UNDERSTANDING PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE FROM ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGY AMONG MUSLIM EDUCATORS IN TANZANIA

MNYERO JANJA

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UNDERSTANDING PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE FROM ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGY AMONG MUSLIM EDUCATORS IN TANZANIA

By

MNYERO JANJA

Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in the Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 2016

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to *Allah,* my Creator, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds, and His Prophet Muhammad who taught us the purpose of life. I also dedicate this work to daring students of knowledge, teachers, educators, researchers, academicians and scholars who never stop theorizing and practicing comprehensive understanding of knowledge and education. Besides, this work is dedicated to my beloved parents, the late Sheikh Ali Seneyda Gunda (May Allah rest his soul) who at no time stopped educating people in integrative and comprehensive manner, my mother Asha bt Hj. Mnyero for her heartfelt guidance and countless prayers, my father-in-law Sheikh, Hj. Muhammad Othman Katongo for his encouragement. Additionally, I dedicate this work to Sheikh Hilali Muhammad Qassim, Sheikh Ahmad Zuberi and Dr. Kisusu, the late Sheikh Abdallah Ayoub (May Allah rest his soul) and the late Uncle Ali Mnyero (May Allah rest his soul) the symbols of love, giving and support whom I can't force myself to stop loving them all. Furthermore, I dedicate this work to Dr. Ramadhan K. Dau, Prof. Ahmed Mohammed Ame, *mwalimu* Muhammad Said, *Mama* Subira Sawasawa, brothers Muhammad Yusuf, Seneyda Ali, sisters Khadija Sebe, Tuli Sebe, Wajiha bt Sheikh Gunda and my beloved wife Halima bint Hj. Muhammad who all sand by me when things look depressing and challenging. Above all, I dedicate this research to my friends and enemies and all the people who touch my *qalb* (heart), *ruh* (spirit), *nafs* (self) and *aql* (intellect).

Abstract of the thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

UNDERSTANDING PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE FROM ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGY AMONG MUSLIM EDUCATORS IN TANZANIA

By

MNYERO JANJA

May 2016

Chairman : **Norhayati Alwi, PhD**
Faculty : **Educational Studies**

In line with teacher education reform, it is essential to understand pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) from epistemological views among educators. This research inquiry aimed to unveil meaning, nature and approaches that Muslim educators engage in understanding of PCK. The study focused on PCK as interpreted, experienced, processed and understood from Muslim educators' perspectives and in what ways those views fit Islamic epistemology of knowledge, education and learning. This qualitative phenomenological research inquiry purposively sampled eight Muslim educators with rich teaching and education related working experiences. With hermeneutic phenomenology, the respondents were engaged to reflect their experiences that matter most on the aspect of PCK through probing questions. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews and were transcribed verbatim before being analysed through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Approach. Analytically, the researcher used this approach to focus on the rich parts of the interviews and get initial themes from the transcript of each respondent as an individual case. Thereafter, conceptual connections were made within and across themes to transform initial themes into abstraction before they were connected together in more meaningful themes. Emerged themes were cross-checked with the individual transcripts to note additional information and deepen analysis. Finally, the researcher used the theme of the first case to identify other themes with similar meanings and ended up by developing a master list of more concise themes.

The findings revealed that Tawhidic thinking underpinned unified meaning of PCK among Muslim educators. That meaning ranged from foundational to predominant or self-authorship level. At foundational level, knowledge of learner and self, and knowledge of subject matter were just conceptualised as generic and simplistic ones. At transitional level, shifting integrated knowledge of curriculum and context was shown while at predominant level, self-authorship or predominant Islamic pedagogy became fully realised. Equally, it was revealed that basic understanding of Divine

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revelation featured integration of reasoning and empirical observation with revealed knowledge in hierarchical order to define the nature of PCK. In addition, it was unveiled that embedded Tawhidic thinking in the form of recognition of Allah and observing sincerity of intention and learning culture underpinned memorisation with understanding, articulation and intenalisation of values, manifestation or implementation as holistic integrated learning processes of PCK. Upon intensely tied all themes on the meaning, nature and learning approach with ingrained Tawhidic thinking, therefore, Tawhidic pedagogical content knowledge emerged.

It can be concluded that Tawhidic thinking is the key to conceptualisation of unified meaning of PCK needed for educating good human consistent to their grand purpose and mission of life. Moreover, informed Muslim educators seek to establish strong physical-metaphysical unification of knowledge that focus to educate quality teachers who can face professional and global challenges to succeed in this world and Hereafter. Furthermore, it is primarily vital to appreciate the essence of ingrained Tawhidic thinking to better understand how Muslim educators' beliefs shape their experiences on learning approach and understanding of PCK.

The findings of this research have implications that effective meaning of PCK is consistent to wholeness of learner and of self. In addition, effective Muslim educators are committed to holistic- integrated nature of knowledge for significant learners' lasting achievements. The spirit on learning and understanding of PCK amongst Muslim educators is to transform and educate complete being, regardless challenges.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

MEMAHAMI PEMBELAJARAN TERHADAP PENGETAHUAN ISI KANDUNGAN PEDAGOGI DARIPADA EPISTEMOLOGI ISLAM DALAM KALANGAN PENDIDIK ISLAM DI TANZANIA

Oleh

MNYERO JANJA

Mei 2016

Pengerusi : **Norhayati Alwi, PhD**
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Selaras dengan reformasi pendidikan perguruan, adalah begitu penting untuk memahami pendekatan pembelajaran terhadap pengetahuan isi kandungan pedagogi daripada pendidik. Inkuiri penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk mendedahkan makna, ciri dan pendekatan pembelajaran spesifik yang digunakan oleh pendidik Islam dalam pembelajaran mengenai pengetahuan isi kandungan pedagogi seperti yang ditentukan oleh epistemologi Islamik. Inkuiri penyelidikan fenomenologikal kualitatif ini secara khususnya menggunakan lapan sampel pendidik Islam yang amat kaya dengan pengajaran dan pendidikan berkaitan dengan pengalaman bekerja. Dengan fenomenologi hermeneutik, respondan telah dihubungi bagi mendapatkan refleksi semula pengalaman mereka yang amat penting bagi aspek PCK melalui soalan-soalan pencungkilan. Data dikumpulkan melalui temu bual separastruktur secara mendalam dan ditranskripsi secara verbatim sebelum dianalisis melalui Pendekatan Analisis Fenomenologikal Interpretatif. Secara analitis, pengkaji menggunakan pendekatan ini bagi memfokus kepada temubual bahagian yang kaya dengan data bagi membolehkan tema awal daripada transkrip bagi setiap respondan sebagai kes individu. Selepas itu kaitan konsep dibuat sesama dan bersilang tema bagi menukar tema awal kepada abstrak sebelum dikaitkan bersama bagi tema yang lebih bermakna. Tema yang muncul disemak semula dengan transkrip individu bagi maklumat tambahan dan analisis yang lebih mendalam. Akhir sekali pengkaji menggunakan tema bagi kes pertama bagi mengenalpasti tema lain dengan makna serupa dan menamatkannya dengan membuat senarai utama bagi tema yang lebih padat.

