

INSPIRING STORIES OF PESANTREN LEADERS

*Experiences of Kiai/Nyai/Ustadz/Ustadzah
visit to the Land of the Rising Sun*

Preface: Tanaka Motoyasu & Prof. Takeshi Kohno
Prologue: Prof. Azyumardi Azra, CBE
Epilogue: Prof. Jamhari Makruf
Editor: Pipit Aidul Fitriyana



Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM)
UIN Jakarta

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the Land of the Rising Sun

(This book is translated from the original book titled "*Kisah Inspiratif Pemimpin Pesantren: Pengalaman Rihlah Kiai/Nyai/Ustadz/Ustadzah ke Negeri Sakura*" published by MAARIF Institute for Culture and Humanity, 2021)

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PREFACE

Executive Director Of
MAARIF Institute For Culture and Humanity

Words of wisdom which some people call *Hadith* say, “*seek knowledge until as far as China.*” This idea goes following what Imam Syafii once said: “*go, surely you will find substitutes for what you left.*” These words of wisdom are trying to show the importance of *hijrah* (migrating to a new place or a country). Indeed, Imam Syafii leads one of the Islamic School of Thought, the moderate Islam, because he lived in two different locations with two distinct cultures. When he lived in Bagdad, Iraq, he issued an *Ijtihad* or provision called “*Qaul Qadim*”. After leaving Bagdad, he went to a more modernized city, Egypt, in which he gave another provision called “*Qaul Jadid.*”

Going to various countries is also common among government officials. They use this opportunity to do comparative study in which they learn one thing or two from other countries. Although they spend more time traveling and shopping in most cases, there must be something that they learn from the comparative study they do. The new lesson they learn should therefore be constructively used and implemented in their respective workplace.

Indeed, this book will not discuss China, Imam Syafii, nor will it discuss the comparative study of government officials. It will explore the lessons learned from a journey, especially about stories from the journey of *Kiai, Nyai, Ustadz, and Ustadzah* who will henceforth be referred to as teachers. These teachers come from several pesantren or Islamic boarding schools (IBS) in Indonesia. They receive a travel grant to go to Japan, the land of the rising sun. From this journey, they get many essential lessons about management, education, and culture.

The government of Japan has maintained cooperation with Center for the Study Islam and Society (PPIM) of UIN Jakarta since

2004, creating a program called “Pesantren Leaders Visit to Japan.” The program is thought to be the bridge that has helped understand better the nature of the relationship between Indonesia and Japan. The number of participants has reached 160 pesantren leaders and teachers from various IBS of different sects in Indonesia, including the Salafi, the traditionalist, and the modernist.

The participants of this program experience and deeply understand the lives of Japanese people who have different religions and cultures. The visit also allows them to see firsthand cultural sites and historic buildings in several cities in Japan. Furthermore, in this program, the participants are allowed to deliver a presentation about Islam in Indonesia and how Indonesian people perceive Japanese society so that it helps improve the bilateral relation of both countries.

One interesting thing to explore after they finish the program is whether the participants can transform the experience and lesson that they get into practical uses, which can improve students’ lives and their IBS. Another intriguing aspect is how such experiences can be practically implemented; is it only telling stories, or does it also include individual and institutional changes?

Through “Impact Studies and Support of Best Practices on Pesantren’s Religious Moderation from Pesantren Leaders Visit Program,” MAARIF Institute for Culture and Humanity reconstructed the story of the visit. They tried to answer the questions posed above, compiling seven “best practices” as the inspirational story presented in this book.

We express our gratitude to PPIM UIN Jakarta (Idris Thaha and friends), the Japanese Embassy (represented by Mr. Kei Nishikawa), and all parties contributing to the success of this program.

Jakarta, January 24, 2021

Abd Rohim Ghazali

Executive Director of MAARIF Institute

FOREWORD

PMU CONVEY - PPIM UIN JAKARTA – UNDP

Indonesia and Japan have long-established diplomatic relations in various fields, one of which is through cultural exchange. The Japanese government also provides travel grants for Indonesian citizens to visit this country every year. IBS is one of the targeted groups to receive this grant to understand Indonesian and Japanese Islamic communities better. Such a mutual relationship was previously difficult to imagine because Japan is a secular country. However, the changing pattern of IBS characterized by the introduction of general education and Islamic education made it possible for the Japanese government to fund programs related to it.

The Japanese government has collaborated with the PPIM of UIN Jakarta since 2004, initiating a program called Pesantren Leaders Visit to Japan. It acts as the prominent donor while PPIM becomes the organizer. This program has contributed to strengthening the bilateral relationship between the two countries.

This program has been participated by 160 pesantren leaders, including Kiai, Nyai, ustadz, and ustadzah from across Indonesia. This program gives participants firsthand experience about living in Japanese society, which comprises a non-muslim majority. They also visited several cultural and historical sites, educational institutions, companies, and government buildings in various parts of Japan. Furthermore, the participant also took part in delivering presentations about the lives of Muslims in Indonesia and their understanding of Japanese society.

In 2020, PPIM UIN Jakarta collaborated with MAARIF Institute in evaluating the impact of the program. This program was followed by the provision of funding to support the strengthening of IBS activities

for ten alumni of the program running for 16 years. The purpose of this collaboration and evaluation is formulated in the form of efforts to provide recommendations for implementing the “Pesantrens Leaders Visit to Japan.” The evaluation also featured several activities, including alumni meetings, questionnaire distribution as part of program assessment, telephone interviews, and several alumni best practice compilations.

This book, a compilation of best practices, is an attempt to document the individual and institutional impact of the program in pesantren or IBS where the participant devout themselves. It can be clearly seen that the program has given overall positive impacts to the alumni. However, it is important to note that it may vary from one to another. Some tend to feel a substantial individual impact, while others experience significant institutional changes. The internalization of values of integrity is also apparent among participants. It includes values of discipline, cleanliness, honesty, and others.

On behalf of fellow members of the Project Management Unit (PMU), I would like to express my deepest gratitude to MAARIF Institute for their willingness to cooperate. I hope that this book can provide inspiration in which we can learn every positive lesson coming from various sources, including the one that the participants learned from Japan, the Land of the Rising Sun. The participation of pesantren in this program is expected to highlight the identity of IBS and/or other Islamic educational institutions as moderate and adaptive to social change. We believe that Indonesian Islamic boarding schools can inspire, and we also believe that violent extremism and terrorism will have no place in Indonesia when education is well organized and is everyone’s primary concern.

South Tangerang, January 25, 2021

Dr. Idris Thaha, MA

Project Officer

FOREWORD

**DIRECTOR OF DINIYAH EDUCATION AND ISLAMIC BOARDING
SCHOOLS OF THE MINISTRY OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS OF
THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA**

On Monday, November 23, 2020, the two staffs of MAARIF Institute, Moh. Shofan and Pipit Aidul Fitriyana, came to visit the directorate of early education and Islamic boarding school of the Ministry of Religious Affairs at Jalan Lapangan Banteng Barat No.3 Pasar Baru, Sawah Besar, Jakarta Pusat. The purpose of their visit was to discuss a program that MAARIF Institute, PPIM UIN Jakarta, and the United Nations for Development Program (UNDP) Indonesia have been collaborating on.

MAARIF Institute intended to carry out impact studies and support of Best Practices on Pesantren's Religious Moderation. This study aimed to evaluate the impact that the Pesantren Leaders Visit to Japan program had on participants. Pesantren leaders visit to Japan was initiated by PPIM UIN Jakarta and the Japanese government in 2004. This program had been participated by 160 pesantren leaders and teachers from all over Indonesia.

Recently, on average, ten pesantren leaders have been sent to Japan every year in which they would stay there for two weeks. Participants commonly include Kiai, Nyai, ustadz, and clerics will visit several places such as educational institutions, cultural sites, historical sites, religious centers, companies, and government offices. I also learn it during this program, the leaders of the pesantren are expected to deliver a presentation about Indonesian Islam. Furthermore, they are also engaged in a discussion that will explore their understanding of Japanese society. Indeed, this helps improving mutual understanding between Indonesia and Japan.

Both of them explained that this program went through several stages to achieve the expected goals. Among these stages was updating

the database because several pesantren leaders have died. Assessment through online questionnaires and telephone interviews were also conducted to reveal inspiring stories and the post-visit impact. I was also informed that stimulus funds were given to ten pesantren to support their activities, but the funds were only allocated to ten Islamic boardings school due to budget limitations.

This book contains seven essays. It tries to record the changes that pesantren leaders try to encourage upon their return from Japan. Surely, several obstacles may hinder this process. However, I know from the stories that they have their way of dealing with these difficulties. Also noteworthy is the fact that the impacts in each participant vary from one another. Some felt a stronger personal impact, while others have succeeded in implementing the lessons they learned from their visit to their respective schools.

From this experience, the participants learn about values we often hear daily, such as integrity, discipline, cleanliness, and honesty, as reflected in society. The participants state that they “understand Islam in Indonesia, but witness how these values are implemented in Japanese society.” Apart from the 10 IBS that have received support from this activity, I am sure that other IBS also have inspiring stories to offer, but they cannot participate due to the program’s limitations.

On behalf of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Directorate of Diniyah Education and Islamic Boarding Schools, I would like to thank and appreciate MAARIF Institute for carrying out the program. I would also like to express my gratitude to PPIM UIN Jakarta and the Japanese Government, which have initiated the departure of the leaders of Islamic boarding schools to Japan. It is such a huge honor to see this noble and inspiring program is fully supported by the Japanese government for many years.

As a former student, I believe this program has inspired and opened the perspectives of pesantren leaders. I hope that the inspiration and lesson learned from this program can encourage pesantren to improve its quality to compete in global contexts. I believe that a similar program needs to be further encouraged and carried out by the Ministry of Religious Affairs by sending more teachers to other developed countries so that more and more perspectives can be developed for advancement in IBS to happen.

As one of the leaders of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, I also thank the Convey project. I first know this project

when I was still serving as Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Cooperation (2016-2020) of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta because some friends in Jogja were also involved in managing the program.

Finally, I hope that you have an appealing experience in reading this book. I hope it can inspire everybody who reads it and the readers can learn some lessons from it wherever they are. I also wish this program can go under the government's effort in mainstreaming religious moderation. I believe that Islam in Indonesia is moderate, and this moderatism should be promoted to many parts of the world.

Jakarta, January 27, 2021

Dr. H. Waryono Abdul Ghafur, M.Ag

*Director of Diniyah Education and Islamic Boarding School,
Ministry of Religious Affairs RI*

PREFACE

INSPIRING STORIES OF PESANTREN LEADERS Lesson Learned from the Land of the Rising Sun

Pesantren leaders, teachers come from many different parts of Indonesia. They are awarded a travel grant to visit Japan for two weeks. The main aim of this program is to foster cultural understanding between Indonesia and Japan.

The participants were involved in various activities, including visiting several historical and cultural sites, educational institutions, companies, and government buildings in Japan. They were also given an opportunity to look at various facilities and participate in simulations related to disaster prevention. Another unforgettable experience was when they experience living with a Japanese community who is not Muslim in cities like Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, and Hiroshima.

This casual book is a collection of writings from teachers who have visited the Land of the Rising Sun in a program called “Pesantren Leaders Visit to Japan.” The program has been running for several years. It was first held in 2004 initiated by PPIM of UIN Jakarta and the Government of Japan. Through the program, teachers can see, observe, and interact directly with Japanese people. Furthermore, they also studied how Japan built its education system and culture.

The teachers discuss and share their experiences about personal and institutional changes they have made after visiting Japan. This book is about unique stories written but contains a deep meaning that is very important to learn. The teachers play an active role in transforming value awareness more intensively and massively, both in the family, school, and community. Their stories are so valuable and essential to read, and they will make an essential contribution to spreading positive and inspiring values.

The Japanese are highly disciplined, and they maintain their discipline in all aspects of life. In dialogue, a teacher asks how to instill discipline, and one of the Japanese participants replied, “*we were taught discipline since childhood, and our parents always give examples on how to do that.*” Indeed, a child’s attitude is heavily shaped by how their parent teaches them. If the parents are disciplined, then the child will be disciplined, too. This kind of culture in families is what makes discipline very prominent in Japan. Their attitude and behavior are clearly reflected in how organized and orderly the Japanese are when riding the train. That is an attitude that has been taught and accustomed to since childhood.

Japanese people are also well-known for their culture of cleanliness. During the 2018 world cup in Russia, various media reported that the Japanese supporters cleaned spectator stands after the match. Media also reported that the Japanese national team players cleaned their bench and changing room. This attracted world’s attention, and some people even laughed at their behavior. Indeed, we may have read other similar news through the internet about how disciplined Japanese people are. The participating teachers, especially, are given firsthand experience to observe such attitudes and behaviors in Japan. Many of them were amazed by how significant yet straightforward attitude that Japanese people do to maintain cleanliness. They would carry out the trash until they found a trash can. This simple behavior is what makes all the differences.

Japanese people are also highly obedient to rules. For them, breaking the rules will embarrass them. This obedience has been taught and instilled since childhood, and parents play an important role in this process by giving direct examples. It is, therefore, expected that the key to politeness for them is punctuality. Thus, this kind of character is fascinating to observe.

Likewise, we can also see such characters in education, reflecting how good their education quality is. One teacher said that the quality of education in Japan is distributed equally from kindergarten, elementary, middle, to high school levels. It can be seen in their success in producing quality human resources. One of the most critical roles in improving the quality of human resources, according to the teachers, is the education curriculum in the country.

As reported by the participating teachers, the Japanese government’s main aims to achieve in education are developing each

individual's personality to the whole, increasing the quality of human resources, and maintaining justice and truth. Each student is also taught to respect their social environment and to keep harmony. It is also their responsibility to have a work ethic, be disciplined, and be punctual. These lessons are clearly reflected in education, where students are given teaching materials containing such lessons, and the level of difficulty for each lesson is adjusted accordingly. Therefore, education can contribute to building willingness and spirit to learn to build their country and help maintain world peace.

In producing quality human resources, Japan does not go through an instant process. They go through the same process that other developed nations have done. They do not solely depend on the education system itself. In fact, they pay careful attention to the system and the people involved in it, such as teachers and students, to come together with the same vision and mission. With the loyalty of the teachers and the level of discipline of students, they can create quality human resources. Well-established cooperation between all these components helps them achieve the success and the educational goals they have proclaimed. Therefore, it is not surprising that Japan is listed as one of the countries with the best quality and education system.

Education in Japan is concentrated on developing personality traits concerning everyday life. Therefore, the assessment is determined by looking at the student's daily learning performance as a passing criterion. It is what makes teachers amazed by the quality of education in Japan. All the teachers shared that the visit to Japan had brought enormous benefits and changes, not only for themselves but also for the educational environment in which the teachers worked. Furthermore, they say that a visit to Japan has allowed them to contribute to social transformation.

There are various ways the participating teachers model character education for their students through experiences and observations during their visit to Japan. They formulate their experiences in the form of teaching and learning activities, approaches and methods. They place education as a tool to teach and an instrument of social engineering that is creative and fun. The approach and methods they apply could have various implications, and it is not limited to the cognitive domain. Indeed, it also touches on the affective and psychomotor domains.

In fact, teachers find it challenging to formulate creative teaching methods that can help instill values in students, and for them, this is one major obstacle that they have faced so far. Although character building is part of education in pesantren, instilling values in students in their everyday life proves to be challenging to achieve. It is also challenging to encourage students to implement these values. One reason for this is that most teachers still apply to old teaching methods like lecturing so that students are often bored. A visit to Japan has opened their perspective in which they could start making innovations in classroom activities to engage students more effectively.

Although there have been many lessons learned from the program, I believe an evaluation is important to examine the program's effectiveness. Many obstacles are also present in the evaluation process. However, the teachers' contributions, especially concerning several changes in their respective pesantren, deserve appreciation. They have explained in their writings that characters play a key role in life and that these characters can be instilled through education. They have shown that character building can be effectively taught using fun methods and approaches previously learned from their experience in Japan. Hence, it demonstrates the significance of the program. They have successfully implemented these changes in teaching and learning activities. Happy reading!

Jakarta, January 27, 2021

Pipit Aidul Fitriyana
Programme Coordinator

PREFACE

BUILDING MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION BETWEEN JAPAN AND INDONESIA

I write this preface to the book about the stories of several alumni of the Pesantren Leaders Visit to Japan program. In the aspect of friendship, the most memorable thing about this program was that we greeted and addressed each other with the titles “Kiai,” “Gus” and “Ustadz.”

In early 2000, we worked for the Japanese government as the Japanese Consulate General in Surabaya and Political Researcher at the Japanese Embassy in Jakarta. Ambassador Yukio Takeuchi assigned Prof. Kohno to study Indonesian Islam. The duty led him to meet with Prof. Azyumardi Azra—at that time served as Chancellor of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta—and Prof. Jamhari Makruf—then the Executive Director of PPIM UIN Jakarta.

Prof. Kohno had learned Indonesian Islam for quite a long time when studying at Ohio State University, United States, around the mid-1990s. He made friends with several Indonesian Muslim scholars such as Prof. Bahtiar Effendy (deceased) and Prof. Saiful Mujani. From the meeting, Prof. Kohno began to get information about pesantren and madrasas as typical Indonesian educational institutions, although it was not in-depth. Then, I met Mr. Tanaka Motoyasu when he served in Indonesia as a diplomat.

The early 2000s became a crucial moment for Muslims around the world. The attack on the World Trade Center (WTC) tower on 9/11 2001 in the United States and the Bali Bombing 1 in 2002 were two of the events shocking the world. These historical events cornered Muslims due to a deteriorating image. At the same time, it opens up opportunities for us to learn to understand Islam and Muslim society.

Then, Prof. Kohno started communication with Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta as a research institution that is widely referred to by several scholars, both from within

and outside Indonesia, from various disciplines and strategic partners related to Indonesian Islam.

The discussion resulted in several ideas. First, setting an effort is to help restore the negative image of Islam because of the cases of violent extremism. Islam seems to be an extreme religion. Many people think badly of Islam. Even in a number of Western countries, Islamophobia is getting stronger, especially in Europe and the United States.

The second idea is to promote Indonesian Islam. We, the Japanese people, do not understand Indonesian Islam. We understand more about Islam in the Middle East. Therefore, studies on the Middle East are prevalent in Japan. Many Japanese scholars are proficient in Arabic. One of them is Prof. Toshihiko Izutsu, who wrote the study of the Quran. However, at that time, few Japanese scholars focus on studying Indonesian Islam and Southeast Asia.

The third idea is to help provide inspiration and new perspectives to educators and leaders in educational institutions to improve the quality of education and the surrounding community, for example, by giving an overview of school management in Japan.

The fourth notion is to reduce the exclusivity of Islamic leaders through encounters and associations with different groups to create mutual understanding, especially between Japan and Indonesia. Therefore, PPIM suggested conducting a visit program for pesantren leaders to Japan. There are two reasons for this program.

First, Japan is not considered a Christian country. It would have been different if the pesantren leaders had been invited to Western countries such as Australia, Europe, and the United States. They must have a barrier because most of the population is Christian, so they are considered Christian countries. Japan is regarded as neutral in that respect.

Second, Japan can set an excellent example for Indonesian Muslims that any country can progress without losing its local cultural identity. Having a visit to Japan, they would see how Japanese people maintain their local cultures even though Japan has been transformed into a developed and modern country.

Prof. Azyumardi Azra, as the Chancellor of UIN Jakarta at that time, strongly supported the idea of this program. Personally, he was also close to Ambassador Iimura. He was even invited to present this program directly to the Japanese government in Tokyo, Japan.

The beginning was a crucial moment. The program, which was first launched in 2004, has been designed since 2003. The Japanese government

and PPIM have developed criteria for Islamic boarding schools that allow them to be selected to participate in this program. At that moment, there were four approved criteria.

