



## Projecting the Mobility of School Teachers of Islamic Subject From Indonesia to Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, and Thailand in the Era of Asean Free Market

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### ABSTRAK

Artikel ini membahas tentang pemetaan kompetensi guru agama Islam dalam menghadapi Komunitas Ekonomi ASEAN. Sejak pasar bebas diluncurkan pada tahun 2015, negara-negara ASEAN akan bertransformasi menjadi kawasan dimana barang, jasa, para pekerja terampil dan modal dapat bergerak secara bebas yang artinya seluruh pekerja terampil termasuk guru-guru mata pelajaran agama Islam memiliki kesempatan yang sama dalam memperoleh pekerjaan yang layak sesuai dengan kompetensi mereka di negara-negara ASEAN. Untuk mempersiapkan hal tersebut, sangat penting untuk memahami dan memetakan standar kompetensi dari guru agama Islam yang diadakan oleh lembaga atau sekolah berbasis pendidikan Islam di negara-negara ASEAN. Kami menyimpulkan bahwa setidaknya ada dua dasar kompetensi dan lima kompetensi tambahan yang dibutuhkan. Adapun dua dasar kompetensi tersebut adalah pemahaman ajaran Islam (Teologi dan Hukum) dan penguasaan Bahasa Arab yang baik baik lisan maupun tulisan (*muhadathah*). Sedangkan lima kompetensi tambahan meliputi penguasaan bahasa lokal atau bahasa daerah (Bahasa Melayu dan Bahasa Thai); Bahasa Inggris; menulis dan membaca naskah dalam Bahasa Melayu dan Arab (*Arab-Jawi*); melakukan upacara keagamaan Islam dengan menggunakan referensi khusus dari Sekolah Pemikiran *Shafi*, dan kecakapan dalam penggunaan komputer. Untuk memenuhi tuntutan kompetensi diatas, dibutuhkan untuk memastikan bahwa implementasi kurikulum dari Program Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam di pendidikan tinggi berjalan dengan baik dan untuk memakai dan mengubahnya selama sesuai dengan kompetensi yang diperlukan.

### ABSTRACT

This article deals with mapping of teacher's competence for Islamic religious subject in facing ASEAN Economic Community. Since the free market has launched in 2015, ASEAN countries will transform to be a region in which goods, services, skilled workers and capital can move freely. It means that all skilled workers, including teachers of Islamic subjects, have the same access to get a good job suitable with their competence in ASEAN countries. To prepare such skilled workers, it is very important to understand and to map the competences standard of Islamic religious teacher set up by Islamic education institutions (schools) in ASEAN countries. We conclude that there are at least two basic competences and five additional competences required. Two basic competences are mastery of Islamic teachings (theology and law) and good command in Arabic, both written and spoken (*muhadathah*). While five additional competences are mastering local languages (Malay and Thai); English; writing and reading Malay-Arabic script (*Arab-Jawi*); performing Islamic rituals with a special reference to Shafi's school of thought; and computer literacy. To compete and to fulfill the demand of the above competences, it is needed to make sure that the implementation of the curriculum of Islamic Education Department in the Faculty of Islamic Education in Indonesian Islamic higher education has been going well, and to adopt as well as to change it as long as in line with the competences needed.

### KATA KUNCI

Pendidikan Islam; Kompetensi Guru Islam; Pasar Bebas ASEAN

### KEYWORDS

Islamic Education; Islamic Teacher's Competence; ASEAN Free Market

## A. Introduction

Since ASEAN declared to build economy integration in the region of South East Asia 2020 in Kuala Lumpur 1997, many attempts have been done to implement the vision of ASEAN. One of the efforts is to create ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) that has been launched in 2015. The purpose of AEC is to create a single market and production base in the area of goods, services, investment, skilled workers and capital flow. In other words, AEC will lead the ASEAN to be an integrated-economy system that gives opportunity for all member countries to get an access and move freely.<sup>1</sup>

This AEC era means to provide opportunities to all member countries, including their citizens to expand not only in economic aspect, but also in human resources employment and investments. In one hand, the AEC era can be considered as a threat because many professional workers from other ASEAN countries can take strategic vacancies in Indonesia. On the other hand, it can be a challenge for professional and skilled Indonesian workers to compete and to win good positions at workplaces in other ASEAN member countries.

In terms of quality of skilled labor in Indonesia, there are at least 5 discrepancies according to World Bank, that are the application of English in the working field (44%), computer operating skill (36%), behavioral skill (30%), critical-thinking skill (33%), and basic skill (13%). Furthermore, the competitiveness index of Indonesia is lower than some countries in ASEAN. Therefore, it is not surprising that up to now, Indonesia workers have no good position in the workplaces in ASEAN countries.<sup>2</sup> They mostly work at domestic areas, coconut plantations and other unskilled workers areas. Education sector is now open widely after AEC. For Islamic institutions, the opportunity for Indonesians to become Islamic teachers in the region is very much more open than ever.

This article deals with competences demands for Islamic religious teachers needed by Islamic educational institutions in four countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam and Thailand). The purpose of the research is to map competences standards required by the institutions in

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<sup>1</sup>Historically speaking, based on geo-politic, 5 countries in South East Asia set up an Association, which is later known as ASEAN, in 1967. It initially consists of 5 countries, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Philippines. Later on Brunei Darussalam, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia and East Timor join the association. One of the vision 2020 agreed by the leaders of ASEAN is a new stage in the history of economy integration in the region of South East Asia in order to be a stable, prosperous and competitive region, supported by the balance of economy growth and alleviating poverty and socio-economy gap among the member countries. The commitment to create an ASEAN Community is afterwards strengthened by ASEAN Concord II in Bali October 2003 (Bali Concord II) that declares the establishment of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) as the objective of regional economy integration in 2020. In August, ASEAN *Economic Ministers Meeting* was held in Kuala Lumpur. The strong commitment is manifested in the idea of developing a blue print to an ASEAN Economic Society that is ratified in detail and adopted by all ASEAN member countries in November 2007. Moreover, in the 12<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in January 2007, the determined commitment of Asian leaders on the establishment of ASEAN Economic Community is reflected from the agreement on accelerating the establishment of the community in 2015. On that meeting, ASEAN leaders agree on accelerating the establishment of ASEAN Economic Community in 2015 and transform ASEAN to be a region in which every single citizens from ASEAN countries can get opportunity to access goods, services, investments, skilled workers and capital.