Hasil kajian mendapati bahawa pemikiran Tawhidik mendasari makna disatukan bagi PCK dalam kalangan pendidik Islam. Makna tersebut meliputi dari peringkat asas ke peringkat pradominan atau kepengarangan sendiri. Pada peringkat asas, pengetahuan pelajar dan kendiri, serta pengetahuan tentang bahan subjek dikonsepsikan sebagai generik dan amat mudah. Pada peringkat transitional, perubahan integrasi pengetahuan mengenai kurikulum dan konteks diperlihatkan, manakala pada

peringkat pradominan, kepengarangan kendiri atau pradominan pedagogi Islamik didapati telah direalisasikan sepenuhnya. Di samping itu, kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa pemahaman asas mengenai ciri pengetahuan yang dikesan memperlihatkan integrasi penaakulan dan pemerhatian empirikal beserta pengetahuan yang dikesan dalam susunan hieraki bagi mendefinisikan ciri PCK. Tambahan lagi, kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa tersemat di dalam pemikiran Tawhidik ialah bentuk pengenalan terhadap Allah dan penelitian terhadap keikhlasan niat dan budaya pembelajaran yang mendasari penghafalan dengan pemahaman, artikulasi dan internalisasi nilai, manifestasi atau implementasi sebagai proses pembelajaran PCK yang berintegrasi dan holistik. Disebabkan ikatan yang jitu dengan semua tema terhadap makna, ciri dan pendekatan pembelajaran dengan pemikiran Tawhidik, oleh sebab itu, pengetahuan isi kandungan pedagogi Tawhidik wujud.

Kesimpulan utama ialah pemikiran Tawhidik merupakan kata kunci bagi mengkonseptualisasikan makna PCK disatukan yang diperlukan untuk mendidik manusia yang baik selaras dengan matlamat utama dan misi kehidupan. Lebih-lebih lagi, pemahaman asas dan kebolehan untuk mengintegrasikan pengetahuan metafizikal fizikal merupakan modal intelektual yang menggalakkan bagi pendidik yang mencari untuk mendidik guru berkualiti yang berjaya dalam dunia ini dan dunia di akhirat nanti. Di samping itu, tertanam pemikiran Tawhidik merupakan sentral dalam mendefinisikan pendekatan pembelajaran spesifik yang dilaksanakan oleh pendidik Islam dalam pembelajaran PCK.

Implikasi kajian ini ialah terdapatnya keperluan untuk menghayati makna dan kebolehgunaan pemikiran Tawhidik bagi mempromosikan konsepsi bersatu mengenai pengetahuan, dalam kes ini ialah PCK. Di samping itu, pendidik Islam yang efektif adalah komited pada amalan bersepadu holistik melewati pandangan konvensional dari segi konstruksi pengetahuan selaras dengan pencapaian berpanjangan pelajar. Terdapat juga keperluan yang serius bagi mengambil kira pati PCK dalam kalangan pendidik bagi mendidik dan mentransformasikan pelajar supaya lebih sempurna dan lengkap. Perkara ini penting ditengah-tengah tekanan cabaran terhadap agenda neoliberal bagi pemahaman mengenai kandungan dan pengetahuan pedagogi dalam pendidikan perguruan.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 30 May 2016 to conduct the final examination of Mnyero Janja on his thesis entitled "Understanding Pedagogical Content Knowledge from Islamic Epistemology among Muslim Educators in Tanzania" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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Declaration by Members of Supervisory Committee

This is to confirm that:
- the research conducted and the writing of this thesis was under our supervision;
- supervision responsibilities as stated in the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Graduate Studies) Rules 2003 (Revision 2012-2013) were adhered to.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SAW	*Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam*
SMK	Subject Matter Knowledge
KL& S	Knowledge of Learner and Self
KCC	Knowledge of Curriculum and Context
KSM	Knowledge of Subject Matter
NWREL	Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PK	edagogical Knowledge

LIST OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

There has been a growing concern to reform teacher education. Teacher education reform is part of a broader educational development to improve teaching quality and, thus, student learning and overall performance (Darling Hammond, 2005). Central to improved teaching quality is pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), a professional knowledge of and skill for teaching (Shulman, 1986a). Since its inception in 1980s, the concept of PCK has been an important in discussions of educating teachers, with right combination of qualifications and pedagogical skills in practice. Yet today, in Western epistemological thought, the conception of PCK is continually being contested, refined and modified predominantly, through objectivist and subjectivist views (McEwan & Bull, 1991). Although, each of these views has its own strengths and limitations, most studies and discourses have adopted stance that seems to neglect, other non-Western epistemological considerations (Merriam & Kim, 2008). For that reason, understandings of PCK remain inconclusive.

Back in the 1990s, Tanzania combined the potencies of public, private and religious Teachers' Training Colleges, for more dynamic teacher education programmes. In 2007, PCK was introduced as a teaching method course for diploma teacher education (Tanzania Institute of Education [TIE], 2007). Remarkably, the continuous debates on PCK has left teacher educators in Tanzania and perhaps elsewhere, understand it through own experiences. Recent evidence, however, suggests growing concern for many things including, ethical challenges (Anangisye, 2010), student teachers' scant content knowledge (Vavrus, 2009); surface integration of pedagogical and revealed knowledge, and inadequate knowledge of curricula, in the context of dealing with inserted secular spirits in schools and colleges (Islamic Education Panel, 2013). What researchers have often overlooked, however, is the Muslim educators' attempts to reconsider the appropriateness of the debated PCK, from the Islamic epistemological thought (Hashim, 2005). Such observations had vital implications for the development of this study. This chapter gives the background to the study on understanding of Pedagogical Content Knowledge from Islamic epistemology among Muslim educators in Tanzania. It covers the statement of the problem, research questions, significance, scope and limitations of the study. Finally, it provides operational definitions and the chapter summary.

1.2   Background of the Study

This section deals with teacher education in Tanzania to situate the background to the study. The purpose is to give general overview of the teacher education and reform initiatives. In that regard, it addresses the concept of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) in Western Epistemology. Besides, it points the link of Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Diploma Education Programme in Tanzania. In addition, it addresses

Islamic Teacher Training Colleges and Teacher Education, Islamic epistemology and Muslim educators in Tanzania. It also describes the growing concern in colleges of teacher education in Tanzania. Thus, the floowing description of each subsection is in order.

