CY-ICER 2014

Enhancement of Culture in Education: Research on Indonesian High School

Asmaun Sahlan[a]*

[a] *State Islamic University Maunlana Malik Ibrahim of Malang (UIN), Jalan Gajayana 50 Malang 65144, Indonesia*

Abstract

The research focused on the development models of Islamic religious studies at senior high schools. In addition, this research was employed the qualitative approach, applying multi case design. The research findings show the development of Islamic religious subject is not sufficient only with the development of Islamic religious teaching in the class-room i.e. in the form of giving extra time for teaching. Furthermore, the development strategy should occupy the cultural approach by applying religious material teaching as schools' culture; this is particularly, throughout the development of educational leadership, the awareness both from society and school community to shape religious culture at the school. The actualization of religious culture is the manifestation of the development of Islamic religious subject. This strategy effects on the students' attitude in terms of their spirituality, brotherhood, tolerant, discipline and motivation in learning activities. There are two patterns (i.e. performing and modeling) is the continual relationship. It means the more mature of the object of putting cultural values; the more modeling pattern will be used into practice, while using the performing pattern will be decreased. Finally, the result of the research shows in order to implement the strategy effectively, the commitment and support of the school community is needed.

1. Introduction

The urgency to achieve a strategic position in the national education concept is, in fact, absent among students in Indonesia. This gap is assumingly cause by several factors such as: (1) textbooks or teaching materials used are less

* Corresponding name: Asmaun Sahlan. Tel.: +62-812-5286-6886
  E-mail address: asmaunsahlan@gmail.com

prone to knowledge integration between science and religion, (2) employment of teaching-learning strategy has yet to be maximal and relevant with the curriculum requirement due to limited capacity of educators, and (3) hidden curriculum has yet to be conducive for learning process to happen (Mylek and Nel, 2010; Sarkissian, Fox, & Akbaba, 2011; Karlsen, & Nazroo, 2010).

   As a consequence of the three factors, value internalization (affective domain) has yet been able to strongly adhere to students' personalities. All this while, the learning process at school, in general, has not been able to integrate all the various concepts or theories of science with religious values, and vice versa (Hemming, 2011; Brubaker, 2013) through an environment, a support of teaching and learning would be performed (Lubis, and Wekke, 2009). Based on this researcher's observation, there are several schools in Malang that have developed Islamic Religious Education in order to create religious culture at school, namely SMAN 1, SMAN 3, SMAN 4, SMA Shalahuddin and SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Malang. Among the observed religious culture being cultivated at the schools are (1) tolerance between religion, (2) greeting each other with 'salam', (3) ever active religious activities, (4) clean and organized environment, (5) discipline, (6) good manners. This is similar to an observation made by Muhaimin, whereby several SMA in Malang were found to have created a religious atmosphere in many ways, including planned religious events, wise leadership on developing religious culture and early schooling of students.

2. Previous Research

   From the abundance of values contained in Islamic teaching, the most fundamental value is the value of Tawhid (the oneness of Allah). Ismail Raji al-Faruqi formulated an Islamic framework that included theories, methods, principles and subjects that captured the essence of Islam that is *Tawhid* (faith). Furthermore, in making Islamic Religious Education better, efforts mush aim toward this fundamental value (Lindenbaum, 2012; Adam, 2011). This value provides the direction and purpose of education process and serves to motivate educational activities. The conception of an education purpose based on Tawhid, namely "ahdaf al-rabbani", which means Godly purpose that, should be the basis of thinking, action and view of life in the education system and activities.

   Regarding the matter, religious culture at school is a way of thinking and doing of everyone at the school that is based on religious values. Religious, according to Islam, is applying the teachings of a religion comprehensively. According to Woodhead (2011) and Schuelka (2013), there are five dimensions to being religious, namely (a) Conviction filled with hope, where religious people hold fast to a certain theology and acknowledge the doctrine's existence, (b) Religious practice that include worship, loyalty and other matters that show commitment to the religion embraced, (c) Experience. This dimension observes the fact that all religion involves certain hopes, (d) Religious knowledge refers to the hope that religious people, at least, possess minimal knowledge on conviction, rituals, holy book and traditions, (e) Practice or Consequence. This dimension refers to the identification of consequences of religious conviction, practice, experience and knowledge from day to day.

   Tradition and development of religious teachings are closely intertwined because tradition cannot be simply separated from the community/institution that defends it and the community also affect religion being practiced. For that, according to Racokzy (2004) and Airriess, Hawkins, & Vaughan (2012), religion affect the path of society and community growth affects thoughts on religion. In this regard, Wicks (2011) and Mahmood (2011) also stated that human religion, at the same time, is always followed by the different cultural identity of the group that embrace it.