<sup>2</sup>Cinintya Audori Fathin, Arika Bagus Perdana, Ayu Kartikasari and Dyah Ratih Sulistyastuti. "Indonesian Human Resources Readiness in Term of Facing the ASEAN Economic Community," *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik*, vol. 18, no. 2, November 2015:83.

aforementioned countries. By understanding the map of competences needed, Islamic Education Department of Islamic University in Indonesia, particularly the State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya is expected to set up an excellent curriculum and expectantly produce highly qualified Islamic religious teachers to win the competition in labor market-places, particularly at Islamic education institutions in ASEAN countries.

## **B. Prerequisite of Competences for Islamic Religious Teacher in ASEAN Countries` Islamic Education Institutions**

The research focuses on several Islamic education institutions belong to government and private institutions in four countries, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam and Thailand. Based on in-depth interview, observation as well as documentation owned by the institutions, this research will present the prerequisite of competences for Islamic religious teacher demanded by the institutions.

### **1. Indonesia**

Education in Indonesia is administered in two systems, one under the management of the Ministry of Education (82%) and madrasah and other religious education under the management of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (18%). Schools managed by Ministry of Education and Culture teach mainly general (secular) knowledge with only 2 hour of compulsory religious subject. This is called as national curriculum. Before 1975, madrasah, usually located in *pondok pesantren*, only taught Islamic subjects. However, since Joint decision of Minister of Education and Culture, Minister of Religious Affairs and Minister of Internal Affairs in 1975, madrasah teach the same national curriculum in addition to Islamic religious subject regulated by MoRA.<sup>3</sup> They are *aqidah* (theology), the Quran and hadith, *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), and history of Islam. The curriculum of madrasah therefore consists of 70% of national curriculum and 30% of Islamic subjects. In doing so, graduates of madrasah have the same opportunity with graduate of school to compete in education as well as employment. However, this also caused the decline of rigor in the Islamic competence of madrasah graduates because they only spend 30% of their schooling time studying Islam. As a result, the main goal of madrasah is to produce future ulama becomes more elusive.<sup>4</sup> The transformation of madrasah, though, does not abolish the traditional Islamic education of *pondok pesantren*.

In term of funding and management, government welcomes private institutions to open schools and madrasah with government agency acting as supervision and accreditation role. Many Islamic mass organizations, including Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah also found schools

<sup>3</sup>Abbas Ghazali et al, *Madrasah Education Financing in Indonesia*, (Jakarta: ACDP, 2013), 1.

<sup>4</sup>Nur Abid, p. "Problem Pengelolaan Madrasah Aliyah dan Solusinya," *Islamica*, 4:(2), March, 2010: 338.

and madrasah.<sup>5</sup> Pondok pesantren, which usually is usually affiliated to Muslim traditionalists such as Nahdlatul Ulama also found madrasah. In such context, students will get additional Islamic religious instruction after school time. Some pondok pesantren nowadays also found schools as well. They arrange their curriculum in such a way that both general knowledge and Islamic teaching are delivered not only in classroom but also in dormitory.

For this research, there are 3 Islamic education institutions visited, namely Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (the State Islamic High School) Surabaya, Sekolah Menengah Atas (Senior High School) Darul Ulum 2 Cambridge International School located in Islamic boarding schoolat Rejoso Jombang, and Sekolah Menengah Atas Nahdlatul Ulama 1 Model (Senior High School NU 1 Model) at Karanggeneng Lamongan.

General competences for those who want to teach, including religious subject, either at junior or high school in Indonesia is stated in Law Number 14 of 2005, Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional (The Rule of The Minister of National Education) Number 16 Year 2007 and Peraturan Pemerintah (Government Regulation) No. 74 Year 2008. It is stated that teachers must have a certificate from undergraduate level (S1) or Diploma level (D IV) and a certificate of teaching competency. As a basic competence, all schools will consider this prerequisite to determine the eligibility of the candidate to be a teacher. Meanwhile, othercompetences will be required based on the capabilities needed by the school.

MAN Surabaya is a State Islamic education institution. According to the Head Master and his deputy, every single teacher should meet the basic requirement which is in line with the rules and regulations of the government. As a state-owned institution, the school management has no authority to choose according to the needs of the institution. The authority belongs to the Government (Ministry of Religious Affairs) to assign a person to teach at the institution. However, the management can propose additional competencies for the assigned teacher. There are at least 3 additional competencies needed for Islamic religious teacher, namely computer operating skill, proper recitation of the Qur'an (*tartil*) and adequate Arabic mastery.

The second school visited is Sekolah Menengah Atas (Senior High School) Darul Ulum 2 Cambridge International in Jombang, East Java. The selection of Darul Ulum 2 Cambridge International Schoolfor the object of the research represents a type of pesantren based schools that integrates classical Islamic sciences with modern science. The existence of SMA Darul Ulum Jombang 2 is the result of the hardwork of The Chairman Council of Pondok Pesantren (Islamic Boarding School Institution) Darul Ulum and support from the community. Starting from SMA Darul Ulum 2 located on Slamet Riyadi Street, Jombang (1979-1994), then transformed to SMA

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<sup>5</sup>Abbas Ghazali, *Madrasah Education Financing in Indonesia*, 1.