1.2.1   Teacher Education in Tanzania

As earlier introduced, the concern on teacher education is widespread. According to Nakpodia and Urien (2011) teacher education is the process which nurtures prospective teachers and updates qualified teachers' knowledge and skills in the form of continuous professional development. In this section, teacher education is conceptualised as a progression of professional knowledge of teaching. This idea covers both in-service and pre-service teachers. There is also induction with reference to the process of training and supporting an individual during first year of teaching or first year in a particular school (Nakpodia & Urien, 2011; Lewin, 2005). Teacher education reform is an enduring agenda with the focus to improve teaching. For that reason, teacher education reform in Tanzania is no different from that of other developing countries. In practice, there is a full-time certificate and diploma college-based training lasting for two years, a Degree Programme at university-college lasting for three years and full-time postgraduate training subsequent to the award of a degree. There are also various In-Service systems in colleges and schools.

In Tanzania, teacher education in Teacher Training Colleges has the following aims and objectives. The first is to impart theories and principles of education, psychology, guidance and counseling, principles and skills of pedagogy, creativity and innovation. The second is to promote an understanding of the foundations of the school curriculum and sharpen the knowledge of teacher trainees, teachers and instructors so that they master the selected subjects, skills and technologies. The third is to impart research skills, assessment and evaluation techniques, and organizational, leadership and management skills to teacher trainees, serving teachers and teacher educators (United Republic of Tanzania [URT], 1995). Upon completion as secondary or primary teachers, they will have a significant role in prompting innovations and changes in the nation (Kitta & Fussy, 2013). For teacher educators, particular attention is given to the following: First, teacher educators have to integrate subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. Second, teacher educators must have considerable knowledge of student-centred teaching and learning approaches. Third, teacher educators should educate ethical and quality teachers (Kitta & Fussy, 2013; Anangisye, 2010). Therefore, the above aims and expectations lend support to have comprehensive understanding of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) as professional knowledge of teaching. In the following part, the account of PCK in Western epistemological thought is presented.

1.2.2   Pedagogical Content Knowledge in Western Epistemology

This section aims to situate the concept PCK in Western epistemology which seems to dominate its conceptions. The detailed description is given in the literature review section. For the sake of part, the following description is important:

Since the world with time grows into a global society, education is understood as an authoritative opportunity for nationwide development. For that reason, growing research evidences call for improved teacher education programmes (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Those are programmes with clear views of teaching knowledge and learning, and integrated pedagogical knowledge and related strategies across courses (Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust & Shulman, 2005). This means teachers in schools and teacher educators in teacher education colleges, must develop useful teaching knowledge and understanding in order to serve diverse learners positively (Abdul Rahman, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2006). One of the most pervasive inventions linked to the said teacher education reform, is the concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK). This concept is considered as one of the active constitutes of professional knowledge of teaching in educating teachers with required knowledge.

Interstingly, Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) in the Western epistemology is understood through objectivist or constructivist views (McEwan & Bull, 1991). Western epistemology here means theoretical thinking of what is knowledge, how people know what they know, and what relationship exists between the knower and the known in the framework of the secular Western worldview (Chilisa, 2012; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Equally, the concept of objectivist is used to mean positivist epistemological view which favours independent relationship between the knower and known (objectivism) while constructivist denotes interpretive epistemological view which encourages subjectivism or dependent relationship between the knower and the known (Scotland, 2012; Crotty, 1998). At first, PCK was conceptualised as a "special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding" (Shulman, 1987; p.8). This conception as observed by McEwan and Bull (1991) is underpinned by the objectivist views of reality.

In practice, that early conception of PCK is considered central to successful teacher education programmes. In this way, PCK becomes a transformative and a new expert knowledge of teaching resulting from the converted subject matter, pedagogical and contextual knowledge (Kind, 2009a) and it is out there to be discovered (Scotland, 2012). Based on such objectivist view, the given conception of PCK is expected to provide educators, teachers and pre-service teachers with a rational understanding of what constitutes good teaching (Ballantyne, 2005). This means PCK is used to reflect a separate synthesized form of subject matter, and pedagogical and contextual knowledge components needed to make effective teachers (Ball, Thames & Phelps, 2008; Gess-Newsome & Lederman, 1999). In the course of time, however, another group of researchers has emerged and focused on integrative view of PCK (Oliver & Parker, 2008). Unlike objectivist view, in this particular view, PCK is also conceptualised as the intimate intersection of subject matter, pedagogical and contextual knowledge (Gess-Newsome, 1999) based on the constructivist view of reality (Abdul Rahman & Scaife, 2012). This epistemological twist signifies that the understanding of PCK is not generalised but rather constructed. From this background, we can trace numerous views that seem fundamental to teaching knowledge debates related to the understanding of PCK. In the subsequent part, the position of PCK in teacher education in Tanzania is stated.

Most researchers, scholars and policy makers have taken side based on differences on the said epistemological views. Remarkably, that difference of perspectives is documented amidst great inconsistences between Western and non-Western epistemological views on knowledge construction and or learning (Merriam & Kim, 2008). In the Western epistemological view, meaning and sources of knowledge are demarcated while learner's body is separated from the spirit (Nasr, 2012). The implication of this understanding is that of partial concept of learner as human being and a hostile approach towards both God and religion. Now, when Islamic view is used as non-Western epistemology, there is cognition of (God) *Allah* as the starting point and final goal in understanding the world and its content including knowledge and learner as created human being (Nasr, 2012; Tauhid, 2007). This means there is unity and Godliness of knowledge, learner's life and practices. This is vital reflection because it is coherent with the gist of this present study.

At this stage, therefore, it is worth remarking that cognition of *Allah* to Muslims is the ultimate basis of strength. Two important questions need to be addressed: First, what is the position of the Muslim educators who do not blindly follow the Western-materialistic view of knowledge in conceptualising the concept of PCK? Second, how do such Muslim educators go about with Islamic view in theorizing the meaning and tracing the nature of PCK? In the following part, the description of teacher education and position of PCK in Tanzania is given before talking about the Muslim educators and Islamic Teachers' Training Colleges.

1.2.3 Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Teacher Education in Tanzania

As noted in the previous, understanding of PCK is debated on objectivist and constructivist epistemological grounds. This section intends place PCK in Tanzanian context as follows:

In 2007, in a bid to reform teacher education in the form of strengthening subject content, pedagogical knowledge and skills of teaching (Kitta & Fussy, 2013) Tanzania incorporated Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) as a teaching method course for diploma teacher education (TIE, 2007). Definitely, the reform was thought as important in order to match the competence-based curricula and student-centred learning in schools (Hardman, Abd- Kadir & Tibuhinda, 2012). In the conteted objective and constructive views, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) seemed to suggest the integrative model of PCK.

This integrative stance is seen as acknowledgement of its potentials in understanding of PCK for improved teacher education. Specifically, a policy letter of 2006 cited by Binde (2010) reads as follows:

> "The conceived diploma in the education syllabus needs to be relevant (fit for purpose) and facilitate the teaching and learning needs of secondary education. The concerns about subject matter and pedagogy need to be fairly resolved. Combining the best of the conventional and modern

pedagogical approaches to form an integrated system of teaching and learning which is geared towards competencies in teacher education is of prime importance". (MoEVT, June 22nd, 2006).

