOs
  - b) career that has no direct contribution to da`wah, but can be very useful for da`wah purpose
    - > lawyer at private firms, can do pro-bono service
    - > investment banker, can use expertise for da`wah purpose

c) career that has no direct contribution, doesn't have close relevance to da`wah i.e marine biologist

> contribute in other ways = volunteer time, money

= everybody must/can contribute to da`wah regardless the choice of career

- Advantage of Type A

- career and da`wah merge and integrate to one

- no need to think of volunteer work outside working hours

- traditional profession for asatizah = traditional pathway

- note necessarily freer from other types

- > those who are involved in this type of career and in MMOs are busier in the weekend and holidays = family time sacrificed



# Important Consideration

- Know yourself accurately
  - personality type to match career types
- Think and plan early
  - zoomed in (focus) or in options (at least)
  - consistency between relevant choices and future career
  - have contingency i.e. plan A, B

- Try to be adventurous = outside comfort zone, non-traditional path, create new things
  - may be not now, can be later
- Consult relevant people to guide decision
  - attend relevant courses
- Seek God's guidance
  - have good faith in God
  - His knowledge and plan is always superior than personal ambition and plan
- Master degree becomes a new necessary
  - multi-disciplinary too

- Don't be individualistic = my career/future/life = my choice
  - we owe many people in life
  - we have duty to society and religion
    - > try to reconcile personal ambition with societal and religious interest
    - > what is the priority of the community that has not been fulfilled?
    - > what is the fardu kifayah of the day that need to be fulfilled?
    - > Is there a community's interest that is a fardu ain on me to carry?
  - not a call to a sacrifice one's personal wish
    - > just don't take career choice as purely personal matter
    - > remember = many ways of da`wah, different ways to contribute with different career types

- On salary for Islamic studies graduates
  - remains uncompetitive/a big challenge @ MMOs/mosques
  - not a new thing, important to manage expectation
  - big improvement at JMS madrasah, although still lags behind MOE teachers
  - at mainstream institutions i.e. institute of higher learning, public service = follow the same salary scale, progression is based on performance merit
  - it's not wrong to opt for a better paying job, even if it's not a Type A job, should not be any prejudice i.e. not committed to Islamic works, materialistic mind etc.
    - > earning better salary is not forbidden
    - > going for non-da`wah job does not mean not doing da`wah, can still contribute in different ways
    - > at personal, level, be mindful of Al-Shu`ara', 16:164 and Al-Qasas, 28:60

- Future trends
  - new Islamic college = lecturer, researcher = MA and Phd ie a must
    - > need to identify specialisation
  - existing academic institutions = opening of new Singapore University of Social Sciences = MA and PhD
  - Islamic studies + HSS
  - Islamic content + Infocomm technological skill
  - pelapis for madrasah educators / managers / mudirs
  - pelapis at ROMM and Syariah court
  - vacancies@mosques
  - trade and business i.e. Middle East market
  - foreign services i.e. Middle East area
  - adult training i.e. androgogy

- To be successful in career life, need not only knowledge, good degree and academic result and high moral
  - ALSO, excellent work culture and ethic = high professionalism
  - good personality

# Good Reading

- A Guide to Choosing a Profession That Benefits You and the Ummah, <http://productivemuslim.com/guide-choosing-profession-benefits-ummah/>
- A career choice: An Islamic Perspective, <https://www.central-mosque.com/fiqh/islcar.htm>

Thank You