Darul Ulum Jombang 2 BPPT.<sup>6</sup> Since the status changed, the school was relocated from Slamet Riyadi Street to Peterongan Rejoso, in the area of Darul Ulum Islamic boarding school (1994-2005).

Thanks to the achievements of the Council, through the Directorate of Secondary Education's High School Directorate General of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the school is believed to be one of the schools in Indonesia to organize Pioneer High School International Standard (**R-SMA-BI**). In Academic Year of 2013/2014, the school is awarded to be the pilot project for the implementation of Curriculum 2013, and then in 2014/2015, it is appointed to carry out the National Examination *Computer Based Test* (CBT).

Senior High School 2 Jombang BPPT has given more effort for increasing their quality, ensuring their grades and establishing their cooperation with international institutes of education and experts around the world for creating students and alumni who have an international scientific capabilities and steadfastness in fostering faith and devotion as listed on the school's vision and mission. On August 13, 2007, Cambridge University as the houses of CIE (Cambridge International Examination) has decided Senior High School 2 Darul Ulum BPPT Jombang as the CIC (Cambridge International Centre). Thus, it can execute the Certification of Cambridge Examination for all students of junior high school/ high school grades, and who intend to take the international examination scale. In 2012, the name of CIC (Cambridge International Centre) SMA DU 2 is changing. It becomes SMA Darul Ulum 2 CIS (*Cambridge International School*).

SMA Darul Ulum Jombang 2 develops its curriculum by adapting three curriculums at once, namely Pondok Pesantren curriculum, National Curriculum and Cambridge Curriculum. The goal is creating a new generation superior in Faith and Piety (Iman and Taqwa), Science and *Akhlaq al-Karimah* (good attitudes) in both national and international scale. To fulfill academic vacancies, particularly teachers for religious subjects, the Foundation of Islamic Boarding School Darul Ulum is the only authority to select the candidates.

Based on the high demand of the curriculum implemented, teachers' competencies level for Islamic religious subjects is reasonably high to fulfill the demand. Therefore, to be a teacher for an Islamic religious subject, candidates have to fulfill the requirements which include certified teacher (undergraduate/S1) and professional teacher certificate, literate in ICT, 500 TOEFL score, ability in reading al-Qur'an, and ability to read and understand Islamic boarding school's *kitab kunings* (classical Arabic books for Islamic teaching).

The other school as the target of the research is SMA (Senior High School) NU 1 Model. Located in Karanggeneng Lamongan, the school tries to integrate traditional Islamic teachings and

<sup>6</sup>BPPT is abbreviation of Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi (Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology). BPPT was established on 28th January 1974. This Agency is under the coordination of the Ministry of Research and Technology. One of the programs is to introduce and internalize the development of technology, the institution had tried to cooperation with many schools to develop the curriculum and implement it.

science. In other word, the principle of the schools is the integration of religious and science. The vision of the school is to educate students becoming a perfect person (*insan kamil*) by mastering religious teachings, science and technology altogether. Meanwhile, its visions are to develop learners in mastering: (1) skills in line with community needs and science development technology; (2) science and technology and application of the development of the globalization era; (3) national and Islamic culture comprehensively, (4) *akhlaq al-karimah* (good attitudes) based on Islamic principles and values; and (4) Islamic teaching based on *Ahlussunah Wal Jama'ah* and applying them in their daily life.

To implement the vision, Senior High School NU 1 Model applies an integrated curriculum which develops Islamic traditional (*salaf*, of mainly Shafi'i school in jurisprudence and Ash'ari theology) subject matters with modern sciences.<sup>7</sup> The school tries to maintain the existing on Islamic subjects and to adopt new subjects which are considered modern. By implementing the integrated curriculum, the students are expected to be high qualified graduates who master science and technology embedded with *akhlaq al-karimah* based on Islamic principle and values. In addition, the school has also tried to equip students with English and Arabic language. It is due to the fact that the school has developed its networks with other schools from USA and ASEAN countries, particularly Islamic schools from Thailand.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, the students are expected to be ready when they are abroad. On the other hand, the students at the school are also able to communicate and study together with foreign students.

To achieve this goal, the school has a strict policy to recruit high-qualified teachers for religious subjects. There are several abilities required to the candidates of new teachers. In addition to the basic requirement of being a teacher, the school will select the candidates based on their ability in reading the Holy Qur'an and *Kitab Kunings*. Mastery of Arabic is also considered to support *muhadatsah* (speaking) program applied by the school. Besides, the school also considers the capabilities of the candidates in terms of entrepreneurship, life skill competence and leading *tahlil prayer*, *istighasah* and *Maulid Diba'ias* as well as *manaqib al-Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani*.

## 2. Malaysia

Similar to Indonesia, there are types of secondary education in Malaysia, of which religious education is part. In Malaysian education system, there are at least four secondary

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<sup>7</sup>The term *Salaf* in this context should not be confused with *salafi* which is a textual approach to Islam rooted in Wahhabi theology.