One of the issues that emerge from this policy statement is that, teacher educators are encouraged to integrate pedagogy and content (Binde, 2010). Thinking about integrative PCK can entail readiness to include, among other things, insights and truths from a collection of perspectives for a more complete understanding of the phenomenon (Esbjörn-Hargens, Reams, Jonathan & Olen, 2010). In this case, the educators' integrative understanding of PCK is needed in order to educate informed teachers, who can improve teaching in schools (Bhalalusesa, Westbrook, Lussier et al. 2011) consistent to wholeness and holiness of knowledge and learner (Al-Zeera, 2001). Based on the above observation, comprehensive understanding of PCK becomes important, due to its significant status in the reformed curriculum of diploma in secondary education, diploma in primary education, and diploma in childhood pre-service programmes in Tanzania.

To date, the current setting of the reformed curriculum of the said diploma programmes is a living witness. According to TI, (2007) the curriculum for this diploma programme is divided into three units. First, it covers specialized courses such as curriculum and teaching, foundations of Education, psychology, guidance and counseling, research and evaluation and measurement. Second, it covers academic courses, which include academic content knowledge (ACK) of different discipline subjects, such as Kiswahili Language, History, Geography, Biology and Mathematics. Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) is treated as a teaching method course for each subject (TIE, 2007). The third component includes general courses with subjects such as Islamic and Bible knowledge, information and communication technology, educational media and technology, communication skills and project work. Together, these three units suggest a critical role for educators to scan and try to understand them from the proper view. The emphasis of this study is on Islamic epistemology and Muslim educators who teach at diploma level for secondary school education. In the succeeding part, the description of Islamic Teachers' Colleges and Teacher Education is in order:

1.2.4 Islamic Teachers' Colleges and Teacher Education in Tanzania

To appreciate the presence of Islamic Teachers' Colleges in teacher education in Tanzania and Islamic epistemology, one needs to clearly understand the following: First, the idea of Islamic Teachers' Colleges is not new. Historians and researchers (Sengondo, 2013; Said, 2011; Mushi, 2009; Lodhi; 1994) trace the idea far back to the 8th century when Quranic schools had been part of the indigenous learning system. In those days, Tanganyika (the former name of Tanzania before the 1964 unification with Zanzibar) itself did not exist as a territory (Mwakikagile, 2010). Specifically, Sengondo (2013) views the first and second migrations of early Muslims from Makkah to Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) around 615 and 616 AD as the time when Islamic educational thought and practice touched the great east Africa. This observation harbours the idea by Kimambo and Temu (1967) in Mushi (2009) that some societies

in Tanganyika were already depending on Islamic teachers before the arrival of Christian missionaries to educate people for administrative purposes. In view of that it can be said that, at least by the 8th century and before Tanganyika, people were already experiencing Islamic Teachers' Colleges and Islamic epistemological thought and practice. In this study, this is an important historical record which is needed to enrich the discourse on the essence of Islamic Teachers' Colleges in the mainstream teacher education in Tanzania.

Moreover, the commitment of the Tanzanian government to achieve quality education is as well important in the discourse. This is done through being party to the World Declaration on Education for All [EFA] in Joemtien 1990, the Ouagadougou Declaration and Framework for Action on Girls Education in 1993, and the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] (Wedgwood, 2007). In 1995, Tanzania also adopted the liberalization policy. Among other things, this policy allowed religious-based schools, in this case, Muslim and Islamic schools and colleges, to enter mainstream education (Anangisye, 2010). To date, the establishment of Islamic Teachers' Colleges and schools has become a phenomenal throughout the country. Understandably, that happens amidst ideological secular setting of public education in general and teacher education in particular. One implication of this setting is that teaching religious knowledge and views, in addition to other courses in the curriculum should be taken into account by what Anangisye (2010), considers as specific religious-based Teachers' Training Colleges.

The above reflection has the following vital suggestions in relation to the Islamic Teachers' Training Colleges and teacher education. First, the pursuit for integrative education among Muslims in Tanzania has developed over several centuries back. Second, the Tanzanian government vow to quality education and the vision for an educated nation is undeniable. Third, Tanzania is cognizant of different worldviews that exist in religious-based education institutions. Fourth, Islamic Teachers' Colleges are expected to have comprehensive aims of educating student teachers or leaners, as complete human being with universal outlook (Al-Attas, 2005) and for the benefit of humanity (Maududi (1941) in Ali (2010). Therefore, the present Islamic Teachers' Colleges in Tanzania have holistic duty in teacher education reform. The following part describes Islamic epistemology and Muslim educators.

1.2.5 Islamic Epistemology and Muslim Educators

Consistent to the previous subsection on Islamic Teachers' Colleges and Teacher Education in Tanzania, it is important to note that Islam is a complete way of life. Islamic epistemology here refers to the concept or theory of knowledge that addresses knowledge categories in a holistic manner (Bakar, 2011). Central to this conception is the view that Muslim educators should reflect the Islamic intellectual tradition cognizant of the *tawhidic* theological principle, commonly translated as the oneness or unity of *Allah* (Nasr, 2012). At this moment it is worth stating that the Islamic epistemological thought presented here, holds that belief in *Allah* and the life after death must found the comprehensive paradigm shift in making all routine actions among Muslim educators, in order to achieve a form of worship (*ibadah*) from the

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Islamic worldview (Nasr, 2012). Of interest to the present study, is the theoretic orientation of Islamic epistemology on human thought and behavior (Amin, 2009). This understanding lent support to employ the Islamic epistemology as the context and theoretical lens of this study. This theoretical support enriched the premise of this study that Islamic epistemology as a specific lens is comprehensive to promote Muslim educators' attempts to address wholeness of knowledge and leaners.

Muslim educators are professional teachers expected to understand knowledge of teaching, without demarcating knowledge sources (Douglass & Sheikh, 2004). This view requires Muslim educators to fulfill some outstanding duties. The first duty is to capitalize on the *tawhidic* or unity of thoughts that would help them to guard, and preserve the Islamic worldview and belief system (Bakar, 2008). The second duty is to become more active on integrating awareness of their status and that of learners as slaves and vicegerents of *Allah* (Haneef, 2011). The third duty is to put in place content and pedagogical knowledge that would maintain a harmonious balance between sources of knowledge consistent to learners' excellence of this world and the hereafter, as the means and grand purpose of life (Islamic Education Panel, 2013; Hamzah, Krauss, Noah et al., 2007). The fourth duty is to make use of the ethical dimension of knowledge to balance the permanent and comprehensive requests of man and society and their changing needs (Bakar, 2008). Noting the largely debated PCK, Muslim educators are presented with Islamic epistemology as another epistemological view, the realization of which constitutes, a paradigm shift from the fallacy that the Western epistemological thought is universal (Elmessiri, 2013). This paradigmatic shift is important because it guards against the blind acceptance and as Badri (2016) suggest, it can help to critically examine the veiled beliefs and culture-bound assumptions behind weird infused views.The following part describes growing concern in teacher education in Tanzania.