3. Method

   Since the research planned is a multiple case study, measures to be taken during the study are as follows: (1) Data collection for the first case, namely SMAN 1 Malang. (2) Observation for the second case, namely SMAN 3 Malang. (3) Continue observation for the third case, namely SMA Shalahuddin Kota Malang. Even though plans for this research are done in phases, specific events of observation are done simultaneously. For example, during registration of new students, graduation of class XII students, final test of semester, incidental activities, and certain events that requires specific times. In addition, the researcher will take advantage of these events to gather data.

   Based on the conceptual findings at the three schools, a comparative analysis is then employed and concepts developed to obtain an abstract of religious subject development in creating religious culture at the three schools. A

modified analysis is applied as a way to expand the theory and test it (Ntim, 2012). In line with a multiple case study plan, these observations attempt to understand the meaning of events and interaction of the people in given situations (Waggoner, 2012). In order to understand the meaning of events and interaction of people, theoretical perspective or orientation is used in a phenomenological approach as explained above.

4. Findings and Discussion

Islamic Religious Education is rich in values, be it *ilahi* (godly) or *insani* (humanly). In line with the purpose of PAI at school that is to create Indonesians that are loyal to religion and of noble character, which means humans that are knowledgeable, diligent in worship, smart, productive, honest, fair, ethical, disciplined, possess tolerance (*tasamuh*), maintain personal and social harmony, and develop religious culture within the school community.

The values, which serve these purposes, should be internalized and developed in the school's community culture. In cultivating these religious values, mutual commitment among the school's community, especially the administration is a must. Strategies to culturize religion into the school by people's power should be led by the school's principal, and reward and punishment as written in the School's Discipline; secondly, persuasive strategy, as a mean to form the school community's opinions; and thirdly, normative re-educative strategy. A norm is something that is typical or common that occurs in society. When normative is combined with re-education, it is to instil and replace old paradigm of the school community with a new standard. For the second and third strategy, indirect habituation, exemplification and persuasive approach will provide good reasoning and prospects that will in turn, convince the school community to practice it.

Instillation of religious values in school should be the core of the school's policy. This is in addition to the development of PAI in a plan to increase community's interest in their schools. Based on the observation made, education institutions that show academic performance and religious environment will possess their own appeal in the eyes of the community. Therefore, religious culture development policy ought to be the strategy in increasing the quality and interest of the community.

Also based on the findings, creation of a religious atmosphere and efforts to instil those values are very much apparent. Data on religious values installation show that indeed PAI has been developed sufficiently and effectively. Religion is indeed rich with noble values that should be practiced and cultivated in everyday life, and that is why the development of PAI in schools through religious culturization is most important. Religious culture comes in many forms such as ritual activities and social connections, as well as symbols as a manifestation of religious values.

5. Theoretical Implication

In term of values, religious culture involves spirit of sacrifice, brotherhood, spirit of helping each other and other noble traditions. Furthermore, in term of behaviour, religious culture involves the praying in congregation, generosity to give to charity, diligent in learning and other noble behaviours. In line with Hallfors, Cho, Iritani, Mapfumo, Mpofu, Luseno, & January, (2013) the religious condition of a subject would prevent him from acting to dangerous activities would raise him to disease such HIV and others.

Moreover, religious culture at school, in fact, brings forth religious values as a tradition on how to behave and an organization culture that is followed by the whole school. Through making religion a tradition or habit at school, the school community has already practice the teachings of religion. Francis, Robbins, and Cargas (2010) and Wekke and Lubis, (2008) they conducted a research that show in an environment that conduct religion and faith as the basis of activities would have a strength to maintain the positive impact to the practice and behaviour.

Therefore, there are several ways in order to culturize religious values, namely through school policy employed by the school administration, through activities carried out in class and extracurricular activities outside of class, and also continuous and consistent habits and behaviour of the school community that are geared toward developing a religious that the efforts to create religiously cultured schools face all sorts of challenges, be it internally or externally (Dingley, 2011; Boer, 2011; Kraler, 2007). Internally, education faces various students of different beliefs and religions. Furthermore, every student has different backgrounds, this would be help by enhancing a technology (Wekke and Hamid, 2013). For this reason, religious education is hoped to instil principles that include (a) Learn to

Live with Differences, (b) Mutual Trust, (c) Mutual Understanding, (d) Mutual Respect, (e) Open-mindedness, (f) Appreciation and Interdependence, and (g) Conflict Resolution.