First, Islamic boarding schools must be reasonably large and influential in their area because inviting respected Kiai or Nyai information and program inspiration can be spread widely in their surrounding areas. That was how the initial assumptions were built.

Second, Islamic boarding schools are affiliated with moderate Islamic organizations. For example, pesantren are affiliated to NU and Muhammadiyah. There needs to be representation from moderate Islamic organizations to get support from civil society organizations.

Third, small independent pesantren or madrasas. For example, Integrated Islamic Elementary School (SDIT) and Integrated Islamic Junior High School (SMPIT) belong to this category. In 2003, such educational institutions were widely built and developed as they are today.

Fourth, it must be based on regional distribution. Although the majority of pesantren are concentrated in Java, the distribution of areas is the primary concern. Besides, each region in Indonesia is unique, has its traditions and local wisdom.

In 2004, we returned to Japan with our respective duties. However, we communicate intensively to make this program successful, including the formulation of events in Japan.

In managing the program, according to our duty, we were involved in accompanying several early batches. It was a timeless memory of how we accompanied the Kiai and Nyai, who were amazed at the modernity of Japan. There were many interesting events during my experience with them. For example, in 2004, some Kiai were left at the station. The train stops at the nearest station because they were not used to using the subway. Then, we asked the participants to get off the train, wait at the station, and not go anywhere. Meanwhile, we returned to the initial station to pick up the Kiai who had been left behind. Fortunately, they were still at that location where they had been, so we could find him and guide him to rejoin the group.

During the program, the Kiai also shared that they were tired because of their busy schedule. They also said that they are not used to pushing and carrying suitcases to various places while walking. However, they said they were happy because their bodies became healthy and fresh. At first, we thought it was a natural thing. It may be because they were not used to traveling with many things. However, in the end, we understood the

position of the Kiai in the structure of Indonesian society.

Every year, PPIM helps us to provide a long list of prospective pesantren and madrasah participants in the program. We then discuss the long list together to set it up as a short list. This short list is about candidates for program participants.

In the initial period of the program, the selection method was carried out through face-to-face interviews by visiting Islamic boarding schools and madrasahs. For example, this was done by Prof. Jamhari and Mr. Takonai, Director of the Political Section of the Japanese Embassy to Indonesia at the time. They met and asked the leader of the pesantren directly to participate in the program. Even if they could not join, they were suggested to appoint an influential senior ustadz, and allow them both to meet with the person appointed as a substitute on the spot. We continue to maintain this as much as possible so that engagement with pesantren becomes stronger.

Through this program, we feel that we have built mutual understanding between Japan and Indonesia. Many pesantren also claim to have been helped in improving the quality of their education. We are delighted because this achievement is in line with the initial goal of the program formulation 17 years ago. We received much information and understood pesantren and Indonesian Islam.

We are committed to continuing to support this program to the fullest. Only in 2020, the program could not be held due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We did not expect this program to last for a dozen years. Appreciation should be given to PPIM UIN Jakarta for managing this program very well and professionally.

We also extend our appreciation and gratitude to the MAARIF Institute for assisting in preparing this book. Hopefully, this book can inspire the people of Indonesia to build mutual understanding and cooperation between Japan and Indonesia.

Jakarta--Indonesia & Yokohama--Japan, March 6, 2021

Tanaka Motoyasu

(Director of Political Section of the Japanese Embassy to Indonesia)

Prof. Takeshi Kohno

(Professor at Toyo Eiwa University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Social Sciences)

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PROLOGUE

PRACTICING ISLAMISM

Prof. Azyumardi Azra, CBE
Professor of History of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah;
Chairman of the Advisory Board of PPIM UIN Jakarta

In early 2000, there were increasing tensions between Muslim and non-Muslim communities in various parts of the world. The attack on the World Trade Center (WTC) tower was marked by the attack on November 9, 2001, which was known as the 9/11 attack. The tension was further exacerbated when the United States coalition invaded Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003. The Bali Bombing incident on the night of October 12, 2002, also made the situation even more complicated. These four major incidents, among others, became the leading causes of the tension.

Efforts are needed to build mutual understanding in order to defuse the tension. We must know each other to grow mutual understanding, and one way to do this is by reading books. However, face-to-face meetings can be more effective. As Chancellor of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta in 1998-2006, I was very close to the Japanese Ambassador to Indonesia, Yutaka Limura. Indeed, he has a love for Indonesia. I was asked to promote Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin in Tokyo, Japan, because Islam was seen negatively due to terrorism attacks in the name of Islam.

This was an opportunity to propose various programs between Indonesia and Japan. I openly conveyed that Indonesia and Japan have strong ties. Unfortunately, negative memories about Japan tend to be stronger in the minds of our younger generation. In fact, this is inseparable from how historical narratives were built. For example, they learn that Indonesians were forced to do *romusha* and worship the sunrise during the Japanese colonial era

However, Japanese occupation in Indonesia has also brought several positive impacts in many ways, one of which can be seen

from Indonesian Muslims' perspective and collective memory. There are at least four main things. First, the Japanese colonial government created Masyumi, not as a political party but as a federation that replaced the Indonesian Islamic Council (MIAI). Second, Japan invited Muslim leaders (Kiai and ulama) to participate in the discussion of Indonesia's independence through the establishment of the Investigative Agency for Preparatory Work for Indonesian Independence (BPUPKI). This agency was then changed into the Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence (PPKI). People with Islamic education backgrounds were represented through the two institutions formed by Japan. Third, the Japanese government trained young Muslims in scouting and the military, and they later joined the Indonesian National Army (TNI). One of the well-known figures is General Sudirman. Fourth, Japan also established the office of the Religious Affairs (Shumubu), which became the embryo of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion. It was followed by the establishment of Regional Religious Offices (Shumuka).

To establish a stronger mutual understanding between Muslim and non-Muslims communities, I proposed a program to the Japanese government called pesantren leaders to visit the Land of the Rising Sun. This program is very possible because Indonesia and Japan have long-established diplomatic relations in various fields through cultural exchange. Pesantren and madrasas are two of the main targeted groups to promote better understanding between Indonesian and Japanese Muslims. The changing pattern of pesantren and madrasas, which teach religious education and general education, allows the Japanese government to fund programs related to education in pesantren and madrasas.

Japan was chosen because the majority of the population is non-Muslim. The image of Japan is also quite positive among the leaders of Islamic boarding schools and madrasas compared to Western countries or America. Leaders of pesantren and madrasas were sent to Japan to foster mutual understanding to have empirical knowledge and experience. This is the first reason.

Secondly, this program became a learning platform for Islamic boarding school leaders to raise awareness that Islam is not a mere slogan. Indeed, they must be able to realize the substantive values of Islamic teachings. The departure of the leaders of pesantren and madrasah aims to open the eyes and hearts that Islam is enough to

be believed in and needs to be practiced. The best way to practice it is to see, feel first hand, and learn from the community that has successfully practiced it.

Many Muslims think that they are self-sufficient. They believe that everything is settled after they embrace Islam. However, they are unaware that Muslims are still left behind in many aspects of life, such as science and technology.

In Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) literature, *taharah* was discussed first, but it is ironic to see that many Muslims are not practicing a clean lifestyle. Islam also teaches work ethic, but many of its followers do not have enough work ethic and are lazy. Even though Muslims have done five daily prayers, I believe that they have to do and learn more about discipline.

Japan can be a good place for learning to apply Islamism. One main reason is the fact that the previously mentioned values have become the culture of Japanese society and it is interesting because Japan is not a Muslim society. These values are very close to us because they are taught in Islam. Despite this proximity, many Muslims are still not practicing it. Therefore, it is insufficient to claim that Muslims are *khairu ummah* (the best society). They must then practice the values of Islamism in various aspects of life.

Since it was first conducted in 2004, this program has never stopped except in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Appreciation needs to be given to the Japanese government and PPIM UIN Jakarta, who have consistently collaborated in the success of this program. It is not an easy matter to manage and fund a program going on for 16 years. Appreciation should also be given to the MAARIF Institute, which has carried out impact evaluations and studies to compile this book.

What is interesting about this book is the gradual changes in Islamic boarding schools and madrasas after their leaders participate in the program *pesantren* leaders visit Japan. The program inspires them to translate Islamism as a concept into practical and measurable implementation. For example, students pay careful attention to cleanliness in their Islamic boarding schools through a culture of “good deeds”. They take off their shoes and put them on the shelves provided before entering class. In addition, they even put the shoes tidily so that the footwear is ready to wear when they leave class

Furthermore, many Islamic boarding schools and madrasas have built partnerships with educational institutions in Japan. For

example, Pondok Pesantren Diniyyah Puteri Padang Panjang sends its students to study science and technology to Japan every year. As a result, their students are now able to make robots. This progress was unimaginable before. Students make their parents proud, and even parents hope that their children will study in the Land of the Rising Sun.

This kind of program must continue to be carried out because it is instrumental in implementing Islamism and developing the world of Indonesian education. The outcomes of this program should be disseminated massively through creative media. Through this approach, we can expect more and more people to be exposed to this information.

This program also contributes to building mutual understanding between Muslim society and Japan. We can see that Japan is becoming more friendly with Islam through the continuous campaign of halal and sharia tourism. As a result, the number of Indonesian Muslim middle-class tourists to Japan is increasing, and Japan should adapt by providing Muslim-friendly tourism.

Ciputat, February 28, 2021

CULTURAL AND STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

***An Inspiration from Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High
School Probolinggo***

M. Disin Asmoyo

A short story of becoming a teacher

Becoming a teacher may have been the path of my destiny. Although I do not specifically have an educational background in the field of education, I have been a teacher since I graduated from college. The decision to become a teacher has brought me through various experiences and very impressive learning. One of the most valuable experiences, which also became an important point of change on how I see the world of education, was the experience of participating in a comparative study to Japan in 2005 through the “Pesantren Leader Visit to Japan” initiated by PPIM UIN Jakarta. In this book, I will share with you the various impacts and impressions I experienced after returning from Japan.

From a cultural point of view, I can say that I incline to East Javanese cultures because I did all of my formal education in this province. I was born in Probolinggo, East Java on May 4, 1974. I studied at the Pabrik Gula Pajarakan Kindergarten, Karangbong State Elementary School I, Pajarakan Junior High School and Kraksaan Public High School. Then I continued my studies at the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Jember, East Java, majoring in Agronomy.

After graduating from college in 1998, in the same year I immediately taught Science and Biology at Islamic middle school and highschool, Islamic junior and senior high schools of Pondok Pesantren Subulus Salam Kapasan Probolinggo and Plus Al Mashduqiah Junior High School at Pondok Pesantren Al Mashduqiah Kraksaan, Probolinggo, East Java. After teaching for about five years in these schools, I finally devoted myself fully by teaching at Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School as a permanent teacher of Science and Biology in the 2003/2004 academic year.

Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School Before the Visit to Japan

Compared to other schools, Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School is still in its early stage as it was established in 2003/2004. Since its establishment, the foundation has undergone three changes of leadership. From 2003 to 2012, K.H Nurchotim took the leadership role. He was then succeeded by H. Suryani, who led from 2012 and 2018. From 2019-present, Arief Saptahadi was in charge. In these periods, the headmasters were changed twice. In the 2003-2009 period, Supriyad S.Pd, M.M served as the principal, and since then, I was entrusted to be the headmaster.

There were only 13 students in the first batch, and then in the second batch of the 2004/2005 academic year, the number of students increased to 44 people. The class was divided into two. In the third year, there were 50 students, and because the school was in its earliest stage, all applicants who registered are accepted. During the three years of establishment, the school structure was also very simple, following the standards of the education office consisting of the Principal, Deputy Head of Curriculum, Deputy Head of Student Affairs, Deputy Head of Public Relations, and Deputy head of facilities and Infrastructure. In addition, the learning system at that time was mostly done classically in which explanation of the material was done orally as the use of learning media was very limited and not common.

Impression during the Visit to Japan

I never imagined that I would have the opportunity to visit a famous country for its technological sophistication and cultural strength. The opportunity to do a comparative study in Japan is an important one in my life and career as a teacher. This valuable experience has given me an awe-inspiring learning experience, especially related to the world of education.

I went to Japan in 2005, representing the Islamic school network in East Java. I was a science teacher at Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School. The visit lasted for two weeks, and during these times, I was given opportunities to visit many schools in Japan, including kindergarten, elementary school, middle and high school, and universities. It was an incredibly fantastic experience for me because I could learn further about Japanese education.

In general, the learning process in middle and high school share several similarities with what I have seen in Indonesia. Learning

activities in the classroom use the methods that are usually used in Indonesia. In terms of size, each class consists of 30 to 35 students. The major difference, however, was observed at the Kindergarten and Elementary School levels. Students at this level spend most of their time playing in the classroom and are not taught to read or count. These practices were totally different from what I know in Indonesia.

There may be a slight difference in the junior high and high school levels. There are complete learning facilities and media support schools in Japan. For example, in the science learning process, each student is facilitated with a complete microscope tool which functions very well. The facilities and tools are sophisticated and adequate.

Another thing that I really admire about Japan is that Japanese students are very diligent in keeping things tidy. For example, when they enter class, they do not wear sandals or shoes. It is done in addition to maintaining cleanliness. It is also believed among Japanese society that if students learn without footwear, the knowledge can be more easily transferred to students. In essence, students in Japan are very diligent in maintaining cleanliness. Every school does have a janitor, but students play an important role in cleaning classrooms. They are diligent in working together to keep the classroom clean.

The culture for disciplined was evident in Japan. Japanese students are very disciplined in every way. For example, the culture of queuing is different from our culture. In their lives, queuing has become a habit, and they will feel embarrassed if they do not do it.

Implications on Individual Changes

The experience of doing comparative studies in Japan has had a profound impact on me personally as a teacher. It has changed how I see education, culture, and discipline. I also learn how to carry out practical and fun learning.

Before having a comparative study experience in Japan, I use very common learning styles and methods that teachers mostly use. I believe that these methods were also familiar among teachers in other places. The teacher carries out the learning process in the classroom through oral explanations. Teachers rely heavily on their verbal and communication skills to explain learning materials. The use of other learning media is still minimal, and it cannot be applied optimally. In Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School, this condition lasted for quite a long time until the 2005/2006 school year. The innovations

in carrying out the new learning process began to spur after learning new experiences from a comparative study visit in Japan.

After returning from Japan, I shared my experiences with the management of Islamic School Network, the Bhakti Pertwi Foundation Board, teachers, and the employees of my school. Furthermore, I was also invited to share these experiences by several educational institutions, both private and state schools, under the auspices of the Integrated Islamic School Network in the Probolinggo and Pasuruan regency.

I feel like I have changed a lot after I visited Japan. This experience has been inspiring and has also encouraged me to learn further. Most importantly, I am more determined to make many changes to myself and to develop my capacity. In 2006, I decided to return to study. I took the teaching course in Biology education in STKIP (School of Teacher Training and Education) Pasuruan. This degree is essential for me to because I am not a graduate of the Education Program. After that, I took part in Teacher Professional Education and Training (PLPG) in 2008, organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia through the State University of Malang. I join this program to obtain a certificate as an educator. However, what is substantial is that as a teacher, I must continue to learn and improve my abilities to become even better.

The experience from Japan has impacted my capacity and capability, which in turn also influence the strategic positions that were offered and entrusted to me, as well as the policies that I took next. Several strategic positions have been assigned to me because of my capacity to carry out these tasks. I served as Deputy Principal of Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School in 2005 – 2008 and Principal of Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School from 2009 – present. I was also a state and private middle school secretary in 10 sub-district of Probolinggo regency in 2012. I served as a Member of the Education Commission of the Indonesian Council of Ulema (MUI) of Probolinggo in 2018 – 2020 and the Chairperson of the (MKKS) of Probolinggo from 2019 to the present. This MKKS consists of 140 Private Junior High Schools. In Probolinggo, the number of private high schools far exceeds that of state schools (74). Through these strategic positions, I have made innovations and policy breakthroughs, which have enabled Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School to progress very rapidly.

The Impact on My Institution

I am very grateful for having the opportunity to observe firsthand educational advancement in Japan. I learn that the success they have achieved is supported by the system's strength and culture within the educational institution itself. After this visit, I believe that such a culture and education system can be adopted in the school where I teach while expecting the same progress.

The idea was successfully realized, especially after being entrusted with a strategic position from vice-principal to becoming a school principal. My experiences inspire many school policies that I took in Japan. In fact, I feel that the changes I implemented bring quite significant impacts to the school. This change can be seen in school structure, in which character education has been further strengthened. The learning activities have given more chances for students to develop their interests and talents. Overall, Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School has undergone two major progress, which include cultural and structural changes.

Cultural Changes

Changes in the cultural aspect are largely inspired by the values I learned from educational institutions in Japan. These changes occurred in several important activities, starting from the school orientation for new students, implementing the foundation's vision and mission, and changes in the pattern of relations between teachers and students. All of these changes, in turn, also influence teachers' and students' achievements.

To improve the quality of our teachers, the foundation continuously provides them with professional development activities to enhance their capacity. For example, the Bhakti Pertiwi Foundation has collaborated with the Islamic Education Consortium (KPI) in Surabaya to conduct training on Quantum Learning, Quantum Teaching, and Total Quality Management in terms of improving classroom management skills. This activity has further implications for teachers' professionalism. This activity has also bolstered teachers' awareness of KAIZEN spirit or continuous improvement, both in personal and professional qualities.

The introduction of the vision and mission of the foundation to new students also underwent significant changes. The materials for debriefing new students during the student orientation program have

been changed because the materials are more oriented to the school's vision and mission. The materials include (a) Introduction to the Vision and Mission of Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School, Teachers, and Employees, and the School Environment; (b) Building students' character spiritually, morally, and ethically in daily life; (c) learning strategies; and (d) Love for the environment.

I consider this change a very important step in introducing new students with such values. As observed in educational institutions in Japan, the inculcation of values and the introduction of educational culture is one of the keys to achieving success in carrying out the learning process in schools.

In addition to this, the school is also committed to strengthening spiritual values as parts of the school's vision and mission. Implementing these values features several main agendas to support spiritual values so that students' character is formed. Students involve in learning Qiroati Method of Reading the Qur'an Program and several congregation prayers, including Dhuha Prayer, Dhuhur Prayer, Asr Prayer and a gathering program called Silmi Qur'ani. This is a communal remembrance to Allah conducted in one class at one of the students'/guardians' homes on Saturdays. We also do Khotmil Qur'an Program for students in class 9 and a Celebration of Islamic holidays.

Secondly, the school also focuses on fostering academic and non-academic achievements by facilitating students with extracurricular activities to develop their talent and interest. One of the activities is the Japanese language community, which our alumni taught who has finished a bachelor's degree in Japanese Language Education from Surabaya State University. In addition to this program, the school also provides students with life-skill training, Quran recitation training, handicraft training, and English language training. All of which are carried out through extracurricular activities.

Our school also launches a program specifically designed to care for the environment. This program has given our school achievement because of our concern for the environment. Bhakti Peritiwi Junior High School was awarded the Adiwiyata Mandiri, for its continuous concern in environmental care. Currently, our school has maintained a partnership with 11 schools for environmental programs. These 11 schools were under our guidance to achieve the same feat in environmental caring.

This environmental program also features a healthy canteen in which every food seller has to receive a license from our team. We also have a program called Sensi (Clean Monday), a regular program to clean the school environment. The school actively promotes 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) in the school environment to hope that students can also implement it in their respective homes.

Changes related to school culture not only gave birth to a new spirit of learning and strong values, but they also allow Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School to get many achievements and awards. The Awards include the following:

1. Provincial Level Widya Pakerti Nugraha School Award (Character Education Competition)
2. Adiwiyata School Award.
 - District Level Adiwiyata School Predicate (Award & Certificate from Regent) 2010.
 - Adiwiyata School Predicate at Provincial Level (award & certificate from the Governor) 2013.
 - National Level Adiwiyata School Predicate (award & certificate from Minister of Education and Culture & Minister of Environment) 2013.
 - Adiwiyata School Predicate for Independent Level (award & certificate from Minister of Education and Culture & Minister of Environment) 2018.
3. Our teachers also manage to get several awards. Some of our teachers are appointed national and regional instructors for several courses such as social sciences, English, and Indonesian Language education.

Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School maintains relations with the Japanese Consulate in Surabaya as part of its gratitude and efforts to continue to establish communication to improve the quality of education. Our school attends at every invitation to the Japanese Emperor's birthday and an invitation to break the fast for the month of Ramadan at the General Consulate residence. Furthermore, our students regularly visit the Japanese consulate general office in Surabaya as part of their Japanese language extracurricular activities.

Structural Changes

In addition to changing the culture and habits in the school

environment, Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School also made many structural changes, ranging from school structure, time management in the context of transferring and strengthening values, strengthening the curriculum to allow more programs for excellence.

Changes in school structure began in the 2009/2010 academic year. It includes a policy change that is widely adopted from Japanese education. The school structure is no longer simple, as is the standard reference of the Education Office. It has undergone reforms and the addition of divisions needed to support the education process. The structure does not only consist of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Public Relations and facilities, but we added seven divisions to support learning activities, including Mastery Learning Division, Character Building Division, Academic Achievement Division, English Environment Division, Adiwiyata Division, Public Relations, and General Services Division. The change in structure and the addition of these divisions eventually gave birth to a variety of activities that are expected to support the improvement of the quality of education at Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School.

To strengthen values transfer, our school also attempt to improve time management by formulating predetermined routines. This will help to bolster religious values and character building. For example, before formal learning is carried out, there is a Qur'an and Tahfidz reading program which is held at 06.30 - 07.40 WIB. This activity is for all levels of education based on the ability to read the Qur'an. Our record shows that this activity can ease the transfer of knowledge from teacher to student. Based on observation and experience, students who excel in Reading the Qur'an and Tahfidz also tend to excel academically.

The curriculum change policy is also carried out by adopting several curricula that are considered high quality. We adopted the 2012-2018 school curriculum as CIEC (Cambridge International Examinations Centre), the organizer of the Cambridge International Examinations. Then in 2018 - 2020, we adopted the International Competitions and Assessments for Schools from the University of New South Wales, Australia.

Besides, our school hold special programs at every level of education. Some of them are the outbound program for new students, English Camp to Bromo, and the self-improvement outbound program. The outbound introduction of the Adiwiyata

School Program for new students (Grade 7) aims to introduce and instill a sense of love for the environment both at home, at school, and elsewhere. It, in turn, will nurture Adiwiyata cadres in grade 7.

The English Camp to Bromo is designated for students in grade 8. This activity aims to motivate and build students' self-confidence by practicing English with native speakers. This program also features environmental activities in which the students are asked to clean the mountain by picking up trash that they find. Furthermore, the self-improvement outbound program is for students in grade 9. This activity aims to prepare them both spiritually and physically in facing the Final School Examination and National Examination.

In addition to these programs, our school also concerns with the school environment and one of its focuses is to maintain cleanliness in the canteen environment. This program is called a healthy canteen. The program aims at keeping the food healthy for students, and what students consume should be free from Flavoring, Coloring, Sweetener, Preservative, and Chewing. All food in the school canteen must first obtain a license from the Adiwiyata Team before being sold to students/school residents.

The policy change is also directed at extracurricular activities, in which the school organizes Japanese language learning activities. This program is facilitated by our alumni who have graduated from Japanese language education. This extracurricular activity aims to facilitate students who are interested in learning Japanese culture and language. The advantage of this program is that the coaches are our alumni so it is easy for them to adapt to the "culture" of our school.

As a result of this rapid progress, starting from the 2006/2007 academic year, there has been an increase in the number of applicants to our school. In this batch, Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School started to conduct a selection test for new student admissions because the number of applicants who register exceeds the predetermined quota. This trend continues to this day. Because of this consistent increase in the community's interest to send their sons and daughters to our school, in 2009/2010 Academic Year, Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School opened three additional classes for new students. It certainly progresses to be grateful because the increasing quality of education that we offer will also impact the community's response to our school and foundations.

Challenges, Obstacles, and Solutions

The changes and achievements of the school do not come easy.

There are barriers and obstacles which may obstruct these changes. I personally had many challenges and obstacles when I began to reflect on the need to improve my quality as a teacher, especially after learning essential lessons from a comparative study in Japan 16 years ago.

In general, the most dominant challenge is when someone has to get out of their comfort zone, especially for teachers and school employees. Creative ideas are indeed relatively easy to deliver, but the biggest problem lies in implementing this idea. Likewise, after finishing the comparative study from Japan, I cannot immediately implement what I learn, but I need to take steps.

Indeed, new creative ideas cannot be instantly implemented and it highly unlikely to realize these ideas alone. From our school experiences, for example, new programs sometimes require collaboration with other institutions. We need to maintain cooperation between schools and government agencies. When the owner of the idea is only a teacher, a structural approach is needed to implement the idea.

Another crucial challenge is to have a similar vision and mission within the Academic Community because the program is for students, teachers, and employees and Foundation administrators, guardians of students, and the community around the institution. These changes require a lot of process and determination to achieve the desired results.

Although there have been various obstacles and challenges, I believe there always be solutions to solve these problems and obstacles. These solutions vary heavily depending on the approaches contingent on my position as a teacher, vice-principal, and principal. After returning from a comparative study to Japan, my position was still a science teacher. I submitted a comparative study report to the Principal and the management of the Bhakti Pertiwi Foundation. After that, I looked at the possible actions which can be implemented. Furthermore, the program is then discussed by the Foundation management and the Principal to formulate a policy.

After being appointed the Deputy Principal and Principal, it was easier for me to carry out changes because they could be directly followed up as school policies, except for strategic matters that needed approval from the Chair of the Foundation. An example of this activity is the change in the name of the position in the school structure, from the general structure to the typical structure of Bhakti

Pertiwi Junior High School in the form of divisions.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that the results of comparative studies from Japan have had a very significant impact and influence on the development and progress of Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School. The influence starts from the character habituation of students, learning activities by teachers and school policies related to the school structure and other strategic approaches. Between 2005 and 2020, these changes have allowed significant progress and achievements for Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School, both from an academic and non-academic perspective, so that this school receives much public interest. It is evident from the public's interest in sending their sons and daughters to Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School. Since the 2006/2007 Academic Year, we started to regulate a selection program for new students. We even have to add a class for the 2009/2010 academic year with a new school structure. Overall, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Japanese Embassy in Indonesia and the Japanese Consulate in Indonesia East Java. I sincerely hope that this collaboration will continue to provide benefits for generations to come.

LEARNING ABOUT EDUCATION FROM JAPANESE SCHOOLS

Inspirations from SD Islam Roushon Fikr Jombang

Sayekti Puji Rahayu

I spend almost half of my life working as a teacher and educator. I have taught for about 20 years. In addition to teaching, I have also been appointed a Principal, Deputy Principal for Academic Affairs, Deputy for Human Resources and Public Relations. Currently, I serve as the Director of Education and Curriculum Development. Even though I was given a position at the school, I always fulfill my duty of teaching and educating students at the Roushon Fikr Islamic Elementary School.

Roushon Fikr Islamic Elementary School was established on January 8, 2001. This school is located not too far from the Tebuireng Jombang Islamic Boarding School, founded by KH. Hasyim Asy'ari. This Islamic Elementary School further develops the Darul Aitam NU Jombang Foundation, which has contributed to sponsoring orphans and education. For those of you who have read Ali Shariati's books, you are undoubtedly familiar with the term *Roushon Fikr*. He popularized this term. This term comes from Persian, which means enlightened intellectual or enlightened people. An enlightened person in Ali Shariati's view, is not a person who takes no responsibility by remaining silent and sitting in glory. An enlightened one should also be responsible for the social problem and endeavor to transform it to be better. In short, Roushon Fikr is a person who has a social responsibility. To be an enlightened person, according to him, cannot be achieved merely through being smart or reading many books. Worshipping alone is also not enough. Everything needs to be complemented by carrying out social activities to guide the community to make changes for the better.

Departing from this philosophy, Roushon Fikr seeks to raise smart, religious children and have social responsibility. Therefore,

students at Roushon Fikr are required to study science and increase worship and are also trained to interact with the community and see firsthand the problems and realities that exist in society so that they have familiarity and sensitivity to community problems.

To date, the Roushon Fikr Foundation has several educational institutions, including Roushon Fikr nursery, children playgroup, Kindergarten, Islamic Elementary School, Islamic Middle School, and Brawijaya Islamic Junior High School. Initially, Roushon Fikri only has an elementary school, but due to the support of many parties and requests from parents, other educational institutions, such as child care, playgroups, and junior high schools, can be established.

When I went to Japan in 2005, Roushon Fikr Elementary School was only five years old. The condition of our school at that time was not as good as it is now. We did not have as many educational facilities and infrastructure as we do today. Moreover, academic, Islamic, and learning programs were still carried out monotonously, and our schools could not provide adequate learning resources and experiences that were meaningful to students. In addition, the teachers did not use creative and innovative learning methodologies

Although there were many limitations, my enthusiasm never subsided. We were always committed to providing educational services to students because I believe that Islamic educational institutions have an essential role in producing a generation of people who master science, technology, and noble character. Islamic educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools have been growing, and they no longer focus solely on religious knowledge. Students are also equipped with other important skills. Therefore, many Islamic boarding schools today have improved, both in terms of teaching methodologies, educational programs, and educational infrastructure

Moreover, technology and information in the 21st century are developing so rapidly so that a teacher must adapt to the progress of the times. Mastery of science is one indicator of success in responding to global changes. Besides, mastery of science is also expected to go hand in hand with strengthening faith, piety, and morality to not focus on pursuing science alone. Indeed, the teaching of religious values is equally important. The teaching of such values will guide and train our generation to have personal sensitivity and responsibility towards their environment and the lives of others.

What is interesting about Japanese education?

I got much inspiration when I was in Japan, especially when I saw the education process there. In my opinion, Japan is one of the countries that can be used as an example in terms of science and technology education. They also strive to preserve and maintain a culture amid globalization to balance modernity and tradition. Science learning developed by the Japanese government uses a Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL), scientific, and student-centered approach. Participants are required to memorize and understand scientific concepts and are also directed to solve problems directly. Through this method, science learning becomes fun.

In addition to the creative and innovative approach, the main cause of the progress of education in Japan is the sincerity of the teachers. The position of the teacher in Japan is highly respected, which is so because the community places great importance on education. From this perspective, education becomes meaningless without respecting and appreciating the existence of teachers. Education cannot be left entirely to parents. In modern society, sending children to schools to be taught and educated has become a primary need. In realizing the importance of this education, Japanese society respects teachers, so teachers also have a work ethic and high enthusiasm when teaching. In fact, I once met a teacher who was old, but he was still passionate about teaching and always keep himself updated with the development of teaching methods.

Furthermore, methods and approaches to education in Japan are not rigid and monotonous. They use various learning resources, including a real-life problem, and it is not limited to books. Therefore, students involve more in practice than memorizing theory. Students are directed to be more active in the learning process. They are often invited to museums, historical buildings, nursing homes, the business world, the industrial world, and others. If there is an exam, the teacher there patiently explains to students the rules and how to answer the exam until they understand. If students do not understand, the teachers will do peer mentoring. Because of teachers' enthusiasm in Japan, every long holiday, they provide free time to give additional lessons for students who don't understand the lesson or experience learning difficulties. If there are students who violate the rules, punishment, and sanctions are not always the main choice because, in some cases, giving punishment is ineffective and creates

new problems. Thus, a teacher must understand why students commit violations to be given the proper treatment.

The learning media used in schools in Japan are also very varied. In addition to using books, they also use learning videos, two-dimensional and three-dimensional media, and science and mathematics practicum. Learning media should be varied not to get bored and are more interested in taking lessons. While in Japan, I saw the teachers there doing a habituation program. The aim is to habituate and form students with character. Among the implementation of this habituation, the program is to familiarize students with reading books before the lesson begins; shoes and sandals neatly arranged in place; implementing a queuing culture; closing the school gate under the agreed time, and throwing trash in its place.

Regarding science education, schools in Japan have several special programs to create comfort and sincerity in learning. Among the programs carried out in several Japanese schools in the science product festival held every year. The students are required to participate in this event. This program is beneficial for developing students' creativity in applying scientific theories that have been learned in school. Their works are displayed at this festival.

Second, schools often invite and bring in science experts to increase students' insight and knowledge. In fact, guardians of students who are experts in specific scientific fields are also invited to the school. In addition to strengthening students' understanding, the aim is to improve the relationship between the school and the guardians of students. The Japanese school also establishes a science club. Through this study group, students are taught to get used to discussing and collaborating to create certain products.

In addition to creating activities that support the development of science, schools in Japan also develop programs that aim to make students more creative and foster social sensitivity. Among the activities carried out to support this program is a visit to a nursing home. The goal is to allow students to interact with parents and to foster care and concern for them. The school also organizes education and safety programs. The form of activity is health education and how to take care of yourself or maintain personal health. There are also entrepreneurship programs in schools.

While in Japan, my entourage and I also visited temples. We met the highest-ranked monk in the temple. It was not easy to meet the

chief monk. My colleagues and I were lucky to be able to meet and have a dialogue with him. We discussed tolerance and how it was carried out. Also, we were taught the proper manner to drink tea. In Japan, the tea is directly picked from the top of the tea leaf. They prioritize efficacy over taste. It's true that if the tea is picked directly, the taste is not very good, but the properties are nice. While the tradition in our country, the tea leaves are dried first, when they are dried, a chemical process occurs so that the efficacy is reduced and the quality is not as good.

Implementing Lesson from Japan

Sepulang dari Jepang, saya menerapkan semaksimal mungkin pengalaman yang diperoleh di tempat saya mengajar. Saya menularkan pengalaman itu kepada guru-guru yang lain, karena untuk mewujudkan sistem itu di sekolah, perlu dukungan dari guru-guru yang lain, agar hasilnya efektif. Selain berbagi pengalaman di sekolah tempat saya mengajar, pengalaman itu juga saya ceritakan kepada guru-guru di sekolah lain. Kebetulan saya ditunjuk sebagai salah satu trainer pendidikan di Kabupaten Jombang, sehingga posisi itu bisa menjadi medium untuk menyampaikan pengalaman yang sudah saya peroleh di Jepang kepada guru-guru dari sekolah lain.

After returning from Japan, I try my best to apply the experience I gained as much as possible in my school. Most importantly, I also shared this experience with other teachers because support from other teachers is significant for changes to happen. Apart from sharing my experiences at the school where I teach, I also share this experience with teachers in other schools. I happened to be appointed as one of the education trainers in the Jombang Regency to share the lesson with a broader community.

After sharing experiences at school, all the teachers at the Roushon Fikr Foundation agreed to use a contextual teaching and learning approach which involves cooperative and student-centered learning. It will require the use of a variety of teaching methods. We also develop and elaborate the learning resources. The sources are no longer limited to textbooks but are expanded. In addition, students are focused on memorizing and understanding the material and are also directed to be able to apply what they learn in everyday life. For example, when studying mathematics, I ask students to count, weigh, and measure whatever is in front of them so that they understand

how to apply arithmetic, weigh, and measure in life. When learning Biology about leaf bones, students are asked to pick up various kinds of leaves that they can find around the house, and then they were asked to identify the leaves and explain the results.

In addition to learning in class, we also invite students to study outside the classroom. We have a program called Out Door Study. They are invited to visit historical places and cultural sites, which become the symbol that signifies the Jombang Regency's local wisdom and surroundings. Students are invited to learn to make pottery, beads, cassava chips, bricks, tiles, dolls, compost, batik, and others. They know all these skills directly with the craftsman to understand how the surrounding community's economic situation. To foster social sensitivity, we invite students to visit orphanages, special schools, and others. We hope that students can adapt and appreciate people who are different from them through this visit program.

Similar to what I observed in Japan, to strengthen the relationship between the Foundation and the guardians of students, the Roushon Fikr Foundation involves parents who have specific expertise to become resource persons in every school activity. For example, one of the students' parents is an eye health expert, and I invited him to give training for students. This program makes the relationship between the school and the parents stronger and better. In fact, some educational programs are made based on parents' input. The development of a new school is also based on parents' suggestions. In the past, we only have an elementary school, but after receiving much inquiry from parents, we open a middle school.

As for implementing the habituation program in the school environment, Roushon Fikr Foundation familiarizes students with reading *Asmaul Husna* (the names of Allah according to His attributes), prayers, and *Dhuha* prayers before learning activities begin. The students are also trained to get used to queuing culture, especially when shopping in the canteen and getting grades from the teacher. Students have been taught to get used to saving some money to donate every Friday. They also get used to communal prayers such as *Dzuhur* and *Asr* prayers at school. Another important thing that is habituated is disposing of garbage in its place and practicing another daily etiquette.

Cultivating the Spirit of becoming an Educator

Teaching staff in Japan have a high work ethic. Even during the long school holidays, they are still willing to provide additional lessons for students who do not understand the material well. Therefore, a teacher is not only required to master knowledge according to their field but must have the spirit and commitment to become an educator. Educating students must be from the deepest heart, based on sincerity and generosity, to lead students to gain valuable knowledge and blessings.

Currently, we have started a remedial program for students who have difficulty understanding the subject matter and an enrichment program for students experiencing accelerated learning. It is a form of the seriousness of the teaching staff to create quality human resources. If there are students who make mistakes, we do not give punishment and sanctions. A junior high school principal in Japan said, *“Punishment doesn’t improve the situation; we need to guide our students patiently.”* I keep this sentence in mind, and it motivates me when dealing with students who make mistakes. I often invite students to talk so that they can grow personal awareness to obey the rules.

When students come late, the teacher will ask them to do several activities before learning begins, such as prayer and reading the Qur’an. After that, they were asked to tell the teacher why they are late to find out why they are late. It will help the teacher to find the right solution for their problems.

The most important thing is that teachers are prohibited from saying inappropriate words that bring down students’ mentality, even when they make mistakes. It is crucial to avoid verbal violence. Teachers are expected to have a calming soul to educate their students. This will help students be more easily touched when advised in a gentle way rather than a harsh way. A rigid approach tends to make students even more rebellious. Even if the student does not fight back, their heart will be hurt, eventually leading to resentment and hatred towards the teacher. If students do not like and hate the teacher, they will not learn well.

A teacher should try to increase students’ confidence, and one way to do that is by rewarding them. The award can be a compliment that will motivate them. For example, a teacher could say *“you were great today”* to appreciate students’ progress. It is highly advisable to avoid blaming and rephrasing the words into more motivational words

such as “*Try again, you can do it.*” Appreciation can also be through a thumbs up, a head nod, a toss, or a handshake while congratulating. It is equally essential with displaying students’ work on the wall.

The last thing an educator needs to do is to pray for their students. Apart from the concrete steps above, the spiritual path must also be taken by educators, and it is expected that students are given blessings and beneficial knowledge for society.

LEARNING ABOUT NATION CHARACTER BUILDING

An Inspiration from Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Pekajangan Pekalongan

Ahmad Sulaiman

Profile of Islamic Boarding School

Muhammadiyah Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School (MMU-IBS) is located in Pejambon of Ambokembang Village, Kedungwuni, Pekalongan regency. This village is 10 kilometers south of Pekalongan. Majority of people who live in this village is merchants and entrepreneur with various social and educational backgrounds. Their culture of togetherness characterizes the people in this village, which, in turn, supports our IBS.

Geographically, MMU-IBS is bordered in the west with rice fields of Tangkil Tengah village, east with Ambokembang housing, in the south with Pejambon housing and the north Ambokembang village.

MMU-IBS stands on a land of almost 2.5 hectares, and this land is a waqf (grant) from H. Fauzan Harun. The land was donated to Muhammadiyah Pekajangan Branch. The Muhammadiyah Pekajangan branch uses this grant to build Islamic educational institutions. There is an educational complex on this land, including the Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Madrasah Tsanawiyah (middle school), and Madrasah Aliyah (high school).