<sup>8</sup>SMA NU 1 Model have conducted students and teachers exchange since 2007 among other things with Randolph Macon Human College, Virginia USA, Youth Islamic Leadership Program of CCE International at Colonial Williamsburg USA and ASEAN countries, including Thailand. They are many students from Thailand from different schools and areas who stay in the Islamic Boarding School and study at SMA NU 1 Model

schools, namely; Sekolah Kebangsaan (national schools), Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama (national religious secondary school), Sekolah Agama Negeri (state religious schools), and Sekolah Agama Rakyat (SAR or people's religious schools). Islamic instructions are taught in these schools with different gradation. The difference also relates to management and funding. While national schools and national religious secondary school administered and funded by Ministry of Education, state religious schools are administered and funded by their respective state Islamic agency. Whereas a person's religious schools are established and funded by local Muslim community.<sup>9</sup> In recent years, these people's religious schools and *pondok* are under scrutiny because many acts of radicalism were thought to have stemmed from these institutions. Some people's religious schools and *pondoks* have been alleged to become the breeding ground for radicalism since the 1980s. Federal government has made several measures to curb radicalism as a result in form of management, funding and curriculum.<sup>10</sup>

For this research two schools are selected as the sample of the research; Religion Middle School Darussaadah and Ma'had Tahfidz Sains Darul Muttaqin or MASDAR. Islamic School Darussaadah represents schools fully financed by the State, which means it is considered as state religious school. On the other hand, MASDAR is a private school fully funded by the foundations; funding sources from tuition, donation and others, so it is a people's religious school. The following will discuss in detail of all aspects related to the research focus of each school.

Located in Kedah, Religion Middle School Darussaadah was first established by Mr. Haji Hussin Hassan in 1918 in form of *pondok*, an informal Islamic education institution. During Japan occupation in 1942-1945, this *pondok* was relocated to the Kampong Tambak Bunga, Jalan Kuala Kedah and had operated since then. This *pondok* was transformed into *madrasah*, a formal Islamic school, with the name of Madrasah al-Hasanah led by Tuan Haji Othman Haji Abdullah and Tuan Haji Long bin Muhammad. In 1956, they agreed to change the name of the Madrasah al-Hasan into Madrasah Agama Darussaadah (Darussaadah Islamic Boarding School) and registered Kedah Islamic Religious Department. Since June 2005, SMA Darussaadah elected to be government-aided religious schools "Sekolah Agama Bantuan Kerajaan" (SABK) and its leadership is held by posterity of the founder of the school, namely Haji Abdul Rashid bin H. Othman. Thus, the status of Darussaadah high school is no longer a private school, but it is a public school that the operational funding becomes the government responsibility.

The vision of SMA Darussaadah is "quality education, human well-educated, prosperous country." The mission of the school is "to preserve the quality of the education system, to develop individual potential, to meet the aspirations of the country," while the objectives (goals) schools

<sup>9</sup> Azmel Tayeb, 'The ups and downs of Islamic education in Malaysia', New Mandala, 15 of August 2012, [www.newmandala.org/the-ups-and-downs-of-islamic-education-in-malaysia/](http://www.newmandala.org/the-ups-and-downs-of-islamic-education-in-malaysia/), visited on 6 of June 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Fauziah Fathil and Wiwin Oktasari, "Religious Education and Containment of Radical Elements: The Case Of Pondok Schools in Malaysia," *International Journal of Islamic and Civilizational Studies*, 01:( 10), 2017: 60-70.

are: (1) to lead, manage and govern the school effectively and efficiently; (2) strengthen the moral and the skills of students; (3) Enhance the students' achievement in extra-curricular; (4) Provide safe, cheerful and conducive school infrastructure; (5) strengthen the implementation of an new integrated curriculum; (6) create a professional and integrated Ulama; and (7) create creative and innovative students

To prove the vision, missions and objectives above, a curriculum package is created by the Darussaadah high school that includes the curriculum level 1 to level 6. The curriculum is a combination between regular and religious curriculum. It is implemented from level 1 to 5, while level 6 is the preparatory stage to the university, and it is special for those who will continue their studies to al-Azhar, Cairo, Egypt. The curriculum starts levels 1 through 6 as follows.

For the level I and II, the subjects delivered consists of 9 subjects of general curriculum and 2 religious subjects. The 9 subjects from general curriculum are Malay language, English, Mathematics, History, Geography, Science, Life skill, Visual Arts Education, Physical Education and Health. While the two subjects related two religious matter are Ushuluddin and Arabic (*lughah Arabiyyan Mu'asira*). For the level III, the students will learn Malay, English, Mathematics, History, Geography, Science, Living Skill, Islamic Education, Physical Education and Health. In addition, the students has an obligation to religious subjects which are consists of Ushuluddin Tawhid, Ushuluddin Tafsir, Hadith Ushuluddin, Shari'a Qur'an, Sharia Fiqh, Date of Islamic Sharia, Grammar and Sarf, Mutalaah and General Arabic.

For students of level IV and V, they have to study at least 13 subjects from general curriculum and 11 religious subjects. While for the sixth level, they study religious subjects. The subjects are as follows.

**Table 1**  
**Subject for IV and V Level**

	General Curriculum		Integrated Curriculum for Early (kBD)
	Malay		Qur ' an Recitation
	English		FiqhFaraid
	Arabic		Tawhid Mantiq
	Mathematics		Tafsir
	History		Hadith
	Science		Arabic Grammar and Sarf
	Syariah Islamiah		Mutalaah
	EducationQur'an Sunnah		Jurisprudence
	Additional Mathematics		Do-Don'ts nusus
	Trade		Balaghah
	Accounting Principles		Arudh Qafiyah



	Economics		
	Physical and Health Education		

**Table 2**  
**Subjects for Level 6**

	Early Phase Curriculum		STAM
	Quran Recitation		English
	Fiqh Faraid		Jurisprudence
	Tafsir		
	Hadith		
	Arabic Grammar and Sarf		
	Insha 'Mutala'ah		
	Date Adab Special		
	Balaghah		
	Tawhid Mantiq		
	Arudh Qafiyah		
	Ulm al-Quran		
	Ulm al-hadith		

According to the table above, we can see that the higher the level, the more religious lesson is given, even at the level of the 6th all of the material is oriented for the students who are eager to continue their studies to al-Azhar. At level I and II there are only two religious subjects given. When they continue to 3<sup>rd</sup> level, the number of religious subjects given is eight (8), in addition of 1 lesson of Islamic education and Arabic lesson. At level 4 and 5, there are 11 religious materials added with some subjects like Arabic, Islamic education Islam, the Qur'an and Hadith. And for 6<sup>th</sup> level all of the materials are religious material.

