

A BRIEF OVERVIEW ON THE INTEGRATION OF *NAQLI* AND *AQLI* AMONG USIM CLINICAL DENTAL STUDENTS – THE *AKHLAQ*

Diana Md Zahid
Nur Hidayah Che' Oun
Nur Iman Mohd Habir

ABSTRACT

Dentistry is a field of work that deals with human beings. It is imperative for dental practitioners to have a good foundation of ethics so that they do no harm to the patients while delivering their service. To develop strong characters, religious education plays an important role. *Aqli* is conventional knowledge, while *Naqli* is revealed knowledge sourced from Quran and Sunnah. Both *Aqli* and *Naqli* are integrated into the learning syllabus in USIM to produce not only competent, but also morally good individuals. The aim of this study is to investigate the integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli* among USIM's dental students. Questionnaires were distributed to a total of 88 dental students from Year 3 to Year 5 of session 2017/2018. The questions included students' background, the understanding of the concept, the application, and the integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli* among the students. Almost all students (92.0%) understood the concept of *Naqli* and *Aqli* after learning about them through the integration in USIM while 8.0% were not sure. More than half of the students (53.4%) thought that they applied this concept in their clinical work, 36.4% of them thought they applied it occasionally and the rest (10.2%) thought they did not apply the concept of integrating *Naqli* and *Aqli*. In general, the *Naqli* and *Aqli* concept was more commonly integrated by Year 5 students (42.6%) than Year 4 (29.8%) and Year 3 (27.7%).

Keywords: *Aqli*, *Naqli*, dental students, ethics, moral, integration

INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

University Sains Islam Malaysia is one of the institutions that is devoted in advocating Islamic education along with scientific knowledge. To achieve their vision to be the distinguished Islamic science higher education institution, their philosophy is 'The integration of *Naqli* (revealed) and 'Aqli (rational) knowledge and virtues are the bedrock of an outstanding generation and knowledgeable society'.

Naqli is the revealed knowledge sourced from Quran, Sunnah and references taken from respected books by previous religious scholars. It could be related to the sciences, such as the creation of humans in the mothers' wombs as described in Surah Al Mukminun Verse 12. It could also be knowledge on Islamic values and morals. *Aqli*, on the other hand, is the conventional or human knowledge (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2017). The rational, dental, and medical science obtained through studies and research are examples of *Aqli* knowledge. The combination of the two disciplines of knowledge will create new knowledge, and this concept of integrating *Naqli* and *Aqli* knowledge is aligned with USIM's vision (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2015).

Akhlaq is an Arabic term referring to practiced virtue, morality, good manners, and characters in Islam. In simpler terms, *akhlaq* is the ethics, good conducts, and moral characters of a person. It has been reported that our beloved Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said about *akhlaq* in these words: "The only reason why I am sent is to perfect good *Akhlaq*". *Akhlaq* (manners) is also a guidance for the follower to be a better Muslim (Shafie & Othman, 2017). The teachings on *akhlaq* are sourced from Quran, or in this context, a fraction of the *Naqli* knowledge.

While being highly knowledgeable is a must, it is also important for a dental practitioner to be professional and ethical and have good *akhlaq* so that USIM would produce a good Muslim dentist. Dentistry is a field of work that deals with human beings; hence, having good ethical values is important to prevent harm to others. Besides that, religious education plays an important part in developing a well-balanced individual (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2017). The implementation of informal Islamic education also plays an important role in building a stable society (Alam KU *et al.*, 2006). In USIM, the integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli* is implemented in the learning syllabus. The elements are integrated into the curriculum course learning outcome. USIM's Model of Integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli* which comprise *Ayatization*, Comparison, Adaptation and Integration were also included into the Faculty's course outline.

The question is also whether the elements of *Naqli* and *Aqli* are being grasped by our dental students as shown in the curriculum. This paper demonstrated how these two knowledges were integrated by the students, who applied *akhlaq* as the *Naqli* knowledge to provide soul to dental education.

The objective of this study is to investigate the integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli* among the clinical dental students in USIM Dental Faculty. Specifically, we would like to investigate the understanding of the concepts among clinical dental students, the integration of the concepts during learning and clinical sessions and the application of the concepts between different clinical years in USIM Dental Faculty. The findings could be used as an audit and help the faculty to reflect the success of the *Naqli* and *Aqli* integration in the curriculum.