The name Miftahul Ulum is taken from the name of a mosque located in the complex. Long before the IBS was established, several educational institutions in the complex, namely Madrasah Aliyah and Madrasah Tsanawiyah. The MMU-IBS has always undergone rapid development, both physically and non-physically, with an increasing number of students every year.

The Miftahul Ulum Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School Pekajangan is located in the Pekajangan and Ambokembang communities who have an important role, especially in Islamic

da'wah in the surrounding community. The communities around the neighborhood have benefited a lot from the existence of these Islamic boarding schools.

The background of the establishment of the Miftahul Ulum Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School stems from the issuance of the decision of the 39th Muhammadiyah Congress in Padang, which instructed the regions' branches to increase the number of educational institutions. In addition, there was a concern among leaders of Muhammadiyah in the Pekajangan Branch regarding the limited numbers of Islamic preachers. These two factors become the main reason for the establishment of educational institutions in Pekajangan.

Following these two issues, there was an increasing demand among people to have religious preachers. For this reason, the Kiai and elders in Muhammadiyah established the Miftahul Ulum Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School, which was initiated by KH. Sulkhan Mighrom (late) and KH. Ishom Cholil, an elder and advisor to the Muhammadiyah Pekajangan Branch Manager during the leadership of H. Chadliri Masyhuri for the 1991-1996 period.

In the beginning, education at the Miftahul Ulum Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School was only limited to the study of deepening and appreciating Islam in the form of *takhasus*. It was the early embryo for establishing the Miftahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, where participants were not limited by age and were not charged.

This *takhasus* education lasted for 2 years, from June 1995 to June 1997. The teaching and learning process took place at the Muhammadiyah Pekajangan Branch office. Through a Plenary Meeting, the Head of the Muhammadiyah Pekajangan Branch decided to establish an Islamic Boarding School, which is later known as Miftahul Ulum. The boarding school was established based on the decision of the Muhammadiyah Branch Leadership Plenary Meeting as stated in Decree No. 95/S.KEP/V.0/B/1997 dated June 15, 1997.

At the beginning of its establishment, KH. Syukron Madani Qahmad Ambari was appointed as the Head of the school through the Decree of the Head of the Muhammadiyah Pekajangan Branch, signed by H. Yusuf Yahya in the 1996/2001 period. As a follow-up to the decision of the plenary meeting, then in 1997/1998, the school first commenced the academic year as Miftahul Ulum Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School.

At the beginning of the academic year, MMU-IBS received 42 students in formal education levels of high and middle school. The teaching and Learning Activities (KBM) are divided into two sessions. The formal education of middle and high school was held in the morning, whereas the non-formal education classes were carried out in the afternoon, evening, and dawn with a classical system guided by Kiai and teachers. This boarding school has been running until now, with several changes related to the education system and management.

As a religion-based educational institution, MMU-IBS designs its curriculum according to the mandate of Muhammadiyah that aims to produce generations that are faithful to Allah, have self-confidence, and master science and technology. Therefore, this aim is reflected in its vision and mission that goes “preparing Islamic cadre who are creative, and innovative.”

This vision is then translated into several missions including 1) building spiritual mentality with faith, Islam, and Ihsan, 2) nurturing students’ creativity to live independently, and 3) equipping students with the knowledge to think innovatively and argumentatively.

My Impression after the Visit

Alhamdulillah, I am beyond grateful for being chosen by the head of MMU-IBS to represent the school in the pesantren leaders visit to Japan. This program was initiated by the Japanese Embassy in Indonesia and Center for the study of Islam and Society (PPIM).

PPIM is a research institution managed by lecturers and researchers in Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. The visit to Japan was held from 12 to 27 January 2007.

H.E Kenta Nakashima, including several staff from the embassy and representatives from PPIM UIN Jakarta, greeted all the participants in Soekarno-Hatta International Hotel Airport. I also met with Dr. Abuddin Nata and Dr. Jajang Jahroni, our guides in the program.

H.E Kenta Nakashima and his staffs spoke in a briefing session. The briefing was intended to give participants detailed information about the program and what the participants would do during the 15 days visit to Japan.

The agenda began with an introduction between the participating members of the delegation and the Embassy staff. After that, we

watched a documentary film about Japan from various aspects, including technological progress combined with perseverance and beauty, culinary culture, natural beauty, religious life, education, etc. After the briefing was complete, all participants departed for Japan.

After 7 hours of flight from Ngurah Rai Airport in Denpasar Bali, we finally arrived at Osaka Kansai Airport, or Kanku in Japanese. It is the third busiest airport in Japan, after Narita International Airport in Chiba and Haneda International Airport in Tokyo. It is also the largest airport in the Western region of Japan and serves Osaka, Kyoto, and Kobe. We were welcomed by the MOFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) staff, a cabinet-level ministry of the Japanese government in charge of foreign relations.

The MOFA staff who picked us up was Ms. Miyo Furusawa. She was the one who guided us during our trip to Japan. In total, 12 people consisted of ten men and two women. The participants were also accompanied by two people from the PPIM UIN Jakarta, namely Prof. Dr. Abuddin Nata and Dr. Jajang Jahroni.

While in Japan, participants visited several temples where Japanese people worship. We visited the places of worship, included Nishi Hongan-Ji Temple, Kiyomizu-dera Temple, Ryoan-ji Temple, and Todaiji Temple.

Firstly, we visited Nishi Hongan-Ji Temple, which was the temple of the head of Shinshu. This temple has become a world cultural heritage. It is also one of the famous temples in Kyoto. In addition, this shrine also has followers who are mainly from Japan, and they will come to visit this temple every year. Thus, it is not surprising that this temple was declared one of the holiest places in Japanese Buddhism.

Next, we visited Kiyomizu-dera Temple. It is one of the most famous shrines in ancient Kyoto and in Japan, with more than 3 million visitors per year. Today, Kiyomizu-dera has become a landmark of Kyoto. Moreover, with its strategic location in the center of Kyoto, this shrine is also one of the must-visit spots in Kyoto. It is located on the Shimuzu hill of Mount Otowayama

Then, there is also the Ryoan-ji temple. The shrine is widely known for its 'Rock Garden (Karesansui Garden)', and has been recognized as one of the historical buildings of ancient Kyoto. Shortly after passing through the main gate, we will see a pond, namely Kyoyochi Pond. This pond was initially known as 'Oshidori Pond' or duck pond. The name is chosen because there are many ducks around this pond.

Lastly, we came to Todai-ji temple. This temple is located in Nara Prefecture and is famous for being home to a giant Buddha statue, the 14.98-meter high Rushanabutsu Statue. This temple is situated at an altitude of 48 meters.

Besides being famous for its beauty, Todai-ji temple has a park called Issuen Park. There is a well-known and must-visit sacred deer Park. The deer in this park becomes the main attraction for visitors to Nara. One reason for this is that the deer in this park are wild animals that have been considered and valued as natural treasures in Japan. About 1,300 deer are living in this park. The deer in Nara's Todai-ji Temple Park is left free, flocking to the shores of the lake, playing among the dry leaves, and all living their lives in the wild. On the other hand, these deer are also tame animals so that visitors can feed them.

From the visits to some of these temples, I can conclude that the Japanese view religion as a bond of culture and tradition. Thus, having two or more religions in one's life is a natural thing, and it is one of the characteristics of Japanese religion

In its long history, religion has developed. The original belief was maintained even though new faiths emerged. The original religion still lives in harmony despite syncretism. There are several religions in Japan besides Shinto, such as folk beliefs, including Buddhism, and other religions that coexist in harmony. Although it is said that religion is not essential in Japanese people's lives, in reality, they still carry out religious life in their behavior as "tradition guardians" of their culture.

In Japan, there is an Indonesian school called Sekolah Republik Indonesia Tokyo (SRIT). It was initially established as Taman Pendidikan Indonesia on the 21st of April 1962. In 1963, it was changed into SRIT.

There are four levels of education in SRIT starting from kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, and high school. This school is designated for Indonesian children whose parents work in Japan. We were given a chance to meet and discussed with the SRIT headmaster.

In elementary school in Japan, students of grades 1-3 do not have to do exams until they are in grade 4 (10 years old). It is so because the study should mainly be directed to build children's character in the first three school years, hence character education. Therefore, they are not taught science subjects.

Character is an inner trait that affects all thoughts and behavior. Children are taught to respect others and be gentle with animals and nature. They also learn how to be generous, compassionate, and empathetic. In addition, children are taught to be able to control themselves and have the nature of justice.

Moreover, children are also taught neatness, discipline, and punctuality. It is a typical Japanese-style educational activity. If you study religion, you can go to the Middle East, but if you want to learn about human civilization, order, neatness, cleanliness, punctuality, and discipline, Japan is the right place. Indeed, we can find many things that have been lost in Indonesia there. We may be accustomed to normative stuff in our environment, but these are very applicable and entrenched in Japan.

The education that parents and teachers give to their children will certainly influence children's daily behavior. For this reason, parents and teachers must be careful in teaching their children and continue to convey positive values to them.

We are very impressed with the children's discipline in Japan. Elementary school-aged children can automatically arrange their shoes on the shelves before entering class to have no messy shoes on the floor. When I visited a school, I saw that elementary school children were able to regularly queue for classes, and take food and drinks for lunch independently. Four sources are used as basic materials in the pattern of education in Japan, namely (1) language as a communication tool, (2) skills to help people, (3) philosophy of life, and (4) religion.

One thing that caught my attention was the philosophy of education in Japan. This philosophy of life teaches the culture of shame to children. They will feel ashamed if something is not neat and embarrassed if they break the rules, including littering carelessly. That is why Japanese people have to finish eating what they eat and leaving no leftovers on the plate. I had an unforgettable experience when I was having lunch in a buffet restaurant in Japan. I did not realize that there was much leftover on my plate. Ms. Miyo then warned me that I could be fined for not finishing the food I took. I was so surprised by this, and I finally put it in a paper bag and brought it home.

Another precious experience was during a visit to Sagano High School, Kyoto. My first impression was to find the school's motto,

which is “Empower Student for Success through Synergetic Interaction.” The school’s creeds are *‘wakei’* which means “be harmonious and respectful,” *‘jikyō’*, which means “trying to improve yourself,” and *‘hisho’*, which means “act globally.” Indeed, this school aims to educate and nurture “global learners.”

At Sagano High School, there are two distinct program departments. The first program is the Kyoto Cosmos Department, which includes three study programs: the Super Science High track, the humanities track, and the social science track. Secondly, there is the Department of General Studies. In addition, the school also cooperates with nearby Kyoto University and other research institutions and provides further education in the natural sciences. Most students participate in clubs and extracurricular activities, including sports clubs and cultural clubs.

The education system in Japan does its best to ensure that students eat a healthy and balanced diet. In primary, secondary, and high school, lunches for students are served according to standard menus developed not only by qualified chefs but also by nutritionists. Indeed, they pay careful attention to what students eat, and their focus is not simply making food with good taste using flavor enhancers. All students in the same class eat the food in their respective categories, and the teacher also eats together. It can help to build a positive relationship between teacher and student.

Apart from paying attention to food, people in Japan pay attention to cleanliness. Students have to clean classrooms, canteens, and even toilets independently. When cleaning, students are divided into small groups, and the tasks were rotated throughout the year.

The Japanese education system believes that requiring students to clean their schools independently will teach them to work in teams and help each other. Thus, from this, children are expected to respect their work and the work of others.

After enjoying the scenery while visiting several tours in Japan, such as the Panasonic Center, Golden Temple, Tokyo Tower, NHK (short for Nippon Hoso Kyokai, Japan’s National Television company), I went to visit Kaiyukan Aquarium, which is the best aquarium in Japan with 29 thousand animals including sharks, whales, and enormous mantas. After that, I visited the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake Memorial Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution. I prefer to call it the Kobe Earthquake Museum. Here I have a personal

experience of how people dealt with the 1995 earthquake and how it affected the people of Japan.

Syahdan, it was one sad morning during my visit to Japan because we all will leave Japan. We went to Narita International Airport by bus, accompanied by Mrs. Miyo Furusawa Hasegawa. Mrs. Miyo gave us a souvenir on the bus, and I chose a handkerchief as a keepsake. Before we entered the checking room at the airport, we said goodbye to Mrs. Miyo as the group companion. We said, *“until next time, we can meet again. Sayonara, Arigatou Gozaimaz.”*

While waiting for the flight schedule, I noted the entire group and their phone numbers to maintain communication with our friends still even though we are in different cities. I couldn't talk to anyone on the plane because my tongue was numb, and I missed my family so much.

MOVING TOWARDS INNOVATIVE, CREATIVE, AND PRODUCTIVE ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL

*An inspiration from Ummul Mukminin
Women's Islamic Boarding School Makassar*

Masriwaty Malik

Profile of Islamic Boarding School

Ummul Mukminin Women's Islamic Boarding School (UMW-IBS) is located in South Sulawesi, and it is one of Aisyiyah's educational institutions. It aims to produce women cadres and intellectuals to help achieve Muhammadiyah's and Aisyiyah's objectives in realizing progressive Islamic movement.

The idea of establishing a women's Islamic boarding school was raised at a meeting of the Aisyiyah Regional Leaders of South Sulawesi on March 8, 1981, by Dra. Hj. Ramlah Aziez (late), who was the chairman of the Aisyiyah Regional Leadership in South Sulawesi. Her idea then received positive responses from all the participants.

The establishment of the IBS began by forming a land purchase committee chaired by Dra. Hj. St. Ramlah Aziez herself. Thankfully, due to the grace of Allah, Rabbul Alamin, the Regional Leader of Aisyiyah South Sulawesi, received a donated land from the late Mrs. Hj. Athirah Kalla, covering an area of two hectares in Sudiang Village, Biringkanaya District

The official handover of the land was carried out in front of the participants of the work meeting of the Aisyiyah Region of South Sulawesi. This meeting was attended by the Regional Leaders of the Aisyiyah of South Sulawesi on 1 Dzulqad'ah 1401 H/August 30, 1981, in Ujung Pandang.

In its development, Drs. H.M. Yusuf Kalla, who is the heir of the late Hj. Athirah Kalla sees that the location of the land in Sudiang Village is not strategic because it is close to Sultan Hasanuddin Airport. The land is then exchanged with another located in Bulurokeng Village, Biringkanaya District, which covers more than 2 hectares.

This waqf land exchange event was held on 1 Muharram 1404 H/ October 8, 1983. Drs represented the heirs. H.M. Jusuf Kalla, while the Regional Leadership of 'Aisyiyah South Sulawesi was represented by Hj. St. Musyawarah Musa, SH, MS, who was also the Chairperson of the Aisyiyah Regional Leadership at that time. The event was witnessed by members of the Regional Leadership of 'Aisyiyah South Sulawesi, the heirs of the late Hj. Athirah Kalla, Muhammadiyah Regional Leader of South Sulawesi, Biringkanaya Sub-district Head and a number of invitees.

Finally, the UWM-IBS was established on August 30, 1981 / 1 Dzulqā'dah 1401 H by the Regional Leader of Aisyiyah South Sulawesi on land donated by Hj. Athira Kalla, the mother of Drs. H.M. Jusuf Kalla. This Islamic boarding school is located in Pai Village, Biringkanaya District, KM. 17 Makassar. In its first batch, there were 17 students. Since its establishment, the UWM Islamic Boarding School has entered its 4th period of leadership. Dra. Hj. Sitti Ramlah Aziez was the first leader before KH. Abd. Malik Ibrahim and Drs. KH. Jalaluddin Sanusi led this institution. Today, the UWM IBS was managed by Drs. H. Abd. Kadir Arief, M.Pd.

In realizing its vision and mission, the Ummul Mukminin Women's Islamic Boarding School implements an integrated curriculum, adopted from Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School Development Institute Curriculum (LP2M), the National Education Curriculum, and the Ministry of Religion Curriculum. This curriculum regulates a six-year education program consisting of four educational units: Public and Islamic Junior High School (middle school) and Public and Islamic Senior High School (high school). These units have been accredited by the School and Madrasah Accreditation Board (BAN-S/M) of South Sulawesi Province. In the 2019/2020 academic year, we accepted 1,374 students.

The educational system at the UWM IBS is holistic-integrative and includes the Tahfidz Al-Qur'an program (Quran memorization). Our school also provides various extracurricular activities for students. These integrative programs are expected to nurture the leadership competencies of students. We manage our boarding school with an excellence model in which we use English and Arabic in the teaching and learning process. We also manage a dormitory that is designated for Qur'an memorization. For the past six years, the Ummul Mukminin Islamic Boarding School has been trusted to hold

the Computer-Based National Examination (UNBK). In addition, since its establishment in 1987, we have graduated 28 batches with a total of 2,171 alumni. Most of them pursue a higher degree both in Indonesia and abroad.

The UWM IBS aims to create excellent female alumni, cadres of scholars, and leaders who practice the teaching of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. It is also in line with the targets of Muhammadiyah and 'Aisyiah in realizing a truly Islamic society.

To achieve this goal, the IBS formulates a vision "The Realization of excellent female alumni, ulama cadres, and Leaders who implement the teachings of Qur'an and the Sunnah Maqbullah. The vision is broken down into three main keywords: excellent, Cadre of Ulama, and Leaders. It is also supported by a vision that leads to that goal.

My Impression during a Visit to Japan

Before explaining any further, let me introduce myself. My name is Masriwaty Malik. I was born on 16 July 1969. I completed my secondary education at Madrasah Muallimat Aisyiyah, Makassar. After that, I went to Madrasah Mu'allimat Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta in 1987. I received a bachelor's degree scholarship in Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta on the study of comparative religion, which I completed in 1993. Pondok Hajjah Nuriyah Shobron was awarded this scholarship. I was beyond grateful when I was given an opportunity to visit Japan in a program called Pesantren Leader Visit to Japan.

The Japanese education system optimally implements an innovative, creative, and productive education. These are the things that are also needed in our IBS. We aim to familiarize our students with technology to support the learning process using observation or practice. Thus, the teaching and learning process in the classroom is solely limited to rote memorization, but it also teaches important lessons that can be implemented in everyday life. It enables the transfer of values which is supported by a strong and integral system and rules.

I was also impressed with facilities and infrastructures that have high educational value. Currently, our pesantren is trying to catch up, especially regarding the environment which supports the spiritual aspect. It is important to allow the students to feel at home. It can further encourage them to learn in a team.

Our school has been implementing the classical method in its teaching and learning process. The learning is carried out in classrooms and is facilitated by a teacher. In addition, there is also non-classical mentoring outside the classroom. The out-class activity is designated to complete special tasks such as habituation.

Our school also adopts a comprehensive approach such as the experience-based and experiential learning approach. Then the habitual learning approach is aimed at forming a good habit among students.

We believe that individual and community awareness can be achieved through education. It has to be oriented towards developing and building positive relationships so that a bond will be formed. This bond will further create a big family of boarding schools. The world of Islamic boarding schools should foster a productive, creative fighting spirit and have a sincere and quality work ethic.

From my experience in Japan, students are not just receiving lessons and gaining knowledge about technology. However, beyond this, they are also taught about independence and freedom to enrich and develop the knowledge gained from the classroom. They usually involve in various teaching approaches such as experimentation and observation.

In addition, they are also introduced to the values of responsibility. For example, the school always holds routine activities in collaboration with the local police office. The police will conduct a simulation of traffic rules in front of the students and teachers. They will also share various tips and tricks to deal with accidents and crime on the road and avoid accidents. This activity aims to provide education and instill a sense of responsibility, especially to students in traffic.

From this first-hand experience, I also tried to implement the same program in my Islamic boarding schools by inviting the police, although it is not entirely the same. It aims to instill the values of awareness and discipline in the students to become good citizens who are responsible and respecting the environment. In addition, we also hope that students can build and maintain networking with other people.