Based on the curriculum that has been prepared at Darussaadah highschool, the obligation of religious teachers is according to the curriculum set and based on the *Turats* book (yellow books or old books)<sup>11</sup> and Arabic is the language used to give instruction in the classroom, especially at the level of 6. Thus, the competencies required to teach religious subjects as stated above are mastery of the material following the teaching of religious education branches, ability of reading the *Turats* (yellow book), mastery Arabic and proficiency Malay language.

Another institution visited is Darul Bar Tahfiz Institution of Science (MASDAR) located at Lot 2215, Mukim Termin Kubang Pasu, and Kedah Darulaman. MASDAR School was established in

<sup>11</sup>Martin van Bruinessen terms this collection as books in Arabic script used in pesantren milieu. They are authored by traditional Muslims affiliated to Shafii School of Law and Ash'ari Theology. See Martin van Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning: Books in Arabic script used in the Pesantren Milieu; comments on a new collection in the KITLV Library*, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land en Volkenkunde* 146 (1990), no 2/3 Leiden. Pp. 226-269.

2012 and officially started the learning process on January 8, 2012. MASDAR is a fully private institution. However, as an educational institution, MASDAR is managed by the foundation of Nazir Human Development Cooperative Trust Northern Territory (KOINSAN).

The establishment of MASDAR are aimed at: (a) preparing and producing religious generation who can memorize and master the contents of the holy Quran beside the science (Islamic law) and academic (reality); (b) providing a platform to carry out missionary work (dakwa) and education to spread Islam through institutions; (c) creating huffadz who have commendable character and has the mental and physical quotient; and (d) Generating coatings that dominate the leadership of al-Quran and have the knowledge and skills needed to perform various tasks as *da'i* (preacher) and *murabbi* (educator). The subjects taught in MASDAR can be categorized into three specific subjects, that are *diniyah* (religious subjects), academic education and *tahfiz* (memorizing the Qur'an). The table below shows the categories and the detail of the category.

**Table 3**  
**Subjects Taught at MASDAR**

	Diniyah	Time	Academic	Time	Tahfiz	
s	Tafsir	2	English	4	Qur'an	
e						
d	Hadith	2	English	4		
	Tawheed	2	Science	4		
o	Fiqh	2	Mathematics	4		
n	Sirah	2	Physical Education & Health	4		
t	Muthala'ah	2	Integrated Living Skills	3		
h	Akhlaq	1	Arabic	3		
e	Dictation & Style	1	History	2		
	Grammar & Sarf	3	Geography	2		
g						
o	Interpretation and Mutala'ah	3				
a						
l	skills al-Qur'an	4				
a	<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>24</b>		

Based on the goals and the subjects that have been prepared in such a way and the ability to deliver material by using Arabic, the competence of religious teachers who can be accepted in MASDAR should have the following qualifications: the ability of reading *Turats* book, Arabic and Malay proficiency

The chances of becoming teacher in Malaysia are still high because many private schools have been established to meet the educational needs. One example is the vice principal at MASDAR who is an alumnus of Pesantren (Islamic Boarding School) Gontor at Ponorogo, East Java; Indonesia. Wide opportunity to become a teacher should be balanced with the fulfillment of competence required by each school. To sum up, competences for teachers of religious subjects needed are Arabic competence both written and spoken as well as Malay mastery.

### 3. Thailand

In contrast to Indonesia, Malaysia (and later Brunei), Muslims in Thailand are minority population. They live in deep south of Thailand in an area once the Sultanate of Patani, which was annexed by Siam in 1906. Thai Muslims mostly are Malay-origin. They have to live in a country with an ideology based on Thai nationalism, the Chakri dynasty and Theravada Buddhism. The Thai government launched several campaign of assimilation towards Muslims in deep south of the country with mixed response.<sup>12</sup> As a result, there are at least three groups in the Muslim south; traditionalists, moderns and hybrids. Traditionalists are those who refuse to assimilate. They do not speak Thai, nor attend public school. Instead, they established own religious schools or send their children to study in Muslim countries. By doing so, they protect their culture and identity. They rely on informal community leadership; instead of depend upon the government structure. The moderns are those who attend public school, never attend religious school, support the assimilation and therefore they speak Thai fluently. The government relies on them to rule the south more effectively by filling some bureaucratic position in the region. The hybrids are in between who have attended public schools and also religious schools at some point in their lives. Insurgency outbreak in South Thailand in recent years was instigated by the hybrids because they felt alienated in term of identity and economic prosperity.<sup>13</sup>

In the effort of preventing further insurgency, Thai government starts to pay a measured attention to the Islamic subject for its Muslim population. Thai government includes the religious subject as one of subjects to be examined in the national level.<sup>14</sup> In addition, government has also

<sup>12</sup>Two worth noting programs of assimilation are resettlement of Buddhism population to the south and promotion of state pillars in public schools, including introducing Theravada Buddhism as a compulsory subject for all students regardless their religious background.

<sup>13</sup>Otto von Feigenblatt, "The Muslim Malay Community in Southern Thailand: A "Small People" Facing Existential Uncertainty," *Ritsumeikan Journal of Asia Pacific Studies*, Vol. 27, February 2010: 55-57.