1.2.6   Growing Concern in Teacher Education in Tanzania

Quite understandably, debates surrounding conceptualisation and generalisation of PCK as teaching method course pose challenges in teacher education in Tanzania. This section provides detailed description of the following challenges:

The first challenge is to erase the dualistic nature of debated PCK. Dualistic nature of PCK as in conventional discourses means conceptual religious-secular dichotomy of education and knowledge as a result of secularism (Yasin & Jani, 2013). The present contested PCK and its related dimensions, poses challenge of knowledge (Al-Attas, 1978), due to epistemological faults (McEwan & Bull, 1991) and imported secular liberal thought as standards (Elmessiri, 2013). In this detail, indigenous educators in general and Muslim educators in particular, must bravely identify dualism in the dimensions of PCK. Consistent to the Islamic epistemology, erasing dualistic nature of PCK should be part of the attempts against broad dualism in education inherent in the Western epistemology (Ali, 2010). This view was important in order to terminate according to Semali (1999), mismatch which indigenous learners knowingly or naively face in classrooms and schools.

Another challenge is related to integration of ethical knowledge across disciplines. Ethical knowledge here means an inherent and hidden state of the individual soul's awareness to sustain a good relationship between him/herself as a creature and the Creator, and between him/herself and the rest of other creation (Abdul Rahim, 2013; Haneef, 2011). It is reported that, most Tanzanian teacher educators in general and Muslim teachers in particular, face the challenge of integrating ethical knowledge with the subject content and how to teach it (Issa, 2012; Anangisye, 2010). Quite reasonably, part of the reason is that of dualism as discussed above. In this case, teaching ethics is limited to religious Colleges of Teacher Education and more specific to educators of religious education. In this regard, many of those who teach mathematics, science and geography as their favorite subject matters are incorrectly excluded (Yasin & Jani, 2013). As a result, student teachers seem to miss the direction as are always exposed to split facts and learning by rote without being connected to ethical development.

From the above point, another part of the reason is that of treating colleges of teacher education in Tanzania, as dumping areas with people without qualifications (Anangisye, 2011). This problem is multpiled when incompetent teacher educators fail to integrate ethical knowledge in normal subjects (Anangisye, 2010). The following challenge emerges from these observations. This is the challenge that educators face with integrative PCK model, as the said incompetent educators fail to keep the speed of changes in integrating, knowledge of learner and of self in integrative PCK model (Abdul Rahman & Scaife, 2012). This failure of incompetent teacher educators to grasp the shifting nature of integrative PCK poses a number of questions: what kind of ethical knowledge should they integrate? Why should they choose some content of ethical knowledge and leave others? On what basis do they choose the ethical knowledge components? How can what is most ethical in the content knowledge of their subject of specialization become integrated? Collectively, educators in Tanzania and possibly elsewhere, are challenged to uncover the complex nature of integrative model of PCK towards promoting teacher ethics.

Moreover, there is a challenge linked to scant content knowledge among student teachers. Content knowledge is all about teachers' understanding of the subject they teach (Ball, et al. 2008). Here, scant content knowledge means limited scope and understanding of what to teach. According to Anangisye (2010), most teacher training colleges and universities tended to churn out half-baked school and college teachers to teach without the required competence. This problem has resulted in 'considerable damage to potentially good students' (O-Saki, 2001; p. 60) who eventually become teachers. Repeatedly, most graduates from teachers' colleges lack realistic grasp of content knowledge, self-reliant knowledge, skills and values which stand as a reflection of irrelevant education (Babyegeya & Mushi, 2011). Hence, teacher educators are challenged to engage student teachers for deep grasp of the subject content during respective teaching sessions.

Furthermore, teachers' surface integration of pedagogical knowledge in the actual classroom is another challenge. Surface integration here means mere fitting of a given content knowledge or pedagogy without paying attention to the logic of its language and focus during teaching and learning processes. For instance, Bhalalusesa,

Westbrook, Lussier, et al. (2011) revealed that "educators talk about learner-centred methods, but they are constrained in…what appears to be a separation of content and methods" (p 73). This practice is also repeated when student teachers continue to do the same when they become teachers in schools (Hashim, 2007). Very often, that experience can be linked to failure to learn how to resolve the content-pedagogy divide in colleges (Binde, 2010). Hence, 'rote techniques'' dominate in classrooms (Sumra & Rajani, 2006, p. 4). This challenge separates student teachers from constructive learning activities (Vavrus, 2009) and compromises the shift from teacher-oriented to student-oriented teaching conceptions (Hardman et al., 2012; Woods, 2007). In this context, Muslim educators are challenged to unify knowledge dimensions of PCK consistent to the unity of learner and of self beyond classroom

Above all, inadequate knowledge of the curricula and context among some teacher educators and their respective students (Vavrus, 2009; O-Saki, 2004) is another risk. Inadequate knowledge of curricula and context here means lacking through understanding of what to teach to inspire, learners' ability to make use of their daily experiences and realities (Tauhid, 2007). In the findings by Vavrus (2009), it is reported that most teacher educators during teaching practice sessions fail to capitalize on the material reality of the schools in assessing their students on the pretext of meeting "international standards of excellence" (p. 307). This is a concern as it inhibits diploma teachers' ability on graduating to integrate classroom activities with the reality of the context (O-Saki, 2004). This means most diploma graduates are left with little understanding of what to teach and how to assess the learning in actual setting. Under present diploma education programmes in Tanzanian context, what makes PCK among Muslim educators an interesting topic for research from Islamic epistemology? This is covered in the next part.

1.2.7 Pedagogical Content Knowledge from Islamic Epistemology among Muslim Educators

There were several reasons for limiting the study Islamic epistemology and on Muslim educators. Firstly, the growing interests of Muslim educators on the Islamic epistemology could make it easy for integrative research like the present one to access their understanding of PCK. This research could offer them an opportunity to uncover the complex nature surrounding the conceptualization of PCK. Secondly, teacher education remains as under-researched area in Tanzania (Chambulila, 2013). Specifically, research on Muslim educators who are keen to Islamic epistemology in Tanzania is limited, often lacks impartial and thorough account (Jamjoom, 2010). This could be due to the fact that Muslims, let alone Muslim educators in Tanzania, are incorrectly blamed to hate so called secular education (Njozi, 2003). This research could help to clear that misconception since there is no demarcation between education, teaching, schooling, instruction and training in Islam (Halstead, 2004). Therefore, the research was limited to Muslim educators to appreciate that said broadest sense in practice.

