

Profile

Dr. Omar Hasan K. Kasule: Pioneer in Integrating Islamic Medicine into Medical Practice and Teaching

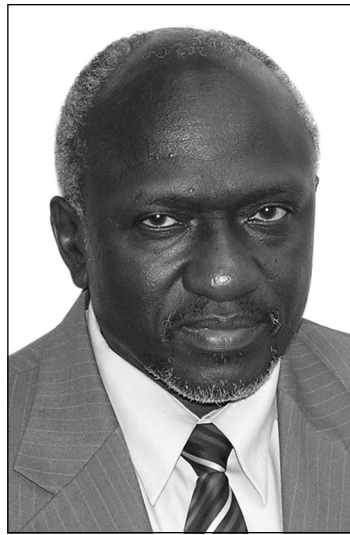
Omar Hasan Kasule, MBChB (MUK), MPH, DrPH (Harvard) graduated from Makerere University in Uganda and subsequently obtained his postgraduate training in public health, including a doctorate in epidemiology, from Harvard University. He was a fellow at Harvard and taught a course on the delivery of maternal and child health services. At the Harvard Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, Massachusetts, he worked on cancer clinical trials and analysis of cancer epidemiological data from the Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group (ECOG). Additionally, Dr. Kasule obtained a certification in Arabic and Islamic studies from Bilal institute in Kampala, Uganda.

From 1987 to 1995, Dr. Kasule was in the United States managing development projects involving education and health in North America and the Caribbean and was a clinical epidemiology quality assurance consultant in several states.

After working in the United States, Dr. Kasule accepted a position at the newly established International Islamic University in Malaysia, where from 1995 to 2005 he held the appointments of professor of medicine, deputy dean for research and postgraduate affairs, and founding chief editor of the International Medical Journal (www-e-imj.com). Dr. Kasule's teachings emphasize the study and practice of medicine that integrates social and ethical values into the medical curriculum. He has 7 years experience conducting problem-based learning sessions for undergraduates.

Since June 2005, Dr. Kasule has been on the faculty of medicine of the University of Brunei, where he teaches undergraduate students epidemiology, biostatistics, and medical ethics. He teaches postgraduate courses on advanced research methods and evidence-based health policy and practice. The King Fahd Medical City in Riyadh was fortunate in recruiting Dr. Kasule to its faculty of medicine in 2009.

Dr. Kasule has served as an external examiner



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and consultant for several universities. Fluent in six languages, Dr. Kasule over the last 24 years has traveled, in addition to his medical work, to many countries conducting management programs for nongovernmental organizations and community leaders.

Dr. Kasule is a consultant on Islamic medicine and the integration of Islam into medical practice and teaching for many hospitals and faculties of medicine in the southeastern Asia region. His writings on these disciplines can be accessed at <http://omarkasule.tripod.com>

I was first introduced to Dr. Kasule in June 2008 when he presented at the NOOR Forum in Madinah, Saudi Arabia. After that I invited Dr. Kasule to visit King Fahd Medical City (KFMC) in Riyadh and had the pleasure of getting to know him better. The theme of his presentations and discussions at KFMC involved his passion and contribution to the incorporation of Islamic values and ethos into medical curriculum and helping graduate and train Muslim physicians empowered with the highest ethical values. His diverse presentations to staff, students, and administration received exceptional evaluations, and his personal mannerisms—soft spoken, polite but firm, knowledgeable yet humble—were indeed a pleasure to experience. He is a real role model. His pioneering work across Indonesia, Malaysia, and, more recently, Brunei, has transformed medical education in a significant number of medical schools in southeast Asia. This has resulted in Dr. Kasule being a

sought-after scholar all over the globe. His presentation at KFMC, “Medical-Ethical-Legal Learning Practice—A Trans-Cultural International Experience,” was absolutely brilliant. In this presentation, Dr. Kasule reviewed the theory and principles in medical ethics used in training programs and shared his personal experience in three continents (Antartica and Australia excluded) and 11 countries.

I requested Dr. Kasule to describe the reasons that led him on this very unusual career path, and here is his explanation:

Professor Kasule, like most Muslim intellectuals of today, was exposed to the crisis of duality in education from his youngest days in the late 1950s when he attended Arabic Islamic schools in the morning and secular English schools in the afternoon. He was motivated to find a solution to the crisis of duality or intellectual schizophrenia among Muslim intellectuals exposed to two systems of education with different and contradictory world views. In the 1970s he motivated groups of Muslim teachers to develop Islamic religious knowledge modules for East African secondary schools.

In the 1980s, while completing his postgraduate training in public health at Harvard, he shifted his attention to addressing the duality crisis by flying more than half a million miles, running workshops under the aegis of the International Federation of Student Organizations. These workshops addressed the holistic Tauhidi-based personal, leadership, and intellectual development of youths in all continents except Australia.

In the early 1990s, as director of education and leadership training programs based in Virginia, he addressed the duality crisis by working with Islamic schools in North America and all over the world under the umbrella of International Bureau for

Education Research and Resources. The focus was developing curricula and teaching materials that would reflect the Islamic world view in all school subjects and thus mitigate the effects of the duality crisis. He took a momentous decision in 1995 to move to the newly established faculty of medicine at the International Islamic University in Malaysia and applied the experience of three decades of working on the duality crisis to the development of Islamic input into the medical curriculum that would ensure that future physicians would learn and practice medicine with embedded Islamic values and *fiqh*. He continued the same mission when he became a professor of epidemiology and Islamic medicine at the newly established faculty of medicine of the University of Brunei in 2005.

Over the past 13 years he has written and lectured extensively in Southeast Asia and other parts of the world on integrated medical curricula, and many medical schools have adopted his ideas (See <http://omarkasule.tripod.com>). Since 2008 he has transferred his experience in the medical field to other university disciplines as director of the Islamic Epistemology and Curriculum Reform Project (see www.i-epistemology.net).

Profile submitted by

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