<sup>14</sup>There were 8 subjects examined in the national level, namely: Thai language, Math, Science, Social Science, Religion and Tradition, Foreign language, Health and Physical Education, Art and Technology.

a great attention to its Muslim population to develop Islamic education institutions in Southern Thailand. One of them is the Madrasah and boarding school of Salihyah led by Dr. Abdullah Yeelah.<sup>15</sup> Madrasah combines both religious curriculum and science (general). Beside the main curriculum set by the government, madrasah also adds specific curriculum related to the strengthening of Islam teachings, such as al-Qur'an, Hadith, Fiqh, Aqidah and morality. In term of religious subjects, the school uses books written in Arabic script. Arabic is also taught even though it is not used for daily conversation for the students. Based on the interview with the management of the school, it is found that to implement the curriculum, the school requires religious subject teachers who are able to read Arabic script (yellow book), to speak Arabic and English, and to be able to work with computer.

Similar requirements are also stated by one of the respondents. He said that every school should have religious education. It is due to the fact that religious education is the pillar needed by the students. In the Sutthisart Wittayahigh school, the religious instructions are taught 24 hours a week. The Islamic subjects delivered consist of aqidah, fiqh, Qur'an, and Hadith. Teachers use textbooks such as *Anak Kunci Surga* and *Penawar Hati*. The books are published directly by The State to follow the curriculum. The way teachers deliver the material is really important. Teachers in these schools teach using a variety of languages such as Arabic, Thai and Malay language. To support the language proficiency of students, the school provides extra lesson of Arabic and English regularly so it is expected that students will have a greater ability in Arabic and English.<sup>16</sup>

Regarding the prerequisite for Islamic subjects, teachers in this school must have undergraduate backgrounds in Islamic studies. Sutthisart Wittaya High School has full authority to decide teachers' recruitment which is done openly and publicly to get the best teachers. Teachers who teach subjects related to religious faith is not required to be able to master Arabic and English actively but teachers are required to master the materials of the Islamic subject. In addition, the management of school also considers additional skills owned the teachers candidates, such as Qira'at or reading skill of the Qur'an and Scouts.

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<sup>15</sup>Abdullah Yeelah is a doctor graduated from Middle East countries. As the leader of the boarding school, He accompanied by his family stay in his area of the school. His students as well as his assistance (ustadz) also stay in his boarding schools. It is alike pesantren (Islamic boarding school) in Indonesia. Yeela's boarding school consists of several buildings and some areas for his students playing.

<sup>16</sup>Sunita Yamu is a high school teacher from Sutthisart Wittaya School, located in Thailand's Yala province. Similar explanation is also stated by Jamilah Seng, a teacher of boarding school from the Meuang city, Narathiwat Province. The school offers 24 hours a week for religious subjects which consist of several subjects, such as aqidah, fiqh, history of Islam, the Qur'an, the Hadith. The lessons use a specific textbook based on the subject, the subject matter of Islam-related tenets, history and laws are already determined by the school. Religious subjects use Arabic and local language as the translation. The teachers in the school area use the national language or Thai languages. Therefore the requirement for being Islamic religious subject is quite similar with a requirement asked by Sutthisart Wittaya School, such as having, at least, undergraduate certificate in Islamic studies and mastering Thai language for the instruction. Teachers who teach Islamic subject is not required to speak Arabic or English. Teachers are not required to have additional skill as well.

#### 4. Brunei Darussalam

According a statistic in 1999, the number of religious schools in Brunei Darussalam is 115. Beside that, religious instruction is also taught in public schools.<sup>17</sup> However, in contrast to Malaysia and Thailand, the challenge of Islamic education in Brunei is not radicalism, but “dual system of education”. In many ways, this issue was also faced by Indonesia and other Muslim countries in which dichotomy between religious education and secular education existed. In order to overcome this challenge since 2005 Brunei Darussalam has implemented what was called as “Integrated Islamic education.” According to al-Shaybaniy as quoted by Lubis et al, an integrated Islamic Education “focuses mainly on implementing Islam as a whole. This can be done by integrating Islamic knowledge and belief, matching the belief and practice, balancing the work for worldly affairs and the religious duties for the hereafter. Integrated Islamic Educaion governs the entire education process and knowledge development and incorporates the spiritual, physical and mental aspect in implementation.”<sup>18</sup> So far, 15 schools have implemented this new paradigm, whereas other public schools still employ old system.

While in Brunei Darussalam, government issues a policy that religious subject is a compulsory for all students in this country. Beside the obligation for students to learn the lessons in a formal school, students must participate in diniyah education (religious school) for 6 years. If there are parents who do not send their son or daughter to religious school, the parents can be punished by the State. Another civil effect is students who do not have a certificate from a religious school will not be accepted for employment of the Brunei Darussalam Government. In order to accommodate the religious education opportunities, the Government of Brunei Darussalam has provided religious schools in the morning and afternoon. Religious schools in the morning are given to students attending formal schools in the afternoon. On the other hand, when students attend formal school in the morning, they can go to religious schools in the afternoon.

Religious teachers who will teach in both formal schools and religious schools are mostly graduated from Religious Teachers University College of Seri Begawan or it is known as KUPU SB. KUPU SB was established on January 20, 2007 which coincided of 1428 Hijriyah under the command of Kebawah Duli His Majesty Paduka Seri Baginda Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien.

There are vision and mission of KUPU which is explained as follows. The vision of KUPU is "to achieve moral glory and the excellence of religion education teaching knowledge that are included as international standardised. Meanwhile, the mission of KUPU is "to dignify religious teacher studies in order to produce educators through the integration of knowledge, training,

<sup>17</sup> Ahmad F. Yousif, “Religious Life and Institutions in Brunei,” *ISIM Newsletter*, 5/00: 16.