All of these efforts have resulted in productive outcomes. The students are enthusiastic and more sensitive to the program that we have adopted from Japan. Some of our students are also selected in an exchange program to Japan. In addition, we have also held a special edition activity with the title “Islamic International Festival.” This festival is often held

with Japanese nuances, although there are countries other than Japan as well. In this program, students will wear various international clothes and souvenirs featuring Japanese themes. The students or the council of teachers/ustadz are very interested in this festival.

Another thing that was quite memorable during the visit to Japan was the importance of instilling students' independence, discipline, and awareness to keep the environment. We also always encourage the students to get used to being independent and having seriousness on purpose. In addition, children in Japan are also taught to maintain traditional culture and arts, such as calligraphy (shodo) with Kanji or Katakana fonts and the art of flower arrangement (Ikebana). In addition to maintaining tradition, this is also a form of appreciation and preserving the traditions of their ancestors.

If children in Indonesia are taught about traditions and culture, they will be more motivated to pay attention to their own culture, including those in Islamic boarding schools. Thus, arts or culture are not only owned by "the elderly" only. For example, young people may be able to preserve a unique language/writing. For example, in Makassar, there is a language called Lontara Bugis juxtaposed with Japanese-style Kanji or Mahfudzat messages. That way, there are three types of letters/cultures unified in one work of art.

On the other hand, we also want our students to use traditional Indonesian educational games as a form of entrainment and learning. For children in Japan, classic games have been their entertainment for centuries, such as origami.

At first, I thought origami was just folding paper, but more than that, origami can be used as a medium to express appreciation and prayer. Usually, origami paper containing these expressions, prayers, and wishes is placed in the Children's Peace Memorial Park around the crater of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

Our Islamic boarding school has learned a lot from Japan and has begun to explore scientific and technological steps and cultural values inherent in everyday life, especially in the educational environment. I was mostly impressed with their modernity and vision, emphasizing independence and discipline to care for existing cultural values.

Perhaps, with hard work and high discipline, the achievements of science and technology can be achieved by the Japanese. Of course, this is not an easy task for our pesantren because there are deeply rooted patterns in our culture which is hard to change.

Therefore, we began to improve ourselves because there is no other choice for our pesantren but to improve gradually with a clear structure, plan, and measurable system. It must be done to nurture the competence of our graduates and build more open and respectful work communication.

As Islamic educational institutions, Pesantren is expected to be able to integrate science and technology based on faith, social monotheism, and trust. Thus, pesantren carry out two important roles as an agent of change and an agent of conservative to preserve cultures. On the other hand, Islamic boarding schools are also expected to improve their quality, enrich the treasures of education by instilling cultural values and strive to shape the character of people who are strong-minded and forward-oriented. Hopefully, our students will be even more prepared to face their future starting from the pesantren by producing various products that lead to progress and are inspirational towards modern pesantren.

Finally, the prosperity or progress of a nation is not determined by large their territory is. However, prosperity will be more easily achieved if we pay attention to sincerity and high discipline to master science and technology while preserving culture.

Institutional Changes

Less than two weeks after I came back to Indonesia, I immediately received an “official invitation” to share my experiences from the Land of the Rising Sun. I talked in front of the entire family of the Islamic boarding school, and it could be said that it was a gift from a “working visit” from the Land of Sakura.

I also shared my experiences with students. Some are carried out in the mosque and classrooms. I often told inspiring stories from Japan as an introduction before the learning begins. Fortunately, we received 1-2 CDs from Japan containing the recorded events during my visit, and we always display these in various meetings at the pesantren. With this “socialization,” I hope the information can spread, and people can benefit from it to make positive progress together.

Even though the UWM-IBS is relatively young compared to other pesantren in South Sulawesi, we receive much public interest, especially in Makassar. It is due to the lack of special Islamic boarding schools that are designed for women.

On the other hand, we cannot fully respond to the demands for implementing technology in education, especially in the teaching and learning process, because students cannot hold or carry any communication tools (mobile phones) in school. It can be said that we also lack facilities such as a multimedia room which should be used to support learning.

Therefore, educators and teachers in our school wish that technology-based learning models can facilitate a more communicative teaching and learning process. However, several constraints hamper this hope as many of our teachers do not have a laptop. To overcome this problem, through the cooperative “Ummul Mukminin,” the pesantren then facilitates ustadz/teachers to buy a laptop using soft payments every month.

Students who come from various parts of Indonesia have high hopes that pesantren will be able to improve the pattern and quality of their education in today’s digital era, especially those related to reading culture and research. Of course, reformulating education (especially in our pesantren) cannot be done as easily as turning the palm. Efforts are needed to make teachers and students aware that learning methods are not only focused on the teacher but can come from various sources in the current digital era.

Surely, many positive things can be taken during a visit to Japan. To “follow up” the results of the visit, we always socialize various positive things from Japan that can also be applied in our Islamic boarding schools. The socialization was carried out to the students and also to the leaders of the pesantren.

The obstacle faced in implementing the Japanese-style education model is the lack of confidence from various parties. Some think that the pesantren cannot implement the same type of education. However, each school principal from Junior and Senior High Schools responded well to directly related inputs to the students. For example, students propose to add reading materials in the library so that the reading resources of the students are more varied.

Another proposal that received a positive response was related to establishing a Japanese library corner, although the reading material was still minimal. Then, gradually, we try to make the pesantren environment as charming and conducive as possible. As a first step, we started by providing two computers available out of the classroom. Even though it is protected with an iron frame, the students can still access the computer easily in turns.

ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL AND RENEWAL MOVEMENT

An Inspiration at the PERSIS (The Islamic Unity) Tarogong Islamic Boarding School in Garut

Ai Nurjannah

I was born in Garut on November 26, 1965, and I got married in 1986. Now I have six children and nine grandchildren. I have been a caregiver at the Persis Islamic Boarding School since graduating from Madrasah Aliyah / Mu'allimin in 1983. My highest education level was a Master's Degree at The State Islamic University in Bandung, concentrating on Interpretation of the Quran.

Currently, I am teaching al-Quran and Usul Fiqh subjects at Madrasah Aliyah. In addition to teaching, I am also entrusted with additional duties as Director of the Human Resources Development Division of the Persis Tarogong Islamic Boarding School. I am also the Islamic Women's Association leader for the Islamic Wives Association (Persistri) as Deputy Chair I for Jamiyyah at the West Java Province level.

PERSIS Tarogong Boarding School

The Islamic Unity (PERSIS) Tarogong Boarding School is located in Pataruman Village, Tarogong Kidul District, Garut Regency, and inaugurated in 1980 by the General Chairperson of the Persatuan Islam Tarogong Leadership Center, KH. E. Abdurrahman (late) and Mr. Muhammad Roem (late) representing the Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Council (DDII). It was led for the first time by KH. Sjihabuddin (late). This school is built on an area of more than 3.5 ha, and it is equipped with mosque facilities and infrastructure, classrooms, libraries, laboratories, dormitories (male/female), Islamic boarding school health clinic (poskestren), small business of the Islamic boarding school (kopontren), sports facilities, and other facilities. The number of students is more than 3,800 people, coming from almost all over Indonesia.

Pesantren caregivers are graduates of Islamic boarding schools and universities Indonesia/overseas such as the Persis Islamic College (STAIPI), Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences (LIPIA), IAIN/UIN from various regions, IKIP (now Indonesian University of Education—UPI) Bandung, Padjajaran University (UNPAD) Bandung, University of Indonesia (UI), and the Islamic University of Medina. Pesantren graduates generally devote themselves to the development of Islam in society.

Some pesantren graduates continue their education at national/foreign universities such as the Persis Islamic School (STAIPI), Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences (LIPIA), State Islamic University (UIN) in various regions, Indonesian Education University (UPI) Bandung, Padjajaran University (UNPAD) Bandung, Bandung Islamic University (UNISBA), Pakistan International Islamic University, Islamic University of Medina, and Alazhar Islamic University.

Educational programs organized by the Persatuan Islam Tarogong Boarding School include Child Care Center for Toddler Houses (Rumah Balita), Kindergarten, Madrasah Diniyah (morning and evening, especially for the community around the pesantren who study in public elementary/junior high schools), Islamic elementary schools Integrated Islam (SDIT), Madrasah Tsanawiyah, Madrasah Aliyah and Mu'allimin. Further, this Islamic boarding school also provides Islamic Studies (out-of-school education for the general public with Islamic materials typical of the Persatuan Islam Boarding School, and Pesantren Kilat (Short Islamic Course) or Pesantren Holidays (intensive Islamic education about two weeks during school holidays in a boarding school atmosphere and environment for elementary and secondary level students).

In the 2020/2021 academic year, the number of students studying at the Tarogong Islamic Unity Boarding School was 3,800. All students are guided, taught, and served by more than 330 teachers/supervisors and 87 employees. The learning process is also supported by facilities and infrastructure such as the Ihyaul-Islam Mosque (for male students), Al-Amanah Mosque (for female students), Classrooms, Library, Dormitory, Tahfizh Pondok (Quran-memorizing program), Kitchen, Sports Building (GOR), Sports Field, Science Laboratory, Computer Laboratory, Language Laboratory, Multimedia Room, Multipurpose Hall, health clinic, a Small Corporation of the Islamic

Boarding School, Healthy Canteen, as well as Internet (Hotspot) and the Internet Cafe.

The Development of the PERSIS Tarogong Islamic Boarding School

When it was inaugurated in 1980 (1400 H), the Islamic Boarding School had a denoted land area of 11,746 square meters and a building area of about 2,100 square meters consisting of 11 classrooms, 11 boarding rooms (in the dormitory of female students), bathrooms, public kitchens, housing for teachers, warehouses and other facilities. The number of students at that time was 284 students, including 79 students living in dormitories and those educated by 18 teachers and assisted by Five employees. The levels of education that have been held since 1980 include Ibtidaiyah (primary level), Tajhiziyah (preparation class), and Tsanawiyah (junior high school level).

In its development, public interest and trust in this Islamic boarding school have been increasing. Students studying in Islamic boarding schools have come from almost all over Indonesia. This condition requires Islamic boarding schools to improve themselves, both in terms of facilities and the quality and quantity of their teachers. Due to the efforts of the Islamic Boarding School and the community's mutual cooperation, the Islamic Boarding School has increased several facilities, including a multi-story building which was completed in 1985, consisting of 9 classrooms and one office space. In 1987, the Ihyaul-Islam Mosque was built, followed by constructing a dormitory for male students next to the Ihyaul-Islam Mosque in 1989.

The Islamic boarding schools experienced relatively rapid development and improvement until 1990 (1410 H), or in the first ten years. During those ten years, the area of donated land has doubled, facilities and facilities have almost tripled, the number of teachers and employees has more than tripled. Likewise, Islamic boarding schools can educate and accommodate orphaned and underprivileged students. However, this development could not accommodate an almost fivefold increase in the number of students. Since the opening of the Senior High School level in 1983, the number of Islamic boarding school students has increased significantly. In 1990, it reached 1,378 students and 531 of them living in boarding houses.

In 1992, the Islamic Boarding School built a special mosque for

female students, namely the Al-Amanah Mosque, which was then followed by constructing a female dormitory next to the location of the Al-Amanah Mosque in 2000. Since then the location of the Pesantren has been divided into a male complex and a female complex separated by a highway.

The Islamic boarding school continues to develop by opening various levels of education. These include pioneering the establishment of early childhood education programs and developing basic education programs. In 1992 Raudhatul Athfal was founded, and now it is known as Persis Tarogong Kindergarten. Furthermore, in 1998, in addition to Madrasah Ibtidaiyah/Diniyah, the Integrated Islamic Elementary School (SDIT) was also established two branches now, Persis Tarogong Integrated Islamic Elementary School (SDIT) I and SDIT Persis Tarogong Integrated Islamic Elementary School (SDIT) II, since 2016.

Since 1994, the Pesantren has been led by Ustadz Mohammad Iqbal Santoso as Mudir 'Am (the head). We are grateful to Allah SWT. Besides, we would like to thank the surrounding communities for their assistance and participation so that the Islamic boarding school can be built on a donated land area of 4 ha with 3,804 students. Moreover, it has 294 teachers and 85 employees who serve, guide, teach, and educate its students.

Pesantren has a vision "Realizing Islamic boarding schools as miniature Islamic societies and excellent educational institutions." The vision uses indicators in the form of: 1) promoting ukhuwwah (brotherhood), ta'awun (spirit of helping each other), and discipline; 2) being habituated to worship and good deeds; 3) promoting amar ma'ruf nahyi munkar (invite to do good deeds and prevent from wrongdoings); and 4) having a comfortable, clean, orderly and safe environment.

Meanwhile, the mission of the pesantren is to "build civil society with good morals who are tafaquh-fiddin (religiously obideint), and can master science and technology." The mission is specified into three main targets. The first target is to foster students with Akhlaqul-karimah (good manners), so that students: a) have morals towards Allah-not polytheists; b) behave according to morality, and can be friendly, polite, courteous, and neat; c) become disciplined, independent, confident and creative; and d) understand Islamic teachings related to the Environment.

Second, the target is to fostering Tafaquh Fiddin (religious obedience), so that students: a) are able to use Arabic; b) master

and understand Islamic sciences, and c) memorize at least six juz (chapters) of the Qur'an.

The third target is to foster students to master science and technology so that students can: a) understand & master science b) have good language skills (Indonesian, local, Arabic & English languages); and c) mastering information and communication technology.

The Islamic boarding school has 5 values and characters that have been developed, namely **First**, Mahabbah- محبة (Feeling of Love and Affection) through Salam (love of others), Privat Iqra (love of the Qur'an), Congregational Prayer (love of Allah). Besides, it also includes Social charity (love of others), Brush teeth and cleaning environment (love yourself and the environment), Dzuhur prayer in congregation, Rewards or awards for outstanding students, Habituation of five principles (smile, greeting, greeting, courtesy and politeness), and Qira'ah Qur'an habituation every day at the beginning of learning.

Second, Tawadhu- تواضع (Humble) is promoted through habituation of four magic expressions (sorry, excuse me, please and thank you), sadaqah (giving) and social visits, scholarships for poor children, and queue culture.

Third, Ta'awun - تعاون (Cooperating and Helping) is done through group activities, outbound, class meetings, class-regular cleaning schedule, Gebyar Tsanawiyah (art performance), Rihlah muhibbah (Study Tour), and competitions among classes.

Fourth, Amanah أمانة (Honest and Responsible) is fostered through money-saving activities, honesty-testing boxes, Yellow Cards for those attending late, Star Rewards, General Meetings of Rijalul Ghad and Ummahatul Ghad (the student board organization), Class Organization Bai'at Ceremony every Sunday, Extra Curricular Organization--Rijalul Ghad (RG) and Ummahatul Ghad (UG), Rijalul Ghad and Ummahatul Ghad elections (the student general election).

Fifth, Mujahadah - مجاهدة (Hard Work and Seriousness) is optimized through project activities, drawing centers, angklung arts, drum bands, competitions, and enforcement of student discipline, consequences for students who violate the rules. Besides, it also includes public lectures, training, and Mukhayyam (camping).

Gradually, Islamic boarding schools developed a curriculum to

apply modern education principles adapted to the Islamic education system. Educational activities are focused on moral development as well as understanding and practicing Islamic teachings so that they are set based on the Qur'an and Sunnah.

All activities of pesantren life are arranged as educational activities such as pious deeds, mutual cooperation, congregational prayers, sunnah fasting, and speech training. Thus, the pesantren is expected to become a miniature Islamic community environment with the nuances of ukhuwah (brotherhood) and discipline. Pesantren combines the Islamic curriculum typical of the Persatuan Islam Boarding School with the national education curriculum (the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Religious Affairs).

Social Community

In addition to providing education, Islamic boarding schools have social programs that include three main aspects. *The first* is Compensation for Orphans and Dhu'afa (poor people). Some of the students studying at Islamic boarding schools come from underprivileged families, orphans, and converts to Islam, both from the areas around the pesantren and outside the city or Java. They are under the education of the Islamic boarding school and have the same rights, obligations, and treatment as other students.

To support and finance the education of orphans, the poor, and the dhu'afa (the poor), Islamic boarding schools accommodate zakat, sadaqah (give), and maintain good communication with the community who become foster parents.

Second, it also encourages the Economic Development of the Ummah. In developing the economy of the ummah and the community around the pesantren, the Assalam Islamic Boarding School Cooperation (Kopontren) has been established. Its principal activities include cooperative education, distribution, sales, and sharia savings and loan business.

The Islamic boarding school also develops productive businesses in the form of cultivation and processing of Arabica coffee, on 8 ha starting from plantation business to selling packaged coffee. In the same area, it also includes planting vegetables and raising sheep and cattle, establishing cooperation with various parties for the economic empowerment of the ummah.

Third, this Islamic boarding school provides a Public Health Service. Pesantren participates in providing health services for students, teachers, and pesantren employees and residents of the community around the pesantren through the Al-Amanah Health Clinic, which professional doctors and nurses serve.

Primary Impression During the Visit

In 2012, I had the honor of being invited by the Japanese government to take part in a cultural exchange program for twelve days with the title “Pesantren Leaders Visit to Japan.” The most memorable thing during the visit was the Japanese character. They have good characters. Wherever you go, everything looks the same. Japanese people are friendly and smiley. Wherever they are, they are always friendly and smiling, like in elevators, schools, public places,

Because I was so curious, I often asked the guides and resource persons I met, “what kind of character education is developed in Japan?”. “What kind of curriculum is designed and taught in schools?” I got a simple answer, “ethics”. When I visited Todaiji, I asked the same thing. Then, I conclude that ethics is an inherent spirit, built with a long process and passed down from generation to generation. In the end, these ethics lead Japanese people to become human with characters of being independent, polite, strongly committed, disciplined, consistent, and others.

I was reminded of the verses of the Qurʾan and hadith whose values are more than just ethics but have not been practiced. The Japanese people behave based on ethics, and they can make those principles a culture. Only with ethics do Japanese people become organized. Everything becomes orderly and neat.

After the Visit

After returning from Japan to Indonesia, there was a strong motivation to improve the pesantren, especially after witnessing up closely how Japan succeeded in building its nation in terms of discipline, encouraging the progress of the country. I am confused about where to start. The motivation is powerful because this visit gave great inspiration to make changes and reforms in the pesantren.

The first step I took was to tell and submit activity reports to the pesantren leaders because, after all, we must start to have the same perceptions of what the reforms could be. The Institutional boarding

school showed a positive response and the flexibility to develop good values by making the visiting experience Japan as inspiration adapted to local conditions, the importance of pesantren and Islam in general.

Over time, Islamic boarding schools launched changes and *tajdid* (renewal). After returning from Japan, I seriously thought about building an integrated system in moral education for students. Several foreign institutions concerned with education offer cooperation and assistance to build Islamic boarding schools based on character building.

The Institute for Religious and Philosophical Studies (LSAF), in collaboration with UNICEF, offers collaboration through the “Child-Friendly Islamic Boarding School” program (friendly school). The proposed programs are very supportive and in line with what we are looking for to follow up visit the program to Japan.

Mentoring is a program offered by UNICEF and LSAF in the form of training and simulations on child-friendly education without violence so that students feel comfortable studying in Islamic boarding schools. This concept was initiated to respond to the growing reality in a society that pesantren is an educational institution that is identical with violence, coercion, and slum.

The child-friendly concept builds an image of how pesantren will become the most sought-after educational institution. Some teachers, *Kiai/Nyai*, and students are regularly implementing this program, gradually and for quite a long time. Participants are positioned as subjects where they are involved in formulating and initiating what and how a child-friendly boarding school is assisted by a facilitator (UNICEF) to construct the concept to the operational and measurable practical level.

Like UNICEF’s activities, Living Value Education (LVE) was introduced by LP2M UIN Jakarta. The presence of LVE complemented the previous program enlightening the understanding of character education.