METHODS

This quantitative study included the usage of questionnaires. The questionnaires were developed based on the elements that was observed in the study by Hanim *et al.* (2017) which involved interviews with final year USIM dental students about their opinions on the integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli*. A total of 25 questions were asked in the set of questionnaires as follows: 1) personal information, 2) five questions on the understanding of *Naqli* and *Aqli* concepts, 3) ten questions on the integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli* in learning sessions and 4) 14 questions on the application of *Naqli* and *Aqli* integration in their clinical practices. This questionnaire includes NO, YES, SOMETIMES and NOT SURE as the answers. A pilot test was done with ten sets of questionnaires prior to the study. After getting the feedbacks, some modifications were made to the questions to narrow them down, and to make them more specific and objective. The questionnaires were distributed to the dental students in their clinical years from the Faculty of Dentistry, USIM: Year 3, 4 and 5. It was written in Malay since all the dental students are Malay. A statistical analysis was carried out using SPSS version 23 and the descriptive research findings were conducted.

RESULTS

A total of 98 questionnaires were distributed to the dental students in their clinical years from the Faculty of Dentistry, USIM. However, only 88 were selected and included in this study and 10 were included for validation. From the 88 samples, only 25 were males while 63 were females. The largest group in this study was the Year 3 students (30 samples). The second largest group consisting of 29 students was the Year 4 whereas the Year 5 students made up the rest of the samples with a total of 22 samples. The distribution of patients according to gender and year of study is shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the sample

Variable		Year 3 n (%)	Year 4 n (%)	Year 5 n (%)	Total
Gender	Male	6	11	8	25
	Female	24	18	14	63
Total		30	29	22	88

A total of 29 questions were asked of the respondents. As shown in **Figure 1**, 92.0% of the students answered “yes” for all five questions on the understanding of the concept of *Naqli* and *Aqli* after learning about them through the integration in USIM while 8.0% were not sure. The responses on the ten questions regarding the integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli* in the learning sessions are shown in **Figure 2** while the responses for the 14 questions regarding the integration of the *Naqli* and *Aqli* concepts in the clinical sessions are shown in **Figure 3**.

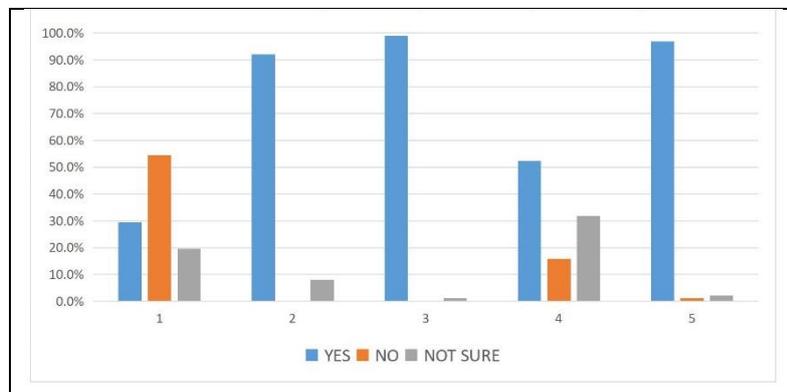


Figure 1: Response on the five questions on the understanding of *Naqli* and *Aqli* concepts

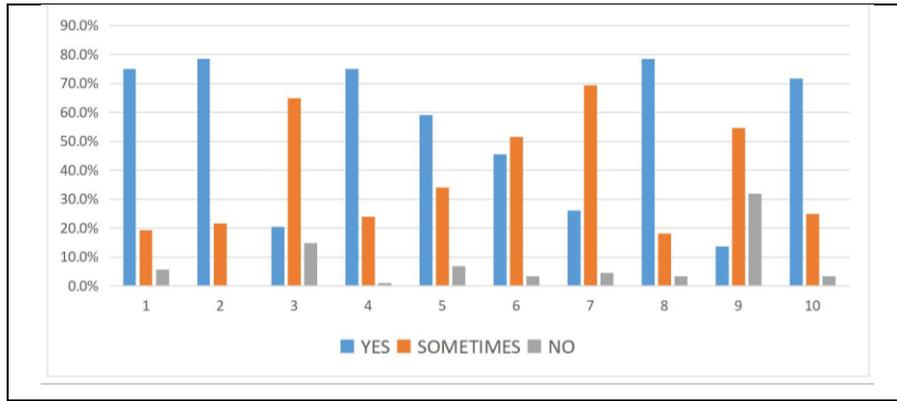


Figure 2: Response on the ten questions on the integration of Naqli and Aqli concepts in the learning session