Third, this topic could adjust the focus and assist on developing constructive views about what the Islamic epistemology stand for. The ongoing negative events and media

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description of Islam and Islamic education, mostly base on a full misconception of what makes Islamic epistemology and its focus (Elmessiri, 2013; Amin, 2009). As a result, the lack of research in the frame of the said fallacy has led to poor conclusion that Islamic epistemology and Muslim educators have little to contribute in the teacher education reform. That result has accentuated the importance of this topic. In addition to the above reasons, Muslim educators in Tanzania and indeed elsewhere, are the stake holders in the debated PCK, whether active or passive (Jamjoom, 2010). Expected, their views are constantly shaped and improved, by the unique conception of what constitutes knowledge in educating complete human (Al-Attas, 2005). This research was limited to Muslim educators to help them experience epistemological tensions involved in dealing with PCK. Our focus was not best answers but at least their ability to identify, reflect and constructively suggest full range of plausible conceptions and ideas that can offered from the Islamic epistemological thought. The next section highlights the statement of the problem of this study.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The meaning of PCK has been debated throughout transformative or integrative models (Abdul Rahman & Scaife, 2012; Shulman, 1987; 1986b). The said debate happens while other reserachers remain unclear (Kind, 2009). In Tanzania, PCK is a required teaching method course (TIE, 2007). To date, the contested meaning of PCK remains a concern, because many conceptions of teaching knowledge as in many other developing countries are limited to constructivist instruction to please international donors (Vavrus, 2009; Tabulawa, 2003) and meet labour market requirement (Memon & Ahmad, 2006; Tyack & Cuban, 1996). However, a more fundamental conception of PCK that has yet to be addressed is related to the urgent need of teaching knowledge for educating, the complete person (Haneef, 2011; Alwi & Nordin, 2002). Accordingly, previous studies of PCK have not dealt with multiple epistemological thoughts in much detail (McEwan & Bull, 1991). Until recently, there have been no reliable empirical evidences on how Islamic epistemology, for example, is reflected in the meaning of PCK by Muslim educators. For that reason, this research was conducted to detail it and fill the existing gap in knowledge.

In addition, the present tension on splitting the nature of PCK is real. Some researchers separate PCK and subject matter knowledge, others integrate subject matter knowledge and PCK while another group don't see differences (Kind, 2009; Segall, 2004a). Most studies in the field of teacher education and PCK have only focused, on human against metaphysical sources of knowledge (Salleh, 2009; Al-Zeera, 2001). That has limited insights on learners' spirituality (Tacey, 2002), and ideas to renew curriculum for promoting teacher ethics (Anangisye, 2010). Besides, most of the reviewed works on Islamic view sounds general than specific to PCK. For that reason, literature on the insights of Islamic epistemology (Ahmad, Othman & Ismail, 2012) to address the nature of PCK is scant in Tanzania and definitely somewhere else. An added genuine issue that has yet to be researched is the generally thought integration of human-metaphysical sources in knowing the nature of PCK by Muslim educators. Hence, this study was appropriate to unveil the issue in question.

Furthermore, the tension of separating spiritual thoughts in teaching is evident today. In Tanzania as in other countries, the teacher education curriculum is divided into educational and academic courses (Ball, 2000). In this regard, the task of integrating academic or content knowledge and pedagogy is left to individual educators and teachers themselves (Ball et al. 2008; Ball, 2000). Along with the passion in merging them to fit teacher education reform, however, there is growing concern over silence on educators' spiritual thoughts. This happens as educators spend time, to reflect, think and practice (Schön, 1987) integration of content knowledge and pedagogy (Ball, 2000). Previous studies and reviews (e.g. Vavrus & Bartlett, 2012; Binde, 2010; Kind, 2009; Abel, 2008) are also silent on this aspect. The silent literature highlights the merit to study ways that Muslim educators employ to integrate spiritual thoughts in understanding of PCK from Islamic epistemology.

Tawhidic or unity of thinking is a central theme in the Islamic epistemology. It emerges by being mindful of the unity of learner and of self, life and that of knowledge to please *Allah* (Al-Faruqi, 1992). This thinking is directly related to PCK when it is applied to reflect meaning, nature and approaches and link them to Allah by taking great care of what to include and exclude, in the light of the Divine laws and Divine code of conduct (Nasr, 2012; Maududi, 1941 in Ali, 2010). In this regard, for example, ethical dimension of PCK would be realized by conscious attempts to incorporate virtues, reject vices, and use moral inspired examples, language and narratives into the curriculum at the diploma of education level. The focus is to inspire innermost intellectual and spiritual need of leaner and of self, to fulfill according to (Haneef, 2011; Bakar, 2008), the obligation to Allah the creator, their belief and the rest of creation. This study, therefore, focused on relevance of borrowing the Western epistemological views of PCK by Muslim educators from the Islamic epistemology as an alternative.

1.3.1   Main Research Objective

Based on the said experiences, this study was conducted to unveil the understanding of Pedagogical Content Knowledge from Islamic epistemology among Muslim educators.

1.3.2   Specific Research Objectives

From the main objective, this study focused on the following specific research objectives:

1. To understand the meaning of Pedagogical Content Knowledge among Muslim educators from Islamic epistemology.
2. To explore the nature of Pedagogical Content Knowledge among Muslim educators from Islamic epistemology
3. To appreciate the approaches in understanding of Pedagogical Content Knowledge among Muslim educators from Islamic epistemology.

1.3.3   Main Research Question

In line with above objectives, the main research question was how Pedagogical Content Knowledge is understood among Muslim educators from Islamic epistemology?

1.3.4   Research Questions

The responses to this main research question were specifically guided by the following three specific research questions:

1. What is the meaning of Pedagogical Content Knowledge among Muslim educators using Islamic epistemology?
2. How far is the nature of Pedagogical Content Knowledge among Muslim educators Islamic in epistemology?
3. How do the approaches in understanding of Pedagogical Content Knowledge among Muslim educators reflect the Islamic epistemology?

1.4   Significance of the Study

In line with the above research questions, this study is significant for new knowledge in the field of curriculum and instruction, policy making and improving implementation of practices as emphasized below:

1.4.1   Contribution to New Knowledge in the Field of Curriculum and Instruction

In this area, the findings of this study are significant in the following three ways: Firstly, the findings of this research have highlight Muslim educators' holistic learning experiences that have contributed to develop, and provide conceptual knowledge dimensions relating to PCK. Such knowledge dimensions enrich the growing amount of literature on indigenous knowledge and spirituality aimed at transforming teaching and learning (Chilisa, 2012; Shahjahan, 2005). Getting a grip on Muslim educators' learning of PCK from the Islamic epistemological viewpoint is essential for providing new knowledge in the field. It could be used to inform the content of the teacher education curriculum and instruction about theoretical and pedagogical knowledge in educating balanced, professional and committed teachers. It could also be used to improve students' holistic achievements. This is a needed contribution for a country like Tanzania in her struggle against poverty, ignorance and diseases among its citizens (Kitta & Fussy, 2013). Therefore, the findings add to the philosophy behind unified PCK for educating a holistic individual.