<sup>18</sup> Maimun Aqsha Lubis et al, “Integrated Islamic Education in Brunei Darussalam: Philosophical Issues and Challenges,” *Journal of Islamic and Arabic Education*, 1(2), 2009: 52.

research, services, skills, technology and identity based on Islamic principles and the nation educational philosophy.”

Students who graduated from KUPU are expected to be able to fill the needs of religion teachers in formal schools and religious schools. However, in reality, the majority of students in Brunei do not want to be a teacher. There is only a small portion that would devote themselves as a teacher. Most of them have the desire to work in other sectors, so that teacher profession is only used as a stepping stone to get positions in the government or Brunei Royal. So it's not an unusual case to have many expatriate teachers there.

One of the respondents who condescend to give a description about the competence of teachers in Brunei said that the government has full authority to recruit and select prospective teachers, including religious teachers who will teach in Royal government schools and private schools that still have a relationship of kinship with the Sultan. The respondent stated that besides mastering religious materials, teacher candidates will be selected based on the Islamic faith of *Ahli Sunnah wal Jama'ah* oriented on Shafi'i Madzhab. The religion teachers who will also be a public figure have to be able to become a leader of congregated prayer, reading Qur'an, and leading the prayers (*tahlil*). The more skills they have, such as qira'ah, scouts, calligraphy or qasidah, then the higher chance they are accepted as a religious teacher in Brunei Darussalam. Thus, the competences that are considered to be able to become a teacher in Brunei Darussalam are mastery of teaching materials with special reference to Shafi'i school of thought, ability to teach the Qur'an, especially to recite the Qur'an properly (*qari'*), leading worship or daily '*amaliah* worship which affiliated to *Ahli Sunnah wal Jama'ah Syafi'iyah* and additional competency in the field of scouting, martial art, Calligraphic Art and others.

Based on the explanation, it can be sum up that basically the competences needed by Islamic educational institution in ASEAN countries, particularly in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Brunei Darussalam are quite similar. Based on the data, we can categorize the competences into two classifications: basic competences and additional competences. The basic competences considered as the fundamental elements which have to be fulfilled by the a Islamic religious teacher candidate in ASEAN countries are mastering Islamic teachings, eligible Qur'an and Arabic script reading as sources of Islamic teaching and speaking Arabic. Besides, the five additional competences as added values for candidates are mastering local languages (Malay and Thai); English; writing and reading Malay-Arabic script; performing Islamic rituals with a special reference to Shafi'i's school of thought; and operating computer with special reference to word, excel and power point.

### C. A Challenge for Islamic Education Department

The curriculum of Islamic Education Department, Faculty of Tarbiyah (Islamic Education) and Teachers' Training at UIN Sunan Ampelis designed based on several inter-correlated components. The components consist of students' raw input, basic standard which is defined into curriculum, the lecturers and staffs, tools and medium, funding, quality assurance and the creation of suitable environment. Basic standard which is realized in a form of curriculum is one important component in Islamic Education Department because the curriculum is the main plan of all education process at the State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya.

The curriculum implemented in Islamic Education Department is in accordance with Republic of Indonesia Law Act No. 20 Year 2003 on System of National Education. Mainly, Islamic Education Department develops *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan Tinggi* (KTSP/Higher Education Institution Based Curriculum) focusing mainly on two standards: content standard and graduates' competence standard. Besides, the Department also develops *Kerangka Kurikulum Nasional Indonesia* (KKNI/Indonesia National Qualification Framework) to fulfill the needs of society and to adjust to Ministry of Education and Culture regulation No. 49 Year 2014 on National Standard on Higher Education article 4 clause 1. The article states that national standard on education consists of (a) graduates' competence standard; (b) content standard; (c) process standard; (d) assessment standard; (e) teaching and administrative standard; (f) infrastructure standard; (g) management standard; and (h) financial standard.

All standards become the basis in preparing and evaluating the curriculum. In this case, National Standard of Higher Education (SN DIKTI) for the curriculum is being developed. The available document is still in a form of curriculum structure draft which has not been fully documented. Starting from 2016/2017 academic year, the Standar Nasional High Education curriculum will be realized.

Despite the fact that the implementation of new curriculum in line with KKNI is under development process, The Islamic Education Department of UIN Sunan Ampel has developed its curriculum. The structure of Islamic Education Department's curriculum is based on the principles of development. The principles focus on "potential, development, needs and importance of the students and environment, various and combined, responsiveness of the development of knowledge, technology and art, relevant to life necessity, global and continuous, continuous study in life and balance of national and regional importance."<sup>19</sup> The curriculum construction is defined through structure and courses that are to be taken by students in several semesters. The minimum graduation requirement in the Department is 152 credits as showed below.

<sup>19</sup>To get a comprehensive understanding see Tim Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Sunan Ampel, *Kurikulum dan Kompetensi FTK* (Surabaya: Arsip FTK, 2016)

Table 4

**The Curriculum Construction of Islamic Education Department**

Course Type	Credits	Explanation
Required Course	136	Consists of Personality Development Course (MPK), Knowledge and Skill Course (MKK), Working Skill Course (MKB), Working Personality Course (MPB), Community Life Course (MBB)
Optional Course	16	Consists 34 Credits / SKS in which the students required to choose 16 credits among all of 34.
Total	152	

By implementing the curriculum, the Islamic Education Department expects that the graduates will equip themselves with the following competences: (a) having knowledge about Islam and being able to apply it in society as Islamic Education teachers; (b) mastering general knowledge to support their profession as Islamic Education teachers; (c) having skill in Indonesian, English and Arabic language communication; (d) being faithful, devoted and noble Muslim graduate; (e) having sense of nationality, diversity, democracy and solidarity and (f) having scientific attitude and responsibility to their knowledge.