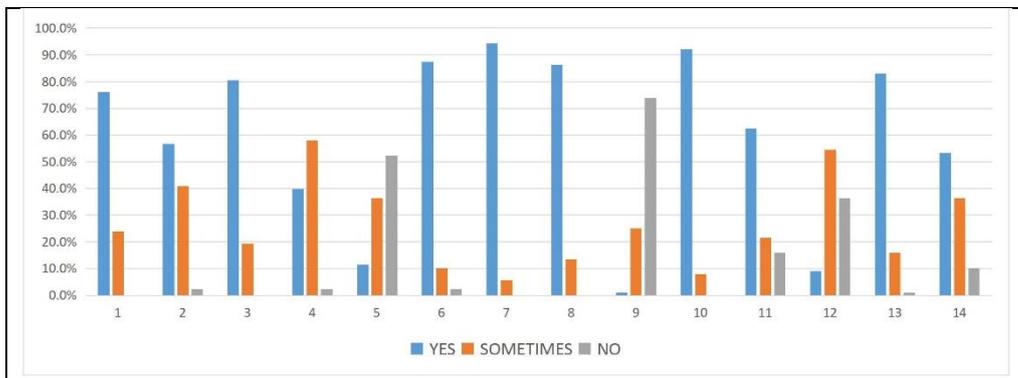


Figure 3: Response on the 14 questions on the integration of Naqli and Aqli concepts in the clinical sessions

Several questions have been highlighted for the discussion in this paper. The questions are presented in Figure 4 to Figure 10.

Figure 4 shows that 78% of clinical students understood the concepts of Naqli and Aqli while 22% were not sure whether they understood the concept. None of them completely did not understand.

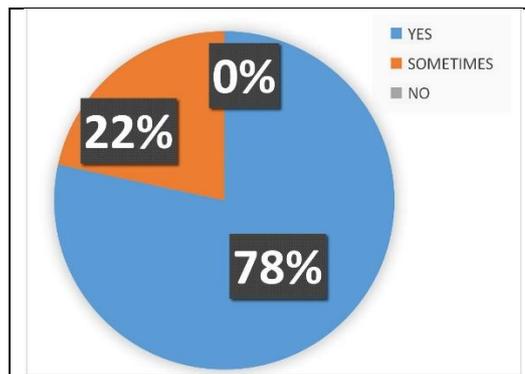


Figure 4: Understanding the concept of Naqli and Aqli in the USIM curriculum

Besides that, 75% of clinical students attended classes on time, 19% occasionally came to the class on the time while 6% were not punctual (Figure 5).

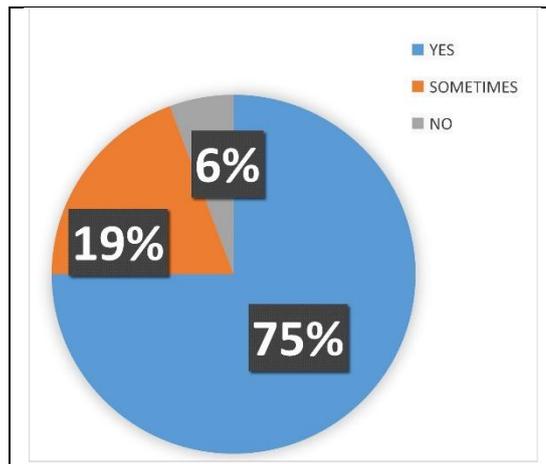


Figure 5: Punctuality when attending classes

It was also shown that 52% of the clinical students did not return the borrowed equipment within the allocated time, while 36% of students followed the rules occasionally, and 12% returned the equipment on time (Figure 6).

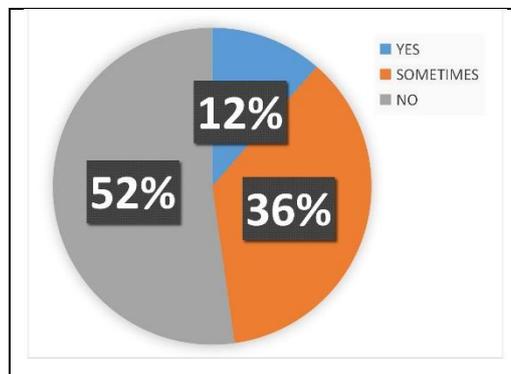


Figure 6: Returning the borrowed equipment within the allocated time

From the question shown in Figure 7, only 1% of the students changed their purple coat daily, while 25% changed occasionally, and 74% did not change their purple coat daily.