Secondly, the findings of this study have incorporated an educational, pedagogical and civilising focus on Islamic epistemology. They unveil how Muslim educators

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capitalise on revealed knowledge sources to strengthen what they teach, which is compatible with the grand life mission and purpose of learners This knowledge is necessary for enriching the ongoing discourse on integrative PCK, for educating learners in a holistic manner (Salleh, Othman, Radiman, et al. 2011). It can also be infused into the curriculum and instruction field to enrich the discussions about teacher educators' integrity, in order to live what they teach (Paramboor & Ibrahim, 2013). That is important for fulfilling their responsibility to the Creator Almighty *Allah*, mankind and the environment (Nawawi, Rahim & Denan et al. 2014). Ideally, the Islamic epistemological perspective covers a range of Muslim educators' existing knowledge, in favour of student –centred pedagogical instructions and a reform of the Tanzanian curriculum.

Closely related, the findings of this study may contribute to the integration of ethical knowledge in the teacher education curriculum through PCK. It is said that, teaching knowledge like other professional knowledge bases, "tends to develop through a combination of thoughtful practice, reflection and simulation" (Cross, 2009, p.1). In this study, the findings reveal how Muslim educators engage learners, think, appreciate and reflect on their own social context and ethical conditions in practical terms. This knowledge is needed in the curriculum framework of teacher education and instruction that is intended to develop ethical learners' confidence, an inquiring mind and problem-solving skills across disciplines. To sum up, with these potential benefits, the contribution of this study's findings to new knowledge of the curriculum and instruction could be used to strengthen the field.

1.4.2 Contribution to Policy Making

Concurring with aforesaid contribution, the findings of this study are significant in policy making discourse as follows: First of all, the findings of this study could help policy makers make research-based decisions. The findings have incorporated the spiritual experience of Muslim educators who knowingly use reasons and revealed sources of knowledge to make the learning of PCK an act of worship. Given such research evidence, policy makers could be exposed to a deeper and richer perception of PCK that Muslim educators have. That experience is significant for developing teacher education in the context of too little inclusive research on related issues (Houston, 2008). The findings could also fortify the efforts of educating ethical teachers in Tanzanian public and religious teacher education colleges (Anangisye, 2010). Since in Islamic context, an act of worship is acceptable based on sincerity of intention, the findings of this study were expected to reflect such perspectives of Muslim educators who have been attempting to seek for the pleasure of *Allah* and in accordance with the prophetic way (*Sunnah*) through daily experiences of teaching and learning of PCK.

Similarly, the findings of this study are necessary because they may enrich policy makers' attempts to plan, develop, administer, approve and evaluate teachers' training curriculum in Tanzania. In recent times, the literature on education and research, among others, insist on using non-Western epistemology of knowledge (Kincheloe, 2007) to avoid "benchmarking the West blindly and uncritically on disciplines of

sciences as well as social sciences and humanities" (Abdul Razak, 2011, p.234). That means there is an inclusive attempt to make use of the indigenous knowledge systems and life experiences (Chilisa, 2012). The findings could help policy makers to rethink and support such positive impacts of the holistic and integrated learning experience of PCK, against alien compartmentalised epistemological models and concepts of education (Nasr, 2012). In this respect, the findings could enrich the knowledge of how to educate teacher graduates as agents of change willing to dedicate their lives in the service of others (Njozi, 2011). The policy makers could also find research evidence that could be active to capitalise on the unity of the hidden and explicit curriculum to produce responsible graduates.

The findings also could be used to enrich bottom-up policy decisions. Bottom-up theorists stress target groups and service deliverers, suggesting that policy is made at the local level (Matland 1995: 146). This can be translated that bottom-up education policy decisions are not an abstraction. They are the normal practice of listening to those in the actual field of doing. The findings of this study could help education policy makers to find out about Muslim educators' choices, concrete procedures and practices in learning PCK. Having such information in place, policy makers would be able to understand this obvious truth, as no-one knows it all (Freire, 1998; p.208). That means that policy makers could know about something that is known by Muslim educators in their attempts to transmit professional knowledge. Currently, this has received little attention in the literature, but it is vitally important for Tanzania, because it might fortify the culture of sharing among educators in designing accessible education policies to update teachers' education programmes. Taken together, the findings of this study are important for policy makers to enable them to understand and appreciate educators' holistic learning patterns

1.4.3 Contribution to Implementation of Practices

Consistence with the above input, this part considers contribution to improve practices. The findings of this study were estimated to highlight essential patterns in learning of PCK. Based on the Islamic epistemology, these findings have been able to show the education authorities some of the essential patterns in the learning of PCK as teaching knowledge. Concepts such as the knowledge of learners, knowledge of self and sources of knowledge have been holistically used as necessary findings for the relevant authorities. That knowledge could offer education authorities a refreshed focus to improve teacher education. Secondly, the use of these findings could improve academic and pedagogical courses in pre-service training programmes. Relatively new to the discourse of PCK, these findings situate learners in the context of complete beings with holistic status. Since the significance of implementing research evidence is not limited to characteristics of the target population, the nature of programme, and its related specific goals (Durlak, 2011), these findings could match the growing commitment to improve teacher education in Tanzania.

Moreover, having well-informed educators is fundamental for improved teaching. These findings have been able to show how experienced Muslim educators think and feel on the need for unity of knowledge and thought in what they do. These findings

could help local administrative authorities of Teacher Training Colleges to explore educators' level of awareness of the problem on splitting of PCK and its related components. In this way, meaningful in-service professional development programmes could be designed for uninformed educators, to change the unreflective classroom practice of teaching and improve the focus on integrating students' knowledge and achievements (Vavrus, Thomas & Bartlett, 2011). These findings insist on the knowledge dimensions that define PCK being reconsidered to improve ongoing teaching initiatives intended to promote professional ethics and responsible teaching in Tanzania (Anangisye, 2010). From the practical perspective, poor research-informed academic and pedagogical programmes have, in principle, serious short and long-term costs (Durlak, 2011). Therefore, these findings could help college authorities to overcome that problem by re-considering knowledge dimensions used to define PCK. In the successive subsection, the scope of this study is presented:

1.5   Scope of the Study

In relation to the research questions, this section highlights parameters or mapping the boundary of this study as described below:

This research sought to understand learning experiences of PCK among Muslim educators. First, the researcher based the study on the Islamic epistemology employed as philosophical and theoretical stance. The purpose was to appreciate wider meaning of knowledge, learning, education and PCK in specific from the Islamic view and beyond objectivist and constructivist epistemological perspectives. Second, the researcher purposively sampled experienced respondents with relative recognition of the Unity of *Allah*, unity of man, and understanding of unity and compatibility of knowledge with faith, since they are in search of truth (Ahmad, 2012). In this case, respondents were engaged to share their experiences on teaching, nurturing or developing and nurturing good manner. Respondents considered inexperienced in working in Islamic Teacher Training Colleges and schools or with little exposure to basic Islamic education or unaware of the Islamic epistemological viewpoint were not included. That was important in order to fortify the essence of studying the problem from the Islamic epistemology with the focus to integrate cognitive, empirical and revealed sources of knowledge.