6. Conclusion

The process to create religious culture is done through two strategies, namely (a) instructive sequential strategy, and (b) constructive sequential strategy. For the first strategy, efforts to create religious culture emphasize on the structural aspect of things, which are instructive in nature and rely on the commitment of leaders to employ systematic measures by force, so much so that punishment becomes a way to create religious culture in schools. Among the processes involved are (1) creation of religious atmosphere, (2) internalization of values, (3) exemplification, (4) habituation, and (5) culturization. As for the second strategy, efforts to create religious culture emphasize more on the importance of developing self-awareness until religious attitude, behaviour and habits are born, which in the end will form into religious culture in schools. The processes involved are (1) creation of religious atmosphere, (2) attitude, (3) behaviour, (4) habituation, and (5) culturization. In order to realize religious culture in schools, commitment and support from the school community is a must, alongside supervision and operations of the culturization processes. This can be done by developing a manual of sort containing guidelines for the students. Firstly, school community's support on the efforts to develop PAI in creating religious culture can be in the form of commitments of the principal and religious education teachers, students, parents and other teachers. Synergistic commitment and cooperation between the school community and support of parents and the local community is important in ensuring that religious culture can be successfully created. Secondly, it is of great importance that PAI is developed to create religious culture at school and its unsuccessfulness may be caused by many things including limited time allocation, learning methods that may be cognitive-oriented, non-existence of value internalization, so much so that the learning process tend to be just a transfer of knowledge, and negative influences from the outside world and also rapid technological advances.

References

Adam, N. M. (2011). Muslim voices in school: narratives of identity and pluralism. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 14 (4), 579-583.
Airriess, C; Hawkins, M; & Vaughan, E. (2012). Situating banal nationalism, the culture wars, and civil religion: governing localized geographies of national identity in Indiana. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 13 (1), 49-67.
Boer, R. (2011). Kapitalfetisch: 'The religion of everyday life'. *International Critical Thought, 1* (4), 416-426.
Brubaker, R. (2013). Categories of analysis and categories of practice: a note on the study of Muslims in European countries of immigration. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 36* (1), 1-8.
Dingley, J. (2011). Sacred communities: religion and national identities. *National Identities, 13* (4), 389-402.
Francis, L. J; Robbins, M; & Cargas, S. (2010). The Parliament of the World's Religions: who goes and why? An empirical study of Barcelona 2004. *Journal of Beliefs & Values: Studies in Religion & Education, 31* (2), 143-153.
Hallfors, D. D; Cho, H; Iritani, B. J; Mapfumo, J; Mpofu, E; Luseno, W. K; & January, J. (2013). Preventing HIV by providing support for orphan girls to stay in school: does religion matter?. *Ethnicity & Health, 18* (1), 53-65.
Hemming, P. J. (2011). Meaningful encounters? Religion and social cohesion in the English primary school. *Social & Cultural Geography, 12* (01), 63-81.
Karlsen, S. & Nazroo, J. Y. (2010). Religious and ethnic differences in health: evidence from the Health Surveys for England 1999 and 2004. *Ethnicity & Health, 15* (6), 549-568.
Kraler, A. (2007). The Political Accommodation of Immigrant Religious Practices: The Case of Special Admission Rules for Ministers of Religion. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 33* (6), 945-963.
Lindenbaum, J. (2012). The pastoral role of Contemporary Christian Music: the spiritualization of everyday life in a suburban evangelical megachurch. *Social & Cultural Geography, 13* (1), 69-88.
Lubis, M. A. & Wekke, I. S. (2009). Integrated Islamic education in Brunei Darussalam: the hopes and challenges. *Educare: International Journal for Education Studies, 1* (2), 141-156.
Mahmood, S. S. (2011). A Word about Ourselves. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, 31* (1), 1-3.
Mylek, I & Nel, P. (2010). Religion and relief: the role of religion in mobilizing civil society against global poverty. *Kotuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online, 5* (2), 81-97.
Ntim, S. (2012). Towards a theoretical framework for the teaching of religion in state-funded Catholic and other confessional basic schools in Ghana. *International Studies in Catholic Education, 4* (2), 152-163.
Rakoczy, S. (2004). Religion and violence: the suffering of women. *Agenda: Empowering women for gender equity. 18* (61), 29-35.
Sarkissian, A; Fox, J; & Akbaba, Y. (2011). Culture vs. Rational Choice: Assessing the Causes of Religious Discrimination in Muslim States. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics, 17* (4), 423-446.
Schuelka, M. J. (2013). A faith in humanness: disability, religion and development. *Disability & Society, 28* (4), 500-513.
Waggoner, M. D. (2012). Religion, Education, and Public Reason. *Religion & Education, 39* (1), 1-2.

Wekke, I. S. & Hamid, S. (2013). Technology on language teaching and learning: a research on indonesian pesantren. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 83*, 585–589.

Wekke, I. S. & Lubis, M. A. (2008). A Multicultural approach in Arabic language teaching: creating equality at Indonesian pesantren classroom life. *Sosiohumanika, 1* (2), 295-310.

Wicks, D. A. (2011). New Horizons: A Center for Research into Information and Religion. *Journal of Religious & Theological Information, 10* (1-2), 1-4.

Woodhead, L. (2011). Five concepts of religion. *International Review of Sociology: Revue Internationale de Sociologie, 21* (1), 121-143.