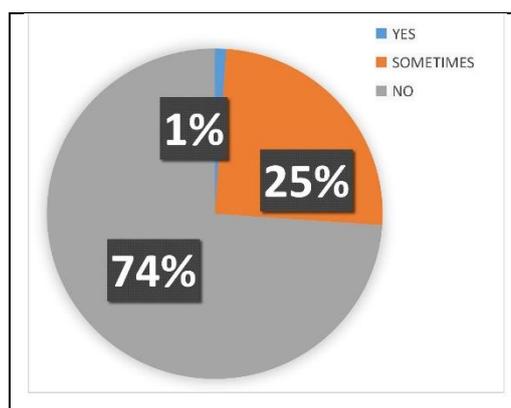


Figure 7: Changing the purple coat daily

In Figure 8, 62% of the students agreed with the new system in which inspections of instruments were done before and after every clinical session, while 22% sometimes agreed and the other 16% did not agree with the new system.

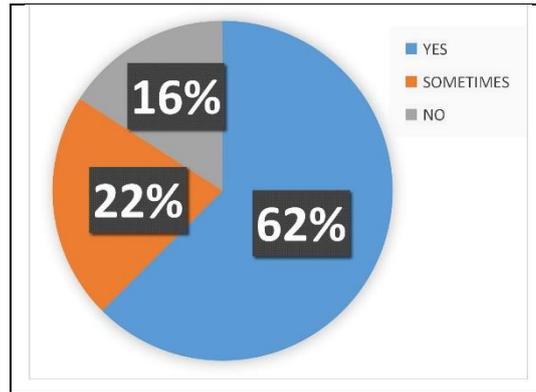


Figure 8: Agree to the inspection of instruments before and after every clinical session

The results showed that 54% students answered “yes” when asked whether they had integrated the concept of *Naqli* and *Aqli* in their clinical settings, while 36% and 10% answered “sometimes” and “no”, respectively (Figure 9).

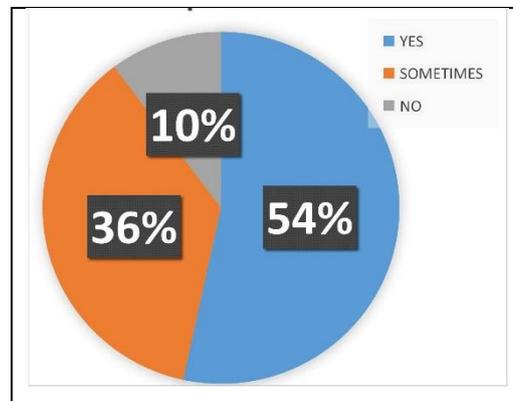


Figure 9: Application of *Naqli* and *Aqli* concept in the clinical sessions

On the other hand, the *Naqli* and *Aqli* concept was more commonly integrated by the year 5 students (42.6%) as compared to year 4 (29.8%) and year 3 students (27.7%) (Figure 10).

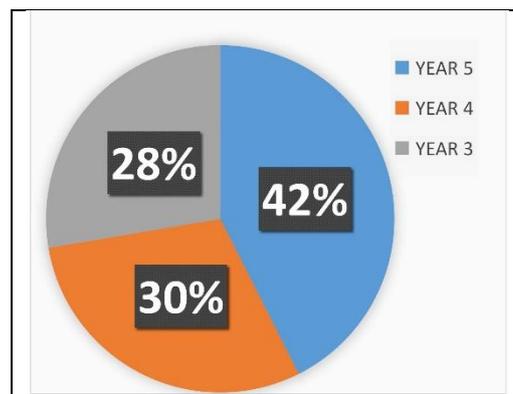


Figure 10: The application of the *Naqli* and *Aqli* according to clinical year

DISCUSSION

THE SAMPLE

The relatively small sample was the limitation of this study. Only USIM clinical dental students were included in the study to observe the integration of the concept as envisioned by the institution. There are two groups of dental students in USIM: pre-clinical dental students (Year 1 and 2) and clinical dental students (Year 3, 4 and 5). The clinical dental students were chosen as samples because they were involved with clinics and patients. Some available data showed that the males' awareness regarding *akhlaq* was higher compared to the females' (Mahmud & Junoh, 2017; Wilhelm *et al.*, 2005) while Karuppaya in 2007 found no significant difference between genders. The larger number of female clinical dental students, however, made it difficult to analyse the male and female separately for this study.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE NAQLI AND AQLI CONCEPT