Third, the researcher only focused on exploring and understanding meaning, opinions, practice and interpretations of PCK among Muslim educators. For that reason, the findings included a considerable volume of rich data showing individuals' attempts to unify components of PCK consistent to, wholeness and holiness of education and knowledge from the Islamic paradigm (Al-Zeera, 2001a). The study did not focus on measuring the extent of learning and practice of PCK among the sampled respondents. This means its results included a range of individual experiences, words and phrases rather than generalized and statistical data attempting to explain the problem (Merriam, 2009). In the following part, the limitations of this study are drawn:

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1.6   Limitation of the Study

Despite best of efforts to lessen all limitations that might rise, the following issues were unexpected and beyond the ability of the researcher to control:

The first limitation of this research is that the refined themes and conclusions on the meaning, nature and learning of PCK by Muslim educators were not communicated to them for further comments. In qualitative research inquiry, this is called member checks as the best key procedure for forming credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Had the themes been communicated, the respondents could reflect on the exactitude of the refined explanations in conceptualisation of PCK and related knowledge domains. Possibly, that exchange at the final stage of this study could result into more sophisticated and practical Muslim educators' learning experiences of PCK.

The second limitation of this study is that the findings would be limited to qualitative methodology through the interpretive phenomenological analysis approach. Almost nothing is known about how the suggested analytical approach could affect the results, although most qualitative study findings might not be generalized to other people or settings due to their small population (Merriam, 2009). In fact, the interview settings were very particular to the respondents who shared life lived experiences based on their contexts. For that reasons, the findings might be unique to the study respondents, meaning that the burden of generalisation remains with the ones who appreciate the similarity of theme and the context of the conducted research (Merriam, 2009). Therefore, the findings would not be employed beyond the given setting unless other educators have characteristics similar to those of the respondents.

Furthermore, the study was limited by timing and logistic of the settings. First, the researcher was unable to get female respondents. The known skilled one could not make it because of other duties. This limited the voice from the vital members of the Muslim community. Second, among the available male respondents, three of them were still involved with other administrative issues in their institutions. One respondent was pre-occupied with a new school project which was under construction. Taken together, it was difficult to stick on the appointed time. This limited the flow of the data collection and delayed complete transcription of respective respondents. Besides, about two interview sessions had to take place at respective respondents' houses. Such specific settings distracted respondents' concentration, as sometimes had to organise house chores and stopped at very vital point of the interview session. Similarly, there were also noisy instances both at respondents' house environments and offices. To some extent, it was difficult to control such noisy distraction in some of the recorded sessions and distorted the course of data collection exercise.

Above all, the notion that PCK is a discipline and specific topic (Ball et al. 2008) might limit this study. This belief appears to suggest that different forms of PCK are available in different disciplines, subjects of specialisation and topics. However, it seems to ignore the truth that the narrations and interpretations of people and events are different (Wineburg, 2001). During the study, two Muslim educators had the same concept of PCK or its components from the Islamic point of view but differed in the details and

how they viewed and learned it. This could result in a different focus on respondents' learning of PCK and weaken the quality of the findings. For that reason, attempts were made to focus on unified themes of respondents' learning of PCK that could not be separated, which have practical significance irrespective of the differences in subjects of specialization.

1.7 Definitions of Terms

This section presents definitions of the key terms employed in this study for richer understanding as follows:

Learning

The concept learning is conceptualized as a collection of perspectives. It is the acquisition of knowledge through study, teaching, instruction or experience, leading to behavioural change or shaping (Pritchard, 200). In the context of this study, learning was understood as an act of worship and a lifelong integrated and holistic process, which unfolds realities in the unified creation of the universe, through seeing, reflection, meaning making, interpretation, reinterpretation and understanding.

Pedagogical Content Knowledge

The term Pedagogical Content Knowledge has been defined differently by different people. Shulman (1986b) defines Pedagogical Content Knowledge as a specific arrangement of content knowledge that represents the features of content most pertinent to its capability of being taught as a study or subject. In this study, PCK is operationally conceptualized as the knowledge of what and how to teach subject matter underpinned by the belief in Allah and Hereafter and reflected by unified meaning, unity of knowledge and integrated approaches from the Islamic epistemology.

Muslim Educators

Teacher educators are professionals with a broad knowledge of learners and how they learn, and knowledge of the curriculum and subject matter, and pedagogical knowledge and skills for teaching through classroom activities (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). In this study, Muslim educators refer to professionals who are conscious of their purpose and mission in life as vicegerents and servants of *Allah* on earth and have considerable commitments to capitalise on multiple knowledge sources in order to nurture the development of learners' minds, bodies and spirits.

Islamic Worldview

Islamic worldview refers to a broad vision of reality that teaches the meaning and purpose of life, and addresses the sense of accountability and values and links human life in the present world with the hereafter holistically (Hussein, 2009; Abdelaziz, 2006). In this study, Islamic worldview is the inclusive understanding of Divine guidance in building a servant with the mind of a vicegerent and personality that earn ﷻ pleasure. It is employed to position Islamic epistemology

Islamic Epistemology

The term epistemology is from the Greek word *episteme*. It means searching into the nature or root of knowledge, how it occurs, its justification and its relationship with man's experience (Azram, 2011). For that reason, Islamic epistemology can be called the theory of knowledge based on Islamic perspective, although Akhtar (2001) views it as being a philosophical term too in explaining reality, sources and process of knowledge for life in this world and the hereafter. In this study, Islamic epistemology is the theory of learning or knowledge system cognizant of the unity of acquired and revealed sources of knowledge, the essence of worship and of being obedient to Allah through balanced growth of the whole personality.

Islamic Teachers' Training Colleges

Islamic Teachers' Training Colleges are full-time teacher education institutions which like, Islamic schools emphasize teaching and learning in the spirit of Islamic worldview and epistemology (Douglas & Shaikh, 2004). In this study, Islamic Teachers' Training Colleges are education institutions that attempt to integrate acquired and revealed knowledge to educate teachers with evident moral and ethical behaviour as servants and vicegerents of *Allah* on earth. This is important definition because students and educators are continually exposed to Islamic practices, including prayers, fasting, and charity, in an integrative manner. For that reason, Muslim educators learn and teach what is good and prevent what is evil in their normal classes for the sake of *Allah,* the Lord of the universe.

1.8   Summary of the Chapter

This chapter sought to describe the background to the study. First, it explores the background, problem, significance, scope, limitations and definitions of terms. Second, positions PCK, highlights Islamic epistemological view, and concerns in teacher education in Tanzania. This chapter also proposes research objectives and questions and significance of the study to new knowledge concerning the curriculum and instruction, policy making and improving implementation of practices. Altogether, this chapter explores the background and proposes the questions to guide.

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