Furthermore, it is expected that the graduate of Islamic Education Department can compete with their counterparts from different university and countries to win and fulfill teacher positions not only in Indonesia but also in ASEAN Countries. It is an enormous opportunity for the graduate of Islamic Education Department to seek and win the demanding competition as long as the graduate can fulfill the competences required not only in their own country but also abroad, particularly in ASEAN countries.

Based on the curriculum of Islamic Education Department, it is necessary to look closer and discuss the subject matters mentioned in the curriculum of Islamic Education Department whether the curriculum will fit the basic and additional competences needed in many Islamic educational institutions in ASEAN countries. The basic competences needed by most Islamic educational institutions are mastering Islamic teachings, eligible Qur'an and Arabic script reading as sources of Islamic teaching, and understanding Arabic (*muhadatsah*). Actually, the three competences are interconnected to each other. Besides, the five additional competences as added values for the candidates to be considered are mastering local languages (Malay and Thai); English; writing and reading Malay-Arabic script; performing Islamic rituals with a special reference to Syafi'i's school of thought; and operating computer with special reference to word, excel and power point.

To fulfill three basic competences needed by Islamic education institution in ASEAN countries, The Department of Islamic Education of the State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya actually offers some subjects that can be assumed to fit the required competences. In terms of mastering Islamic teaching, the Department offers 12 credits for basic competence and 44 credits for the core of



Islamic teaching. The subjects included in the basic competence covers Introduction to Study of Islam, the Study of Qur'an, the Study of al-Hadith, the Study of Islamic Law, *Akhlaq Tasawwuf* (Sufism) and *Aqidah Ilmu Kalam*. The credit of each is 2.

To master Islam religious teaching, Islamic Education Department offers several subjects considered as the core subjects which include Islamic material for junior high school (SMP) and for senior high school. Each consists of 3 credits. Besides, the students have to take *fiqh* I, II and III; *Ushul Fiqh*, *Masail Fiqh*, Tafseer, Hadith, Study of Islam II, History of Islamic Civilization, Philosophy of Knowledge, Islamic Philosophy, Philosophy of Islamic education, Tafseer dan Hadith Tarbawi, Logic and History of Islamic Education. The credit of each subject is 2. In addition to those subjects, there are several subjects which can support the students to equip themselves with many competences, such as Curriculum development, Teaching-Learning Design, Instructional Strategy, Class management and so on.

The students are also required to study Indonesian, English and Arabic language. For Indonesian, the students have to take at least 2 credits while for English and Arabic the Department offers 6 credits for each language. In terms of improving the quality of foreign languages, English and Arabic in particular, the university issues a policy that every student has to achieve at least 450 of TOEFL and TOAFL score before the graduation as additional requirements. Nevertheless, there is no certain criterion to assure the ability of students in speaking (*muhadatsah*) for both languages.

Even though there are many subjects related to religious subjects understanding which are offered by the Department, *Kitab Kuning* reading is not offered in an independent subject. It is true that students will practice their ability in understanding Arabic when they study religious subjects, such as tafsir, hadith, and etc. However, it is very important to ensure their ability in reading the Arabic scripts by offering a special subject related to the competency of reading Arabic text such as *Kitab Kuning*.

For additional competencies required for students, the University has cooperated with Microsoft to increase students' computer literacy. Every student has to take a course to get a certificate of three programs, namely word, excel and power point. For students who feel capable to handle those programs, they can directly take the examination. When they pass, they will get the certificate. Otherwise, they have to take the course. In term of improving entrepreneurship for students, the University has worked with the University of Sydney.<sup>20</sup> There are many programs that have been implemented; among other things are entrepreneurship workshop and training, competition and accommodating entrepreneurship into curriculum.

<sup>20</sup> UIN Sunan Ampel has cooperated with Sydney University since 2010 to develop entrepreneurship among students. Almost every year, the competition has been set up for the students. The winner and the supervisor (from lecturer) get opportunity to attend the workshop and seminar in Sydney University. The Sydney University covers all cost during the workshop.

The Islamic Education Department and University also provide many programs to increase students' capacities, such as *Qira'ah* (recitation of the Qur'an), scouts (pramuka), sports and etc. Those programs are set up to maximize students' potential in order that they will have added values to compete with their colleagues for a good position not only in Indonesia but also in ASEAN countries in the future.

Based on the aforementioned data, the curriculum of Islamic Education Department is relatively well prepared to anticipate ASEAN free market. However, the Department has to control the quality of the curriculum implementation in classes and reevaluates annually to achieve the vision and mission of the Department so that graduates can compete not only in Indonesia but also in the world, particularly in ASEAN countries.

In addition, Indonesian Islam is known of its peace and moderateness. This is a significant value addition. Governments of neighboring countries would consider Indonesian Muslim teachers can bring about peaceful and moderate Islam to the region. They would prefer Indonesians graduates and teachers than Middle Eastern graduates and teachers. Bearing that aspect in mind, the opportunity is wide open.

#### D. Conclusion

To sum up, the curriculum set up by the Department of Islamic Education, the State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya is quite competitive in terms of preparing students to take part in global competitiveness to get a good position based on their competencies. The Department has also a great attention to strengthen the basic competences needed and additional competences as an added value to win the position. To convince the implementation the curriculum on the right path is a must. The department has also tried to continuously evaluate the implementation the content of the curriculum and to adapt and adopt something new as long as it is in line with the competencies needed.

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