According to Ibrahim *et al.* (2016), for the students to apply the *Naqli* and *Aqli* concept, they must first know the difference between the two. Although 22% of the dental students were not sure whether they understood the concept, none of them completely did not understand it. Most USIM students came from religious secondary schools, including the federal, state, and private schools. That was why most of them already had a basic knowledge about the integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli* (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2017). Besides being introduced to this concept when they joined USIM, the students were also frequently reminded of this concept through the University's Philosophy. In alignment with the philosophy, the concept was incorporated into the dental Course Learning Outcome, which is to be achieved by the students by the end of the course (Faculty of Dentistry, USIM, Course Outline). It is believed that *akhlaq* of an individual could be nurtured and changed for the better. With gradual and continued practice, it will become an aptitude and a character (Ibn Miskawayh, 1968). Perhaps better result could be observed if the concept is made clearer during teaching learning session or Ayatisation

INTEGRATION OF NAQLI AND AQLI IN LEARNING SESSIONS - PUNCTUALITY

One of the aspects asked of the students in evaluating their integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli* concept during their learning session is regarding punctuality. Quoted from Surah Al-'Asr verse 1 to 3, "By (the Token of) Time (through the ages), Verily Man is in loss, except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy." Students who have integrated the *Naqli* should have known that punctuality is emphasized in Islam. From this study, only 6% admitted they were unable to be punctual while 75% of the clinical students attended classes on time. Previous study by Hanim *et al.* (2017) on Year 5 USIM dental students also showed that they applied the integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli* by being punctual to classes. The faculty itself has taken measures, whereby students with unsatisfactory attendance were not allowed to sit for exams. Although student's punctuality was not directly noted, marks were given according to their attitude including punctuality (Students Logbook for Faculty of Dentistry). This is a method of teaching *akhlaq* through striving (*mujahadah*) (Nor Azzah, 2010).

INTEGRATION OF NAQLI AND AQLI IN CLINICAL SESSIONS – FOLLOW THE RULES

Since law is described as promoting justice, people tend to behave according to the man-made rules (Bilz & Nadler, 2014), as shown by more than half of the respondents who have returned the borrowed clinical equipment within the allocated time. However, more than half of the remaining respondents failed to display this component of *akhlaq*, with only 12% admitting that they returned the equipment on time, and the other 36% only followed the rules occasionally. As quoted in Surah An-Nisa' Verse 60 "O ye who believe! Obey Allah and obey His Messenger and those who are in authority over you", Muslims should remain faithful not only to Allah and Prophet Muhammad pbuh, but also to the authority. Although student's behaviors were not directly noted, marks were given according to their attitude (Students Logbook for Faculty of Dentistry).

INTEGRATION OF NAQLI AND AQLI IN CLINICAL SESSIONS – CLEANLINESS

The next question asked of the students is if they changed their purple coat daily. Unfortunately, only 1% of the students changed their purple coat daily while 25% changed occasionally and 74% never did it daily. The purple coat is the uniform required to be worn during a clinical session to reduce cross-infection. Islam places a great emphasis on cleanliness not only spiritually, but also physically. It is so emphasized that cleanliness is stated many times in the Quran. As stated by Prophet Muhammad pbuh, "Cleanliness is half of the faith (*Iman*)" (Sahih Muslim). The Quran says this more specifically, such as "Truly, God loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves" (Surah Al Baqarah Verse 222). Unfortunately, this cleanliness was not shown by the respondents through the behaviour of not changing the purple coat daily. Further questioning revealed that this was due to insufficient time and purple coats to rotate for daily use. However, if the questions were changed to weekly instead of daily, it is not known if the result of the study would be different. Perhaps, the method of force and practice or training (*riyadah*) oneself with a decent *akhlaq* until it becomes a habit (Ibn Miskawayh, 1968) should be used instead of enforcing on self-awareness. Perhaps a yearly purchase of white coats and the possession of 2 or more white coats at any point of time should be made compulsory.