The LVE program was also in the form of mentoring presented in the form of training and simulations with the assistance of a facilitator. The essence of LVE is education that helped explore the values that exist within each individual to be raised and then carried out continuously, repeatedly, systematically and the goal is to make those values habits without being forced.

The expected values have been determined to be internalized into

the soul through measurable activities or practices in all educational programs at the pesantren. The values set in this context are universal values accepted by all humans in the world. Values that would be developed could also be carried out in stages in accordance with the policies set by the institution.

Especially inspired by Japan, I began to apply the good lessons I had learned in several ways. **First**, it is a commitment to punctuality. After returning from Japan, I felt guilty when I could not be punctual. So I often say that I am ready to make up a class for the missed learning hours at another time. So that the students still get their rights. I can fulfill my obligations.

Second, it is to develop daily values and include them as an opening or introduction before teaching and learning activities begin. This endeavor was inspired by an elementary school in Japan. Before starting the lesson, the teacher asked the students, “*what good deeds did you do yesterday?*”. Then a student raised his hand and replied, “*I helped an old woman cross the road yesterday.*” The teacher continued, “*What did you feel?*”. “*I felt happy,*” said the child.

Third, for several months the shoe policy was implemented inside and outside the classroom. As in Japan, teachers and students have to change their shoes when they enter the classroom. However, this did not go smoothly because it has not become a culture. Some teachers do not support it—especially those who feel ‘complicated’ because they need to change shoes. And there are still thoughts about school officials who will clean the classroom if the class is dirty. Whereas in Japan, classrooms can be clean without a school janitor.

Gradually, the pesantren continues to improve with the spirit of *tajdid* (renewal). It is supported by Indonesian education policies that lead to character education. Islamic boarding schools are becoming more and more open to continuing to make development efforts, especially in promoting morals. For the basic education level, in Kindergarten and Integrated Islamic Elementary schools, inspiration from Japan has been applied in normal learning joints.

Meanwhile, the secondary level, this program is still postponed. We hope that the Japanese government will improve the boarding school visit program so that it can be provided with structured and systematic technical guidance to be developed in each Islamic boarding school in Indonesia. Institutionally, every pesantren already has regulations that are used as references.

Although lessons learned can only be applied at the basic education level, some changes and progress have been inspired by it. *First*, implementing education quality management started from comprehensive and integrated planning, for example, improving the reporting system as a reference for planning, improving the quality of effective and efficient work meetings, improving the planning and controlling system, creating an internet-based Islamic Boarding School Information and Administration System (SIAP).

The *second* is to develop learning models by holding various teacher training, and it is presented by experienced professionals utilizing educational technology based on the current development.

Third, Islamic boarding schools provide daycare in the pesantren environment for the children of teachers and employees. Thus, Ustadzah (female teachers) can focus more on teaching and still breastfeed their children.

Fourth, the Islamic Boarding School applies the “child-friendly boarding school” model to develop the “friendly school” introduced by UNICEF gradually and continuously. So, students can learn more comfortably and pleasantly.

Fifth, teacher performance reports are published every semester to assess/evaluate the performance of Islamic boarding school teachers objectively so that teacher discipline is more improved and measurable.

Sixth, students’ interests, talents, and achievements continue to be developed and appreciated so that their accomplishments can compete with other public school students. It then has an impact on increasing public trust in pesantren so that the number of students enrolled every year continues to grow beyond the capacity.

Closing

A visit to Japan has inspired many changes and renewals. Although at a technical level, I still find it difficult to describe it in a more detailed and measurable form and pattern.

All members of the pesantren should feel the relatively short experience of traveling to Japan. Therefore, in addition to sharing stories and experiences, the important thing that must be done is to create discussion groups within the alumni to strengthen each other and solve problems within the respective pesantren to apply the good lessons learned.

The visit to Japan is like entering a giant laboratory. It contains a lot of behavior and culture that are very Islamic, even though Japan itself is not a Muslim country. I find it very difficult to formulate and turn ideas into concepts based on Islamic values at the technical level. Therefore, in increasing the success of this program, it would be better if the number of participants sent from each pesantren was at least two people. So that they can strengthen and complete each other. Then, the post-visit activities also included advocacy in the form of assistance or training about the technical guidance for alumni.

Another important thing is the support from the government, like what Japan did. The Indonesian government must empower teachers by strengthening capacity, not just encouraging teachers to be certified. It only leads to the fulfillment of the economic aspect of the teachers. In fact, I see this certification changing teachers' lifestyles but not increasing teachers' capacity.

Apart from the government, families must also have the awareness to educate their children. One of the keys to the success of Japanese education is that they start everything from home. Mother became the first educator, just like the hadith of the Prophet, *al-'um madrasatul 'ula* (a mother is the first school). Good habits at home are later polished at school. The similar habituation patterns both at home and at school eventually could result in the social convention of society, which made Japan be what it is today. In Indonesia, a large portion of children's education is usually handed over to schools.

MORALITY AS CULTURE

Inspiration at Matholi'ul Anwar Islamic Boarding School Lamongan

Siti Lathifatus Suniyah

The Turning Point

I am a teacher, commonly called an ustadzah or Bu Nyai, at the Matholi'ul Anwar Islamic Boarding School, Simo, Lamongan, East Java. This boarding school has developed well and become a center of Islamic learning in North East Java.

My grandfather, KH, originally pioneered this boarding school. Abdul Wahhab. He is a Kiai who spent his time studying at the Maskumambang Islamic Boarding School, Gresik, East Java. The Maskumambang Islamic Boarding School itself was an Islamic boarding school that is managed by KH. Faqih Maskumambang, a close friend of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, founder of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). This relationship with the founders of NU made the Matholi'ul Anwar Islamic Boarding School close to Indonesia's largest Islamic community organization.

From time to time, the caregivers always played an important role in the NU organization in the Simo area, Lamongan. Therefore, it is no wonder that the traditional NU style characterizes the religious culture taught in the pesantren environment.

Since I was young, I have been active in Fatayat NU, the NU wing organization accommodating young women from Nahdliyin. I have been involved in this organization, both as the administrator before I am trusted as a supervisor.

I would like to illustrate that the relationship between our pesantren and NU is very close. Although it was initiated during the time of Kiai Abdul Wahab around 1914, the new pesantren building was built in 1949. Kiai Abdul Wahab himself passed away in 1925. His leadership was replaced by his three sons-in-law, Kiai Abdullah,

Kiai Rusman, and Kiai Djafar. In 1935, all three passed away. The administration was continued by Kiai Abdul Wahab's son, KH. Soefyan Abdul Wahab.

During the leadership of KH. Soefyan Abdul Wahab, son of Kiai Abdul Wahab, established Madrasah Ibtida'iyah, a religious-style elementary school, in 1951. In 1959, Madrasah Tsanawiyah was established, followed by Madrasah Aliyah in 1969.

In 1983, KH. Soefyan Abdul Wahab passed away and was replaced by KH. Mahsuli Effendi (son), KH. Masykuri Shodiq (son-in-law), KH. Moh. Taufiq (son-in-law) and KH. Saifuddin Zuhri (son-in-law). In that era, NU junior high school was established in 1985, NU vocational high school 1 was built in 1986, and Darul Ulum Islamic University (UNISDA) was built in 1989. This campus has eight faculties and fifteen undergraduate and post-graduate study programs. The total number of students recently has reached around 7,679 people.

According to this long history, dynamics and developments, it is no wonder that the Matholi'ul Anwar Islamic Boarding School has now become one of the educational centers located in Lamongan, East Java, both religious education and general education.

I came from and lived in this kind of family and environment. I was born in a family of educators. Education has become a family gene. I had the honor of visiting Japan from the PPIM (Center for the Study of Islam and Society) UIN Jakarta through the "Pesantren Leader Visit to Japan" program on October 12-22, 2015.

It was a priceless opportunity to learn more about education in Japan, a developed country in Asia, and even the world. Japan once triumphed through colonialism then was devastated by the allied attack in the Atomic Bombing incident on its two main cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As the loser, Japan must also pay war compensation to the allies who won the world war.

However, Japan's slump soon ended because the government succeeded in creating modernization in various sectors of people's lives. Even though it had lost the war, Japan continued to rise and regain control of the world with technological advances and industrial products. I believe that this progress is because the Japanese government has succeeded in realizing an educational system relevant to the needs of modern society. I want to know what kind of education model in Japan is. Is there anything that can be

used as a source of inspiration to develop the education system in Indonesia, especially where I live and serve?

Japan: My Initial Perception and Its Reality

As mentioned earlier, I personally view Japan as a developed country economically, industrially, technologically and educationally. It can be seen from the various electronic and automotive products from children's toys, watches, and even branded motorcycles and cars in Indonesian markets. Japan is also still very full of its distinctive culture, which can be seen from the symbols, such as behaving and dressing. It can be seen from the films we have seen, both in action films such as Oshien films and family films or entertainment programs popular in Indonesia such as Takeshi's Castle.

Three years ago, I attended a one-day workshop on "Lesson Study" held by the Director-General of the Ministry of Religious Affairs at that time, where I could see that the concept of Lesson Study was adopted from Japan. From the slides and the available information, it can be seen that education in Japan is very sophisticated, well-established, moving very far ahead of us, Indonesia. Since I was in junior high school, I have heard that elementary school students in Japan do a class project to be taught how to make a toy car. Thus, when they grow up, they can build a real car.

After stepping into Japan, I felt that Japan was much greater. Furthermore, the air was cool with a clean, tidy environment, full of tall buildings, but it did not feel arid because beautiful greenery arrangements supported it. After few days in Japan, I understood the factors that supported the development of this country and its people as its Human Resources. I think the first and foremost key to the progress of this country is the education pattern of its population.

I see that almost 99.9 percent of Japanese citizens are educated, people. I imagine ten years ago, in 2010, the Indonesian government was still busy carrying out the literacy movement on Java island. In fact, Indonesia is not only Java. There are thousands of kilometres of areas and lands which belong to Indonesia besides Java.

With sufficient education of its people, the Japanese government is relatively easier to direct and organize various programs for the development of individuals and the country's progress in general. The Japanese government is very concerned about the education of its people. Children in Japan are required to follow the 12-year

compulsory education program that the government has issued. The government has the authority to summon children who drop out of school prematurely. On the other hand, most Japanese people are aware of the importance of quality education, so that the awareness to learn, struggle and work hard to achieve success in life has inspired the entire atmosphere of life starting from the family, community, school and government environment.

Japan is a developed country with its industrialization, especially in the field of technology. Advances in technology have then brought Japan to become a country that is also advanced in the economic aspects. Thus, it can freely regulate the value of its own currency without depending on other countries. Otherwise, Indonesia must always depend on the United States and several other countries.

The progress achieved by Japan is apparently inseparable from Japan's success in managing its education system. The Japanese education system has been designed in such a way that its human resources can develop properly. Basic education, which is the root of further education, is seriously considered by the Land of the Rising Sun. The proof is that the 9-year compulsory education is held free of charge from the parents.

Even the school will write to parents to register their children to school when they turn school age. It can happen because the population administration in Japan has also been neatly arranged. Population data of regions or districts are recorded accurately at the district government office. In addition, the rules in Japan also require parents to send them to school in the area where they live.

Education as the basic foundation in developing quality human resources is carried out consistently. As a result, Japan has succeeded in becoming a developed industrial country because its people are strong in facing life's problems.

Focus on Universal Ethical and Moral Education

Primary school education in Japan emphasizes the importance of "morals". Moral values are absorbed in all subjects and life. Like the basic education system in Japan known as shougakkou, lessons in schools are more focused on inculcating moral values rather than burdening students with heavy subject matters.

They have and apply an ethical and moral standard that must be instilled in children, such as ethics towards the Creator, parents,

teachers, leaders, neighbors, nature, and others in harmony in everyday life. Japan has applied this concept since 1700. The independent character applied in the family, surrounding environment, school, and workplace makes this country very organized and orderly. From village to city, governance is very well conceptualized and neat. This success all started with character education in schools.

While I was in Japan, I was invited to visit six educational institutions and several other important or strategic places. All of them have their own impression and uniqueness. For example, I felt the uniqueness in terms of education when I visited Dani Kasai Elementary School, Kamata Middle School, Todaiji Middle School, Rokko Middle School, Horticulture Vocational School, and at the University of Kanda. All of them, with their own peculiarities and characteristics, gave me a very valuable lesson.

In the following, I include a note of the visit along with the impressions we got from some special places during our nine days exploring Japan, from the city of Tokyo, Hiroshima, Nara, Todaiji, Kobe, Rokko to Osaka.

I learned about what I should develop further in my educational institution or community from all these destinations. Because Japan and Indonesia have very different cultures, it would be challenging when we want to implement an advanced idea.

Edogawa Danikasai Dai Elementary (Wednesday, October 14, 2015)

The school had clean school atmosphere, complete and adequate facilities and laboratories for various subject areas, such as music room, sports room (indoor), physics lab, chemistry, mini-museum (for history lessons), swimming pool, and others. There was also a gazebo for students to have a rest. The school provides drinking water and lunch for students. Extracurricular lessons included bicycle lessons, counseling on the use of cellphones/smartphones, and providing additional hours for children who are left behind. It could be seen that the children were learning actively, brightly, and cheerfully in a fun and enthusiastic atmosphere during the teaching and learning process. Generally, they were very confident when greeting us by saying “Konichiwa” (Good Afternoon) during break time. Even though going to school without wearing a uniform is far from being stiff, it seems more relaxed in the atmosphere but serious in the material/essence.

We saw a school environment that was clean of garbage and dirt even without a single trash can in the corner of the room or corner of the building. What caught our attention was that the children themselves cleaned the school without a cleaning service. The children already have great skills and awareness in creating and maintaining a clean environment so that students themselves clean all school rooms and areas and their waste is taken back to their respective homes so that the school is not burdened with accumulated garbage.

Kanda University (Wednesday, October 14, 2015)

After being warmly welcomed by the rectorate and followed by a ceremonial event and exchange of souvenirs in a rectorate room, we were invited to visit the “Halal Canteen”. It was named with that name because it had got the “Halal for Islamic standard” certificate after following a number of SOPs such as accreditation/supervision. The certificate was attached to the very front of the canteen. There we were exhibited how to arrange the cooking utensils to ensure their purity from mixing “things” that were considered unclean. In this cafeteria, we were treated with delicious Japanese-style dishes with various foods with “halal certificates”, and I got my appetite, which was a little disturbed while in Japan. Then, I became excited again and really enjoyed the dishes served. After finishing the lunch banquet, we performed the Dzuhur prayer Jama *‘Taqdim Qashar* (performing two obligatory prayers at the same time at the time) with Asr in the room provided.

At the next event, we were invited to visit one of the glass buildings on the campus, which was quite large and luxurious facilitated with a very spacious, comfortable and luxurious library like Gramedia or Toga Mas bookstores (in Indonesia) many prominent collections of books. Bookshelves and storefronts were made of glass. Furniture such as tables and chairs were all luxurious and imported from Italy, which depicted the luxury and comfort and the glass-built classrooms that looked luxurious. However, unfortunately, we did not have time to reach the other lecture hall building beside this extraordinarily elegant glass building due to the very large campus area. Thus, it is not covered by the time limit. Furthermore, there are several galleries with distinctive nuances with various ethnic accessories from each gallery in the corner of this giant glass building, including an Indonesian gallery.

The most inspiring thing during a visit to this university was that the University of Kanda has several language study programs in the countries recommended by the policymakers at this institution which were marketable countries. It was in line with the slogan of Kanda University as 'University of Foreign Languages'. The several available majors were Italian, Korean, Indian and Indonesian language departments. Here, I met several Indonesian students who had only been living and studying at this university for three months. They study with scholarship facilities after passing a series of selections/screenings. I remembered the students in Indonesia and talked to myself about when they could get this same opportunity to go overseas?

Kamata Junior High School (Thursday, October 15, 2015)

As stated by the Principal of this Junior High School, it still maintained its culture and morals, although Japan was a developed country with technology industry. Kamata School carried the mission of educating students by upholding morals. From elementary to middle school, all schools in Japan did not allow students to bring cell phones to school. However, high school students could bring cellphones but could bring their phones into class. If students were caught bringing their phones, they would be confiscated and would not be returned. In the Japanese state curriculum, there were no religious subjects. In exchange, moral lessons were taught once a week. In practice, moral lessons can be taught in all aspects of life.

To anticipate pornographic and forbidden sites, IT teachers must always be aware of the negative effects of the internet. Students are given understanding and always reminded not to open websites that are not age-appropriate.

In general, the impression I got from Kamata Junior High School was similar to when I was at Kasai Dai Elementary School (in terms of learning facilities such as sports buildings, swimming pools, health rooms and laboratories or practicum rooms for each field of science as well as the canteen along with the kitchen). Another stunning impression, the children were more mature in interacting with guests. During a break, wherever we met them, they spontaneously greeted us with *Konichiwa* (good afternoon). I see schools providing special classes to serve students who are still lagging in terms of language.

Daiya Seiki (Thursday, October 15, 2015)

Visiting a home industry location for manufacturing technology spare parts that received orders from the 'Daiya Seiki' car factory/company brought a distinct impression. Just imagine, making one piece of the best choice of steel tools as big as a tennis ball and smaller than a whiteboard eraser takes three weeks at IDR 300 million per piece.

The tools that are produced manually to complement this advanced technology will produce extraordinary production results. From our visit to this place, we learned several lessons, including that in the business world, to generate "high" income, it does not always require a physical appearance (performance) that attracts public attention, large space, and lots of employees.

In learning from this visit, there are lessons to be learned. Among educators or entrepreneurs, those who can support success include having networks, personal qualities, client/customer trust, diligent and thorough service to client orders, working with heart, and work experience (skills).

Hiroshima Peace Museum (Saturday, October 16, 2015)

Unexpectedly, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, which I have heard since I was a child through history lessons and parental fairy tales, turned out to be so terrifying. The human tragedy caused by enmity, conflict, greed, and human was small (1 kg) atomic bomb could spread incomparable suffering throughout the recesses of Hiroshima. I can only say that war would definitely bring suffering and misery to all beings indiscriminately.

Home Stay (Saturday, October 16, 2015)

During the 14-hour homestay, I was impressed by the hospitality of Mrs. and Mr. Handa (the host family). With their hospitality, we were able to live comfortably as if we were with our own parents. Moreover, we were invited to take a walk to see the atmosphere of Japanese society with various cultures, arts, and all other social activities such as attending a Japanese Food festival. It was followed.

There were both very attentive to us as guests. Even when shopping for food, they asked for our approval. In the evening, we were invited to see the rice harvest celebration party held by the community in the village. A high stage featuring traditional Japanese art was attended

by audiences of all ages, watching the song blaring with pounding beats accompanied by a dancer circling for hours.

Japanese people enjoyed the culture/tradition while enjoying the hot noodles and other hot foods they buy from the stage's food vendors. In contrast, elementary school-age children were more busy playing smartphone or tablet games while eating warm snacks that they bought at stalls. That night when we were getting ready for bed, Mrs. Handa was busy getting everything ready to put a layered blanket on us. It seemed that she was not willing to sleep before her guests were really 'comfortable' to sleep that night. We even borrowed warm jackets, which were given to us when we said goodbye the next day.

The next day, after helping us cook for breakfast, Mrs. Handa invited us to learn how to fold (origami) in various shapes. We were also taught to make handy crafts made of simple and easy-to-obtain materials but looked elegant when we wore them. Unexpectedly, that morning in front of the village alley, suddenly some sounds caught my attention so that our family spontaneously ran to the front of the house. It turned out that the community was holding a carnival to continue last night's celebration of the harvest party.

In the afternoon, we were about to leave Mrs. Handa's house and say goodbye. On our way, we were invited to stop by a naturally beautiful tourist spot called Big Garden Shukkuen. Many beautiful and exotic places here. I also met many women dressed in kimonos and participating in a traditional event around the park. Inside a fairly large gazebo, we also saw a ritual event being attended by the parents in a solemn atmosphere.

Todaiji High School (Monday, October 19, 2015)

As an elite school, this exclusive and expensive school has shown its identity from its physical building. It has magnificent and elegant buildings, soccer field facilities and sports buildings, and other laboratories. There is also a kitchen along with a canteen which is clean and spacious like a restaurant.

What is unique about this school is that it is a monk-based school and Todaiji Temple, which only accepts male students with a 6-year learning program (3 years of middle school and three years of high school). For the admission of new students at the high school level, only 1 class is accepted. Of the 1,200 students, the output of this school is 100% of the students accepted at State Universities. The very

strict selection of new students makes this school only accommodate selected students so that teaching and learning can take place very quickly. However, the curriculum in high school is looser than at the junior high school level because the high school curriculum is prepared for university selection.

Monk Morimoto (Monday, October 19, 2015)

He is a religious figure who lives in an environment of human groups who do not care about religious teachings but have moral ethics and customs. He is an old clergyman with extensive knowledge, experience, and insight. Besides, his mind is still clear, and he is supported by several foreign languages, including Arabic, making him a unique and special person. His presence in the Todaiji Temple environment increases the authority of this shrine. Japanese society's religious fanaticism is low but upholds moral ethics.

We saw great attention from the Japanese people, especially the Buddhists, to build their religious symbol, the Todaiji Temple, and all its accessories, including the phenomenal giant Buddha statue regardless of whose initiative, whose support, and motivation.

Kobe Mosque (Tuesday, October 20, 2015)

In the midst of a modern non-Muslim community with high civilization, we were grateful because we still found a mosque that was still well-maintained, clean, and authoritative. It was a phenomenal mosque with historical stories whose building was one of the miracles of nature.

According to the story, when a natural disaster occurred, the tsunami wave raged that destroyed all buildings and everything in the entire city of Kobe; with Allah's will, the Kobe Mosque building was the only building that still stood upright perched in the middle of the town that had been blown to pieces by the storm of the tsunami. We were even more grateful that when we visited, religious ritual activities were still being carried out, and we could listen to the call (Adzan) to prayer every five times as well as congregational prayers. Even the sound of the call to prayer could be heard along the alley we passed by. The mosque committee told us that there were always Japanese citizens who declare themselves converted to Islam. Until the time of the meeting, the congregation of the Kobe Mosque already reached 80 families.

Rokko Middle School-High School (Tuesday, October 20, 2015)

The building is located in front of a football field with imitation grass, sophisticated, modern, and well-planned building construction, and layout, luxurious and luxurious facilities which almost exceed the hotel facilities we stayed in during the visit to Japan. Supported by a geographical structure located between the land of the hill and the seaport, the school is truly stunningly beautiful.

The special thing about this school is that it is a priest-based Catholic school and only accepts male students. The learning curriculum is designed for learning for six years, from grade 1 junior high school to grade 3 high school. It does not accept new students at the high school level. Student input is recruited through selection and intense competition so that the learning process only needs to optimize students' abilities and potential. Students who want to be included in the selection to enter this school sometimes must be willing to repeat the selection test next year again. A neatly structured and sophisticated learning curriculum for a 6-year learning period, school facilities, coaching/nurturing, and extracurricular programs are designed to stimulate students always to be enthusiastic, comfortable, and motivated to deepen knowledge.

In educating its students, this school uses the concept of "Education with Heart". For example, cleaning toilets and the school environment is done by the students themselves. Expensive schools and luxurious and sophisticated school facilities do not make students treated like kings. On the other hand, students are educated to serve and be responsible for themselves and their surroundings to become independent human beings, sensitive to situations and the environment, mentally tough, tenacious, and have good personalities. Together with a 24-hour mentor teacher, students are also trained with a high standard of spiritual, mental education. For example, they do shirtless sports in winter, and so on.

Osaka Horticulture Vocational School (Wednesday, October 21, 2015)

Vocational school in the field of horticulture has an area of 11 ha. It consists of buildings, parks, forest trees, and other agro-plants. All land is dedicated to supporting the success of the school's vision, mission, curriculum. Besides classrooms, the rest of the buildings and rooms are used as laboratories with their own specifications and their advanced technological equipment.

Educators in this school must really master technology. All teachers experiment and analyze scientifically with students in biotechnology laboratories of various specifications so that every year students are always smarter than their teachers.

To maintain the existence of both the school and its graduates, it regularly organizes some prestigious events or participates in salient exhibitions like Cultural Festivals, Sports Festivals, or Food Festivals. Much further, the school may also organize study tours to Australia by visiting Agricultural Product Companies or having a homestay program on the rural farmland.

Matholi'ul Anwar Islamic Boarding School after the Visit to Japan

I learned so many positive values during my trip to the Land of the Rising Sun. Japan, as a developed country with modern society, has a very good education system.

After the visit, I shared stories with policymakers at the students' pesantren, teachers, and guardians. In our institution, there are many educational units, from kindergarten to university level. In general, religious culture is traditional. However, we always try to give the best for Indonesian education.

First, I told the Principal of Madrasah Aliyah, where I teach and devote myself, about the education system in Japan as one of the developed countries. Indeed, it will be incomparable to our conditions in Indonesia today. Our education is still far left behind, for example, about morality and ethics. Almost all educational institutions in Japan set a great emphasis on this dimension. In Indonesia, what is called character education has actually been launched. Our Islamic boarding schools have recognized and implemented it.

One aspect applied, for example, is about the value of cleanliness. Here, we teach children the importance of cleanliness by embedding slogans, using religious language, and providing trash cans. In Japan, the way to instill the value of cleanliness is done by providing no trash can. Children are required to store and bring their trash home. The school does not provide trash cans. It is very good in instilling responsibility in children to take care of their own waste independently. Providing trash cans seems only to make children more spoiled and do not want to know where the garbage they throw will end up. They will never think about the trash they produce. Here,

in addition to being responsible for the values of goodness, morality and ethics, the value of independence is also instilled.

After the conversation, the principal invited the teachers to listen to my experience of visiting Japan. The meeting resulted in an understanding that hygiene practices should be intensified. Even though it is not exactly like what Japanese people do, at least the essence of cleanliness can still be realized. So far, this initiative has been fruitful. Children have recently become more orderly in maintaining cleanliness. A more detailed mechanism is needed to measure the application of this culture of cleanliness.

Responsibility and independence are applied especially in the most basic education unit, Kindergarten in the pesantren environment. One of the trials is to train children to be more independent starting from their childhood. In the local community, we have a culture that forces their children to go to school. Parents want their children to attend education without growing awareness within their children about the importance of education. So being excited to go to school, parents take their children to school. Some even wait outside the classroom until school hours end.

In Japan, the tradition is that children are taught the habit of walking to school. Some parents take their children to school while some students go alone. When the children arrived at school, the parents will leave their children to the teacher without waiting outside the classrooms. Teachers are responsible for the safety and comfort of their students. In fact, it is a learning process about independence for children from a very early age. Then, children will have a motivation to be independent as they cannot rely on their parents.

We have applied the policy of not waiting for children during school and socialized it to parents at the kindergarten level. Even though we do not know whether this policy is successful, at least it has begun to be realized and become common awareness.

Instilling independence in higher education is the habit of doing independent learning. Among the emphasis is the search for references, literature and reading materials independently. This program is implemented in education at the junior and senior high school levels in the environment where I serve. Even though there is no measurable and systematic measure, the results can be seen with the increasing number of children's achievements in literacy, such as the winners of essay writing competitions, book writing, sociology olympiads,

scientific writings, digital essay competitions, poetry reading creations, and so on. etc. Being proud of the students' success, we considered publishing it on the school's website. (Link [https:// mamawar.sch.id/prestasi/](https://mamawar.sch.id/prestasi/)). It is a matter of pride for our institution and me.

The Final Statement

It is the story about the background, the experience of visits, policy developments, and progress of the Mathla'ul Anwar Islamic Boarding School, Lamongan, which was inspired by our visit to Japan 5 years ago in the Pesantren Leaders Visit to Japan Program on October 12-22, 2015.

We express our gratitude to all institutions that facilitated this program, Center for the Study for Islam and Society (PPIM) UIN Jakarta, Prof. Jamhari, Dadi Darmadi, Saiful Umam, and others. Thank you so much for facilitating us to get a very expensive and priceless gift, for us in particular, and for our pesantren institutions, in general. As we cannot repay, we pray that may Allah SWT reward you with the best reward. Hopefully, PPIM will be more popular, successful, and useful for the ummah.

We also would like to express our gratitude and highest appreciation to all levels of the Japanese Embassy to Indonesia and the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who have fully supported this super expensive and prestigious program, both in the form of finance, welcoming ceremony and everything. Thus, we could study in Japan (a super modern and much more advanced country) smoothly, safely and comfortably.

I hope that my departure will not disappoint the organizers who have chosen me as an 'ambassador'. I promise to myself to make a maximum use of and share all the knowledge, experience and knowledge that I have gained from this long journey full of prestige to our environment, both within the Pondok Pesantren and our extended family (where I live). Moreover, I also will share my experience with the school environment and University (where I work), and in the wider community (I happen to be the head of a community organization at the sub-district level, which oversees 25 branches/village).

Finally, we hope that a very prestigious and valuable program can produce results and benefits for the progress of humankind, especially for Japanese and Indonesian citizens, as well as for humanity in the world in general. We hope only for Allah's blessings.

PLANTING GOODNESS

Inspiration at Insan Cendekia State Islamic High School Serpong

Persahini Sidik

Education Institution Profile

Insan Cendekia State Islamic High School (also known as MAN IC or INCEN) is a boarding high school located in various places throughout Indonesia and fostered by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. This school applies the principle of balance between mastery of science and technology and faith and piety. Insan Cendekia State Islamic High School strictly selects prospective students by holding a selection test carried out in 20 provinces throughout Indonesia. Since 2010, all of its students have received full and partial scholarships at every existing campus.

To meet the need for high-quality human resources in the mastery of science and technology-based on the values of faith and piety, in 1996 on the idea of Prof. Dr. Ing. Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie, Agency for the Study of Technology And Application

(BPPT) Magnet School later changed its name to Insan Cendekia High School in Serpong and Gorontalo through the STEP (Science and Technology Equity Program) science and technology equalization program for schools located in the boarding school environment.

In the first academic year (1996/1997), the admission of Insan Cendekia Senior High School students prioritized the first grade of high school students and high achieving junior graduates from Islamic boarding schools and other Islamic schools. However, starting from the second academic year (1997/1998), Insan Cendekia Senior High School also provided opportunities for state junior high school students and Islamic and private junior high school students.

Since the 2000/2001 academic year, the management of the Insan Cendekia High School, both in Gorontalo and Serpong, has been

delegated by BPPT to the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs. To maintain the characteristic of mastery of science and technology and religious obedience, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and BPPT continue to cooperate in the management and development. Furthermore, Insan Cendekia high school was transformed into Insan Cendekia Islamic High School without reducing and changing the overall teaching system running so far.

In 2001, with the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 490 of 2001, the Insan Cendekia Islamic High School Serpong and Gorontalo were changed to Insan Cendekia State Islamic High School Gorontalo and Insan Cendekia State Islamic High School Serpong respectively.

Insan Cendekia State Islamic High School Serpong has a vision “Realizing high-quality human resources who have strong faith and piety, master science and technology, and actualize themselves in social life”. The missions follow the vision: 1) Preparing future leaders who master science and technology, have highly strong motivation, communicate in international languages, are innovative, and have a strong foundation of faith and piety; 2) Establishing professional resources for educators and education personnel; 3) Making Insan Cendekia State Islamic High School Serpong a model Islamic school developing science and technology teaching as well as faith and piety for other educational institutions.

The school designs a graduate profile which is divided into three aspects. **First**, the Attitude Aspect leads students to: a) have faith and devotion to Allah SWT; b) have ethical and aesthetic values; and c) have the values of democracy, tolerance, and humanities.

Second, Knowledge Aspect encourages students to: a) have factual, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive knowledge in science, technology, art, and culture with insight into humanity, nationality, state, and civilization related to the causes and impacts of phenomena and events; and b) master science, technology, and academic ability to continue education to a higher level.

Third, the Skills Aspect equips students with: a) skills in the leadership; b) the ability to think and act effectively and creatively in the realm of abstract and concrete as a development of what is learned in school independently; c) communication skills (Indonesian, English, Arabic), life skills, and adaptation skills to the local, regional, and international development of the social, cultural

and natural environment; and d) physical and spiritual health and entrepreneurial abilities that are useful for carrying out daily tasks and activities, especially to do assignments or learning activities.

Achievement and Distribution of IC State Islamic High School Serpong Alumni

Since 2004, students of Insan Cendekia State Islamic Serpong have won several medals at the National Science Olympiad. In addition, they also often represent Indonesia in the International Science Olympiad. International achievements that have been achieved are: gold medal at the 33rd International Physics Olympiad (IPhO) in Bali, Indonesia, 2002; bronze medal at the 24th International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI) in Milan, Italy, 2012; bronze medal at the International Geography Olympiad in Krakow, Poland, 2014; and finally a bronze medal at the International Biology Olympiad (IBO) competition in Aarhus, Denmark, 2015.

In the social field, it was recorded that in 2013, students of Insan Cendekia State Islamic Serpong won the best participant in the 2nd Committee General Assembly at the Moscow International Model United Nations (MIMUN) 2013, at the Moscow International Relations Institute (MGIMO), Russia, in April 2013. Besides, in 2014, the Insan Cendekia State Islamic Serpong intelligent team won the Smart Indonesia Olympics, which the national private television RTV organized. Insan Cendekia State Islamic Serpong also ranked 2nd at the national level due to the 2013 High School level National Examination. This success was enhanced by 97% of Insan Cendekia State Islamic Serpong graduates in 2013 who were accepted at the favorite State Universities (SHE).

Insan Cendekia State Islamic Serpong students annually pass the National Examination with grade A. More than 90% of them continue their education in state universities and foreign universities. Until now, the majority of alumni in the country continue their education at the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB), Gadjah Mada University (UGM) Yogyakarta, University of Indonesia (UI), Brawijaya University (UNBRAW) Malang, Bogor Agricultural University (IPB), and several state universities. For the overseas study, Japan is the destination country with the highest number of alumni.

Memorable Things When Visiting Japan

In 2016, I served as the Head of the Insan Cendikia State Islamic (MAN IC) Serpong when I visited Japan in the “Pesantren Leaders Visit to Japan” program. This program was initiated by PPIM UIN Jakarta and the Japanese government. Now I have become a subject teacher because of the institution’s policy to rotate leaders. Overall, I have visited the Land of the Rising Sun three times.

The most memorable thing when visiting was the foster parents when I stayed in Hiroshima for two nights. I live at the place of Mr. Iwa’s family. The family only has one child living in Tokyo, so guests who stay at Mr. Iwa’s house are treated like their own children. During the homestay, communication was often done by phoning their child because only their children could speak English. In addition, to communicate sometimes also, we used sign language, pictures and/or photos, etc.

Mr. Iwa lived with his wife at home. Both were in the 70s. They are both very welcome. In his prime, Pak Iwa was a badminton athlete. He was so excited when he told his story when he became a badminton referee in the event. I forget the name of the event. It could be the Asian games/olympiads/other events held in Hiroshima at that time. While, his wife is a Japanese national dancer. Incidentally, during the homestay, the husband and wife celebrated their wedding anniversary. I was asked to wear a kimono and invited to dance to the rhythm of the music being played.

In addition, I was also taught how to drink Japanese-style tea and enjoy Mochi, a typical beverage and food of Japan. To avoid bothering his son, who is in Tokyo, we finally decided to communicate using the google voice feature on our mobile phone. Although sometimes it was inaccurate, it was very helpful because, at that time, the technology was not as advanced as it is today. In an emergency, communication is done through pictures or body language. We communicated about many things and exchanged views on one thing after another. One of them was about the difference between trains in Tokyo and Hiroshima.

Mr. Iwa really enjoyed the condition of Hiroshima, which was not as modern as Tokyo, full of bustle. I replied to tell about the tradition of Eid in Indonesia. When I told and showed pictures of the Eid tradition, Pak Iwa’s family was very impressed and happy. Incidentally, I brought nastar cakes which are usually served during

Eid in Indonesia. So the story was very alive with the cake I brought.

We spent the last day in Hiroshima visiting Miyajima Island for a full day. I was invited to take a tour of the possible places to visit—one of them to a mountain that is believed to be a place to find a life partner. Mr. Iwa showed the writings that confirm that several pairs of soul mates met and wrote their stories on the mountain.

On the way home, Mr. Iwa offered what other places he wanted to visit. Since I did not know much about places in Hiroshima other than a bargain shop, we finally decided to pay a visit to the bargain shop. There is a variety of cheap goods there. The shop is one of the largest shopping centers in Hiroshima.

I am amazed by Mr. Iwa's family. We always establish relationships and communication through Facebook with the help of the translation features already in the application. However, for the past year, we have rarely communicated because my Facebook account was hacked.

Apart from the moment of the homestay, a tough woman became the leader of a Nissan car spare parts company. Sadly, I could not get closer to her. In fact, I believe that women in Indonesia can also become strong leaders like what women in Japan can do.

Post-Visit Impact

Experiencing three visits to Japan, one of which was through the “Pesantren Leaders Visit to Japan” program, I was determined to apply good values that would allow me to be adopted at Insan Cendikia State Islamic High School Serpong.

The first was cleanliness based on observations in various schools, ranging from elementary to college levels, and boarding schools in Japan are very clean. In Japan, school leaders such as the principal sometimes even sweep and mop themselves. It may be a bit taboo in Indonesia.

While still serving as the head of the madrasa, I issued a decree which was followed up by cleaning the dormitory. The students cleaned the dorm independently and other school staff, including myself, as the leader at the time.

In achieving cleanliness in the school environment, a final disposal site for waste is made to be recycled by digging holes at four different points. All waste that could be used as compost was dumped there. Meanwhile, other plastic/dry waste was separated, then it will be put

into plastic tied. Later it would be transported by a janitor whom IC State Islamic High School has contracted. So, it can be said that the current IC is zero garbage.

In addition to cleanliness. It was the physical school building. In Japan, schools do not look so fancy. However, by always maintaining cleanliness and adjusting the paint color of the building and fixing things that look dirty, the schools seem more modest. I tried to apply that in IC State Islamic Serpong. In addition to being diligent with school cleanliness, IC buildings are also painted and managed immediately. Thus, State Islamic IC Serpong currently seems more modest and cool, although it does not entirely adopt or imitate the concept of schools in Japan.

In the midst of this Covid-19 pandemic, I am worried that the good values that have been taught and practiced while at school will fade—worried that children will leave good habits, such as sorting/separating organic and non-organic waste discipline, and maintaining cleanliness.

To overcome and minimize these concerns, I give students homework about their reflections on habits at IC State Islamic High School, such as sorting garbage and being disciplined. Even students are assigned to look for garbage banks around their homes. Apparently, the task received a good response. They even sent photos of the garbage that had been sorted and then sent them to the teacher. At least, they already understood discipline, cleanliness, and modesty even though these activities were not carried out at school.

Second, some classes at IC State Islamic High School Serpong have adopted Japanese-style chairs that are 100% made of wood. According to the Japanese, wooden chairs are better in terms of health because they are easy to clean compared to soft chairs that use foam/similar materials. They also put a kind of tennis ball under the wooden chair.

The tennis ball is used to reduce the damage on the floor. Thus, the floor remains durable, and it does not cause noise when chairs are moved. While IC state Islamic high school still uses the seats made of wooden and foam/similar materials. Due to protests/inputs from students and teachers who feel uncomfortable using wooden chairs during lessons from morning to evening.

Third, the learning method emphasizes the teacher as a facilitator. Teachers are also prepared to direct students to communicate actively

and think creatively as this concept is what is applied in Japan and is very effective for student development.