INTEGRATION OF NAQLI AND AQLI IN CLINICAL SESSIONS – TRUSTWORTHY

In the early stages of the faculty development, the students were initially entrusted with the dental materials and equipment to be used for their clinical work. Unfortunately, after some time, trust issues came up. The system was later changed with the need of inspecting instruments and controlling the distribution of dental materials before and after every clinical session. From this study,

62% of the students agreed with the new system while 22% sometimes agreed and the other 16% did not agree with the new system. This may be linked to the lack of trust and responsibility among the students. It may also suggest that the integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli* has not been fully grasped by the students. Trust is an important component in a well-balanced individual as mentioned in Surah Al-'Anfal verse 27, "O you who have believed, do not betray Allah and the Messenger or betray your trusts while you know (the consequence)." According to Chan (2020), although caring and fairness are two relevant bases to target behaviours, fines and punishments are still being used as a deterrent, as shown in some health promotions across the world. Although the faculty did not implement any fines or punishment, the new system gives the sense of authority to the faculty instead of the students, to control the distributions of the material.

INTEGRATION OF *NAQLI* AND *AQLI* IN CLINICAL SESSIONS – GENERAL

In general, when the students were asked whether they have integrated the concept of *Naqli* and *Aqli* in their clinical settings, half of the samples thought they did. A small number of students (36%) thought they did it occasionally. Surprisingly, another 10% thought they never did. According to Hanim et al. (2017), the students said that "From my experience, I can see that sometimes we implement the integration (*Naqli-Aqli*) in the clinic like timeliness and cleanliness. We as Muslims need to be punctual as time is very important". It could be that the small number of students who thought they did it occasionally or never did were because they thought they did not fulfill these mentioned elements. According to Laeheem (2018), the Islamic way of upbringing, knowledge of the religion, participation in Islamic activities, and practicing Islamic principles were statistically significantly correlated to Islamic ethical behavior.

INTEGRATION OF *NAQLI* AND *AQLI* ACCORDING TO CLINICAL YEAR

Finally, based on the year of study, 42.6% students from Year 5, 29.8% from Year 4 and 27.7% from Year 3 thought they integrated the *Naqli* and *Aqli* concept. This finding is consistent with the conclusion of a study by Coelho and Moles in 2015 that senior students appreciate and understand curriculum better. However, this may also depend on how the integration was implemented through the course. Abdullah et al. (2018) suggested that the instructors who did not have formal Islamic background qualification would need assistance especially in classes where the students have differing views on certain topics. Thus, the background of the instructor or the lecturer could play a role as well. On the other hand, the result also shows that the application of the concepts is improved over the year of study.

CONCLUSION

Almost all students (92.0%) understood the concept of *Naqli* and *Aqli* after learning about them through the integration in USIM while 8.0% were not sure. More than half of the students (53.4%) thought that they applied this concept in their clinical work, 36.4% of them thought they applied it occasionally and the rest (10.2%) thought they did not apply the concept of integration of *Naqli* and *Aqli*. Overall, the *Naqli* and *Aqli* concepts were more commonly integrated by the Year 5 students (42.6%) than Year 4 (29.8%) and Year 3 (27.7%). There should be room for improvements or perhaps a system regarding the cleanliness, specifically regarding the daily changing of the purple coat. With regards to trustworthy issues, the inspection system must be continued. On the other hand, satisfactory punctuality among the students show that the integration is also a success. A behaviour study could yield a more precise assessment of the application of *Naqli* and *Aqli* among the students. Nevertheless, this study could also serve as a reflection and are able to highlight issues that need to be emphasized. Nonetheless, the present study is hoped to benefit the process and progress of integrating *Naqli* and *Aqli* into the dentistry course in the university and stimulate further research into the role of the faculty in students' *akhlaq*.

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Diana Md Zahid
Faculty of Dentistry,
University Sains Islam Malaysia
Level 15, Tower B, Persiaran MPAJ,
Jalan Pandan Utama, Pandan Indah, 52000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia,
Email: dr.diana@usim.edu.my, Tel: 012 9005715

Nur Hidayah Che' Oun
Faculty of Dentistry,
University Sains Islam Malaysia
Level 15, Tower B, Persiaran MPAJ,
Jalan Pandan Utama, Pandan Indah, 52000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia,
Email: hidayahcheoun@gmail.com, Tel: 018 2463496

Nur Iman Mohd Habir
Faculty of Dentistry,
University Sains Islam Malaysia
Level 15, Tower B, Persiaran MPAJ,
Jalan Pandan Utama, Pandan Indah, 52000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia,
Email: imanminhah@gmail.com, Tel: 014 520 8900