Fourth, in terms of discipline, the changes are gradual and persuasive. For example, I raise awareness of my colleagues by telling them that IC State Islamic School Serpong is an Islamic school, but Japan is more Islamic in terms of discipline. This effort also triggers the awareness of colleagues and other students always to practice Islamic values. In the concrete application, the teachers start and end the lesson on time. The teachers do not leave the class if the lesson has not been completed. They should report if you take part in outside activities. In terms of discipline, there has been a significant change at IC State Islamic School Serpong.

Fifth, the gallery was constructed to accommodate the creativity of students at IC State Islamic School Serpong. In Japan, every school has a gallery. It is what makes students in Japan able to progress because there is a place to accommodate their creativity.

Encountering Challenges

In addition to the things that have been successfully implemented, we also encountered problems at IC State Islamic School Serpong. **First**, we still cannot replace markers with chalk as writing tools. Almost all the Japanese schools I visited did not use markers, even in modern areas like Tokyo. However, some private schools and universities still use markers, but I rarely saw them. They use chalk because it is more environmentally friendly, the residue can also be processed, and it is useful for the soil.

Certainly, the type of chalk used in Japan is different from that in Indonesia. Most Indonesians also think that chalks are dirty or unhealthy, so markers dominate, and it is rare nowadays to see schools that still use chalk. When IC State Islamic High School Serpong wanted to replace markers with chalk, there were a few challenges. In addition to the high cost, finding chalk and blackboards also encountered problems because they were difficult to find. As a result, IC State Islamic High School Serpong still uses markers to this day.

The **second** is hand-cleaning habits. In Japan, they use a bar of soap to clean their hands at a school. Meanwhile, we use liquid soap. The Japanese view that liquid soap is wasteful. While bar soap is economical and is unlikely to be contaminated with germs, it is used repeatedly by different people because soap is anti-septic.

The use of bar soap had been going on for a while before we used liquid soap again. The main thing that causes the transition was that the soap bars are often lost or fall. In addition, the feeling “disgusted” has been rooted when one bar of soap is used for all is very difficult to change.

Cooperating with Multi Parties

If you want to adopt a Japanese style, the policy cannot only be decided by the schools/educational institutions. The government must also regulate the procedure with comprehensive support. It is equally important that families at home must also encourage their children to have good habits.

The schools in Japan generally have a swimming pool. Before carrying out activities in class, students first do sports until 9 o'clock. They are also provided with specialization lessons, in addition to the existing compulsory lessons. Meanwhile, in our country, facilities and infrastructure have not been for all educational institutions.

In Japan, cultural and environmental aspects are also kept clean, tidy, unpretentious, such as temples, etc. Meanwhile, in our country, it may be something difficult to do.

However, I am grateful that many alumni studying abroad have helped me. During my three visits to Japan, I often told alumni that they would visit Japan and provide information about Japan, which could be adopted in Indonesia. IC alumni study in big cities in Japan, such as Tokyo and Kyoto. In addition, these alumni often provide useful information for their schools.

EPILOGUE

CREATING THE ROAD OF ISLAMICITY

Prof. Jamhari Makruf

Team Leader CONVEY Indonesia;

Secretary of the Advisory Board of PPIM UIN Jakarta

The Pesantren Leaders Visit to Japan program has dispatched 16 batches since it was first held in 2004. We did not expect this program to run well and last for a dozen years because we initially designed this program for a few years only. However, this program is considered to have a tangible impact. Thus, the Japanese government does not hesitate to continue cooperation.

While the program is running, there are some changes to it. **First**, it is decided to add criteria that involve modern Islamic schools such as Madania and Pembangunan Islamic schools of UIN Jakarta. **Second**, the program provides a homestay hosted by Japanese families. **Third**, it includes a visit to small companies because the business developed allows it to be adapted by pesantren. **Fourth**, it reduces the number of participants for each pesantren, originally two people, to 1 person. Thus, the distribution of pesantren involved with the program becomes more widespread. **Fifth**, it has a long list of participants. Initially, PPIM researchers searched for a list of Islamic boarding schools independently. However, PPIM requires lists from Islamic organizations and Islamic universities in regions such as State Islamic Universities or Institutes.

During the participant selection process, there were several interesting events. One of them was when he contacted an exclusive pesantren in Halmahera, North Maluku. I called the Kiai who took care of the boarding school in order to introduce myself and convey the aims and objectives of the program while asking for time to visit the pesantren. We communicated intensely enough to keep in touch and ensure that the information I conveyed was valid.

On the agreed day, I and Mr. Takonai, Director of the Political

Section of the Japanese Embassy to Indonesia at the time, went to the location. Once we arrived at the pesantren, we could not meet the Kiai even though we came according to a predetermined schedule. From the ustadz at the pesantren, we received information that the Kiai was hoeing in the fields. We immediately called, and he apologized for thinking that the information he received over the phone was a call from a random person. Shortly after, the telephone conversation stopped because he wanted to rush to meet us waiting at the pesantren. Finally, the interview took place. In the end, he stated his willingness to join the program.

After the program ended, he came to me with a message of hope. *“Prof. Jamhari, thank you for inviting me to Japan. Please invite our other friends. They are exclusive because they have never been invited. I have told my friends that I learned a lot about agriculture during my visit to Japan. So, please invite my other friends to join the program.”*

After some time, he contacted me and informed me that he had used the rice fields and fields around the pesantren. He told me that one of the schools in Japan could live only by raising livestock. So by farming, he should be able to live and support the pesantren. The story continued how the pesantren began to get used to the tradition of learning to respect the time and other Islamic values that he saw and felt firsthand during his experience in Japan.

Interesting stories also happened to other alumni of the program. For example, when Prof. Takeshi Kohno, a Political Researcher at the Japanese Embassy who was involved in the program’s initial formulation, and I visited the Hayatan Thayyibah Islamic Boarding School in Sukabumi, West Java, to conduct an evaluation. This school was located on the edge of a cliff. The environment is very clean. Everything was neatly arranged. Takeshi even praised, *“It is very clean”*. The Kiai, Ahmad Dzaky, admitted that he could practice cleanliness in the pesantren because his visit to Japan inspired him. He even said, *“I feel like I found Islam in the land of Cherry Blossom.”*

Other interesting stories also occurred during the program. For example, the story I heard from PPIM’s Senior Researcher, Dadi Darmadi. During the homestay, there is a Kiai who brings pop noodles. On one occasion, he took out the noodle pop. The Kiai was not very fluent in English, but he wanted to interact with the host; he said, *“This is pop mie.”* The host then responded by host, who is also not fluent in English, *“Oh, for me. Arigatou.”* Kiai told Dadi that

while laughing and shaking his head. He admitted that he could not understand it, and it was funny because the host took the pop noodles he wanted to eat. Meanwhile, he could not ask for it anymore because he could not communicate further in English because of the language barrier. Finally, they communicate using universal language—body or sign language.

Another unique story was about towels in the hotel. During the program, the Kiai stay at a very strategically located hotel in the center of Tokyo. Two people occupied each room. In the group, there was a Kiai who was proficient in English. Carefully, he read the information that if the towels were not washed, he would receive a compensation of 1000 yen. This provision applies intermittently. For example, Monday towels are not changed on the same day, but Tuesday. When the program ended and the group was about to check out, a Kiai asked, *“how can you get money from the hotel?”* Then the Kiai who was asked explained how he had got the money. The Kiai who asked the question responded, *“Why you did not tell me? If I had known it, I would have changed towels during the program.”*

What really happened to the Kiai, Nyai, ustadz, and ustadzah alumni of the program? How did they gain a new awareness of the values we know as Islamicity? Why is their acceptance so high on this program?

It was relatively easy for me to answer these questions because I was involved in managing the program from the start. What I saw from the leaders of the pesantren and madrasah was that they experienced culture shock. Islam that has been understood at a conceptual level has manifested in the culture of Japanese society. In fact, there may be some who think that so far Japan is more Islamic because they feel they have practiced the values of Islamic teachings.

Through visits to several places during the program, the leaders of pesantren and madrasah caught the same pattern. There was no difference between one place and another, whether in urban or rural areas, the center of government or public spaces, and indoors and outdoors. They saw various Islamic aspects and clearly feel it, including in people's homes.

This new awareness was formed because the leaders of pesantren and madrasah saw, felt, and interacted directly with different groups from cultural and religious backgrounds. Educational institutions, especially primary and secondary schools, cultural sites, and

homestays, were the three main places that impressed them the most.

Regarding this awareness, I got an interesting story from a colleague at PPIM UIN Jakarta who became the program supervisor, Dr. Fuad Jabali. During one of the visits to the school, the host provided a room for participants to perform the Zuhur prayer. In fact, the room is actually a temple. Some of the participants hesitated to carry out worship. The main question at that time was whether it was legal to pray at the temple?

This question led to a discussion of the conditions of the early days of Islam. The discussion was mainly about what the early Muslim communities did when they entered new areas such as Syria and Persia at that time and how they responded to houses of worship of other religions. They remembered the message from the Prophet and his companions that they must guard the place of worship. In addition, Mr. Fuad also encouraged participants to think about how people outside Medina with different religious and social backgrounds, when they wanted to worship, and Muslims allowed them to worship in the mosque.

Through reflection on the early days of Islam, it was finally decided that participants would pray at the temple. However, the matter did not stop there because there was a Buddha statue right in the direction of the Qibla in the temple. Participants discussed with the school administrator to close the Buddha statue. The school administrator closed it happily. This condition became a reflection for the participants; what if Japanese, non-Muslims, who visit the pesantren and want to worship?

The leaders of Islamic boarding schools and madrasas really appreciated this program because they witnessed that Japan had become modern without losing its cultural identity. They always take care of what has been implanted and preserve local wisdom. It ultimately shapes Japan's national identity. Modernization does not necessarily negate tradition.

Anyone interested in the issue of education in Islamic boarding schools and madrasas and wants to achieve Islamise must read this book for several reasons. *First*, this book reflects the Kiai, Nyai, ustadz, and ustadzah alumni of the program. Written in simple language style so the general readers easily understand it.

This reflection leads us to measurable and unmeasurable impacts or changes. The measurable impact or change is translating Islamism

as cleanliness, discipline, and integrity into practical forms in pesantren and madrasas. For example, the aspect of cleanliness has been mentioned earlier regarding the Hayatan Thayyibah Islamic Boarding School, Sukabumi, West Java. Meanwhile, the unmeasurable impacts or changes are the changes. So it is not surprising that Kiai who say *“feeling that they found Islam in the land of the Cherry Blossom”* and *“.... if you want to learn about high human civilization, order, neatness, cleanliness, punctuality, discipline, and so on, you should come to Japan.”*

Second, this book is one output of the evaluation and impact studies carried out by independent evaluators. Therefore, the substance can be justified scientifically. Another advantage of this book is that it can show the strengths and weaknesses of the program. Besides, it shows the achievements that have been made along with the unresolved challenges.

Third, the stories in this book lead pesantren and madrasas to explore the path of Islamism if we interpreted the stories deeper. The visit to Japan allows Kiai, Nyai, ustadz, and ustadzah to re-question or dive deeper into what they already believe. For example, that the Islam they practice is the most correct. However, when we witnessed Japanese culture, they questioned the truth they believe in. There is a gap between the teachings that they believed in and the reality that they encountered and experienced.

We should be grateful that this program can facilitate the leaders of pesantren and madrasas to reflect--explore truth claims that they have believed exclusively and re-present the friendly, egalitarian and tolerant character of Islam.

Finally, appreciation and thanks should be sent to the Japanese government for 16 years of consistent support for the program's sustainability. Also, MAARIF Institute colleagues have done a good evaluation and impactful study to compile this book.

The people who access and read this book are lucky because it contains plenty of information and inspiration. Hopefully, this book will open up horizons in the management of modern educational institutions without abandoning their traditions. Through this book, we are reminded of wisdom. *“Wisdom is the missing part of a believer; wherever he finds it, then he takes it.”*

South Tangerang, March 6, 2021

Profiles of Authors

Ahmad Sulaiman is a Ustadz at the Miftakhul Ulum Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School Pekajangan, Pekalongan, Central Java.

Ai Nurjannah was born in Garut on November 26, 1965. She has had six children and nine grandchildren. She has been a caregiver at the Persis Islamic Boarding School since graduating from Madrasah Aliyah/Mu'allimin in 1983. Her highest education level was Masters's degree at the State Islamic University in Bandung with a concentration on Tafseer of the Qur'an. She currently teaches the Qur'an and the sources of Islamic law subjects at Madrasah Aliyah. In addition to teaching, she was also entrusted with additional duties as Director of Human Resources Development at the Persis Islamic Boarding School Tarogong. Also, she became the Islamic Women's Association leader for the Islamic Wives Association (Persistri) as Deputy Chair I for Jam'iyyah at the West Java Province level.

M. Disin Asmoyo was born in Probolinggo on May 4, 1974. He studied at the Pajarakan Sugar Factory Kindergarten, Karangbong State Elementary School I, Pajarakan Junior High School, and Kraksaan State High School. He continued his studies at the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Jember, majoring in Agronomy. He was entrusted as Deputy Principal of Bhakti Pertiwi Middle School in 2005–2008, Principal of Bhakti Pertiwi Junior High School in 2009–present. He has been chosen as secretary of Sub District of 10 District Public and Private Junior High Schools in Probolinggo in 2012–present. He has been a member of the Education Commission of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) Kab. Probolinggo in 2018 – 2020, and Chairperson of the Headmaster Working Consultation (MKKS)

of Probolinggo region, the year of 2019–present.

Masriwaty Malik was born on July 16, 1969, in Makassar. She attended Tsnawiyah/junior high school level at Madrasah Mu'allimat Aisyiyah in Makassar. She continued her education at Madrasah Mu'allimat Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta in 1987. She also received an undergraduate scholarship at Pondok Hajjah Nuriyah Shobron from the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta in Comparative Religion Study Program, Faculty of Islamic Religion. Then, she completed her bachelor's degree in 1993. Next, she had the opportunity to visit for a few days to study in the Land of the Rising Sun in the program "Pesantren Leaders Visit to Japan" in 2009.

Persahini Sidik is a ducator at Insan Cendikia State Islamic high school (MAN IC) Serpong.

Sayekti Puji Rahayu is a teachers and educator. She was entrusted as the Principal, Deputy Principal for Academic Affairs, Deputy for Schools in the Field of Personnel. She currently serves as Director of Education and Curriculum Development at Roushon Fikr Islamic Elementary School, Jombang.

Siti Lathifatus Suniyah is a Nyai at Matholi'ul Anwar Islamic Boarding School, Simo, Lamongan, East Java. Since she was young, she has been active in Fatayat NU as a daily administrator. Now she is entrusted as an advisor.

Profiles of the Institutions



MAARIF Institute for Culture and Humanity

The statutes for establishing the MAARIF Institute for Culture and Humanity (2002) state the basic commitment of this institution as a cultural movement in an Islamic context, humanity, and Indonesian values. These three areas are the main and most important things in the journey of intellectualism and activism of Prof.Dr. Ahmad Syafii Maarif, a former Chairman of PP Muhammadiyah and former President of the World Conference on Religion for Peace (WCRP).

The existence of the MAARIF Institute is related to the network of the Islamic Thought Reform movement (PPI) in Indonesia today. The renewal movement is a necessity as well as a historical demand. The complexity of modern humanitarian problems and contemporary issues such as democracy, human rights, pluralism, gender, inter-religious dialogue and civilization, and a series of other problems demand a new understanding and explanation of Islamic teachings.

It is also understood that the MAARIF Institute's programs and activities are part of the sociological needs of the Muhammadiyah organization, even though there is no structural relationship with this organization without reducing the commitment to continue expanding the radius of association. According to many circles, Muhammadiyah is often regarded as representing the modernist-moderate movement in Indonesia, which promotes Islamic ideas, preaching, and carrying out social actions. Therefore, fighting for

the renewal of Islamic thought in the context of the Muhammadiyah movement is the primary concern of MAARIF Institute as part of its efforts to enlighten and strengthen the elements of moderates in Indonesia.



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF ISLAM AND SOCIETY (PPIM)
State Islamic University (UIN) Jakarta

Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) is an autonomous research institution within the UIN (State Islamic University) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. Initially, this institution was founded on April 1, 1995, to invite several scholars from various disciplines and backgrounds to conduct several research activities, studies, training, and dissemination of information, especially about Islam in Indonesia and Southeast Asia in general. Currently, PPIM is a university-based strategic study institution in Indonesia with experience in religious studies and social issues with extensive publications and networks, both within and outside the country or overseas.

The birth of PPIM and the spirit it brought was a response to an academic discourse that, until the late 1980s and early 1990s, still regarded Islam of Indonesia as a “peripheral” issue. Islam in Indonesia and Southeast Asia is considered less important because it is not apart from mainstream Islam like Arabia, North Africa, Iran and even sub-continental countries. As Clifford Geertz suggests, Islam of syncretic Southeast Asia is regarded as “not the real Islam”. It was also exacerbated by the fact that some of the international community did not understand various factors shaping Islam in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. For example, first, the lack of in-depth research on the diversity of Islam in Indonesia by Indonesian Muslim scholars themselves who certainly understood more about Islam in their expertise. Second, many studies have been conducted, but the results of these studies have not been widely published and have not been communicated to the international community.

In fact, as stated by Anthony Reid, from any point of view, Islam in Indonesia and Southeast Asia is very interesting to study. Southeast

Asia's large Muslim population is one of the Islamic strengths in this region. Geographically, Indonesia and Southeast Asia, which consist of many islands with fertile soil, have also influenced the religious style of their people. The tendency of agrarian societies to prioritize the solidarity of social groups causes them to be more tolerant or open to diversity.

It causes the Islam of Indonesia and Southeast Asia to deal with differences in culture, ethnicity, religion, and new ideas. The development of Islam in Indonesia and Southeast Asia with its distinctive features and impressive development stages has attracted the attention of many scholars. The revival of Islam in this region is marked by the splendor of religious practices and the proliferation of writings by indigenous Islamic scholars on the actualization and transformation of religion into social, political and economic life, combined with the strengthening of democracy, gender, human rights, and ideas about Islam and civil society. Furthermore, this institution also describes the dynamically developing Islamic discourse.

Recently, the discourse on Islam in Indonesia has changed drastically, especially after the September 11 tragedy. Various terror events, including the 2002 Bali Bombings, contributed to bringing Islam in Indonesia into the vortex of Islamic discourse and global terrorism. When the tendency of conservatism and religious radicalism strengthened, the Muslim community in Indonesia faced the complicated problem of religion and its role in the public sphere. Therefore, there is an urgent need to develop an institution capable of conducting intensive and continuous research and studies on the phenomena and dynamics of Islam in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. For this reason, Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta exists.

Now, PPIM focuses on conducting strategic studies on religious life and education to influence policy and change in Indonesia. In addition, PPIM remains committed to developing and disseminating the richness of Indonesian Islamic traditions at various levels to enrich the values of life and humanity in a wider context.



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UNDP works in more than 170 countries, helping to alleviate poverty, promote inclusive economic growth, reduce disparities between groups and regions, and build community and individual resilience so that sustainable development can run optimally. UNDP plays an important role in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 worldwide 2030 and Indonesia as the United Nations development agency.

This book is a collection of inspirations written by Islamic boarding school leaders after visiting the Land of Cherry Blossoms in the “Pesantren Leaders Visit to Japan” program, which PPIM UIN Jakarta initiated and the Government of Japan since 2004 and until now. In each of their story, pesantren leaders talk about change at the individual and institutional levels. It is the spirit of change at the core of the stories they tell.

What the leaders of Islamic boarding schools in Japan got reminded them of one thing—character. The word that is commonly spoken in Islamic teachings but the real implementation has only been found in the Land of the Rising Sun. Such manifestations are expected to be realized by Islamic boarding schools after they visited Japan.



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