

A New Paradigm Of Islamic Higher Education In Indonesia: Institutional And Curriculum Aspects

Saiful Akhyar Lubis

Professor in Islamic Education State Islamic University (UIN) Medan Indonesia

Tobroni

Professor in Philosophy of Islamic Education University of Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM) Indonesia

Abstract

The present higher education system in Indonesia is influenced by colonial era legacy as well as American and European education system. The current system has neglected the real problems faced by the Indonesian society, especially the Muslims. An effort to accomplish these objectives must be based on religious and cultural tradition in which needs to be reinterpreted creatively as this is one of the main problems faced by Indonesian Muslims.

So, a new paradigm should be used as a framework and basis for university development in formulating key programs, such as: a). Continuous increase in management quality, autonomy, accountability and accreditation are among the most important components; b). Increase in productivity; c). Increase in relevance; d). Increase in education access opportunity; e). Increase in service to society; f). Increase in scientific knowledge; and g). Increase in ability. This paradigm aims to provide a guideline to strengthen universities based on the principles of decentralization and continuous evaluation. In addition, it also regulates the role of the state government which conceptually and practically should no longer control and micro-manage university, but to provide incentive such the human and financial resources are allocated to vital priorities.

It is time for Indonesian Muslims to make use of the full potential of the majority to strengthen the foundation and provide the direction for the Indonesian higher education system. In this era of national development and reformation, a holistic strategy is needed to prepare for the global present and future.

Keyword: *Paradigm, Islamic Higher Education, Curriculum*

Preface

Education is a systematic process through which a child or an adult acquiring knowledge, experience, skill and sound attitude. It makes an individual civilized, refined, cultured and educated. For a civilized and socialized society, education is the only means. Its goal is to make an individual perfect. Every society gives importance to education because it is a panacea for all evils. It is the key to solve the various problems of life.

Education is always related to the society and state, in addition to its role in developing and realizing students' potentials. In a Muslim majority nation founded on the principles of Pancasila, higher education in Indonesia has had challenges and opportunities, especially in relation to development. Fortunately, Indonesian Muslims are now aware that educational reformation should not be carried out in an ad-hoc and partial manner like in the past, but in a comprehensive manner both in its concept and implementation. Most importantly, policy direction is required on the macro and micro levels to encourage the preparedness of today's youth, in terms of their abilities, skills and motivation in the actualization and organization of Indonesian civil society. This will be characterized by an educated population arising from the people, by the people and for the people, in which education is prioritized and lifelong-learning is practiced, with the nation and character building as its core and principle aims.

Basically, education has been described as a process of waking up to life: waking up to life and its mysteries, its solvable problems and the ways to solve the problems and celebrate the mysteries of life, waking up to the inter-dependencies of all things, to the threat to our global village, to the power within the human race to create alternatives, to the obstacles entrenched in economic, social and political structures that prevent our waking up. Education in the broadest sense of the term is meant to aid the human being in his/her pursuit of wholeness. Wholeness implies the harmonious development of all the potentialities God has given to a human person and true education is the harmonious development of the physical, mental, moral (spiritual) and social faculties, the four dimensions of life, for a life of dedicated service.

Literature Review

In this paper it is primarily used as a broad term comprising the following categories: 1) Islamic instruction, provided in mosques, Muslim organizations, and homes; 2) Islamic Religious Education, offered as a subject in public schools; and, 3) Teaching about Islam, referring to non-confessional courses on Islam offered to Muslim and non-Muslim students. Therefore, a general can be explained: "Islamic education programs also differ in whether they provide education into, education about or education from religion. Education into religion

introduces the pupil to a specific religious tradition with the purpose of promoting personal, moral and spiritual development as well as to build religious identity within a particular tradition. Many confessional approaches emphasize learning into religion or learning how to live in accordance with specific religious tenets and practices. Education about religion utilizes a more or less academic examination of various religious traditions. This approach contextualizes religion within the comparative study of religions, history and sociology. Education from religion takes the personal experience of the pupil as its principal point of departure. The idea is to enhance students' capacity to reflect upon important questions of life and provide an opportunity to develop personal responses to major moral and religious problems. In other words, students learn from different religious traditions and outlooks of life". (Jenny, 2015).

The Islamic point of view on the importance of education in peoples' lives is evidence. Islam acknowledges that learning and the demand for knowledge are the right of an individual. Democratic education, nurtured by Islam, represents a major revolution in human history. Experiments, theories, observations, deductions and systemization, as elements of scientific method, were strongly encouraged in the Qur'an (al-Baqarah: 164). As revealed Sobhi Rayan: "The Qur'an talks about the importance of thinking largely, that mentions hundreds times the terms such as: Consider (*Yaaqilun*), understand (*yafqahun*), learn wisdom (*yataffakarun*), see (*yanzurun*), and foresight (*yubserun*), meditate (*yaatabirun*), speculate (*yatadabbarun*), and ponder (*yaamalun*). In other instances it is used phrases such as: *uli al-albbab*, *uli al-absaar*, or *uli nuha* in order to draw the attention to the functions of the mind. The Qur'an expresses the meaning of mind forty nine times by the verb forms that derive from Him as: *Ya'qilun*, *Ta'qilun* (consider), but *A'ql* (mind) as a name form is not mentioned in the Qur'an, because the verb reflects dynamic activity, but the name implies constant thing. The Qur'anic discourse is not emphasizes only the rational way, but also the empirical method Says: "Travel through the earth and see how Allah did originate creation..." It is obvious address for human beings to inquire their reality by transition from the particular to universal in order to deduct the conclusion. This spirit of thought had characterized the Islamic Culture and influenced on the Islamic thinking ways that produced a distinguished character of personal autonomy. This thinking way appears clearly in the Islamic tradition in Religion Science, Philosophy, and Science (Sobhi, 2012).

Basically, education is an effort towards developing experience and changes that are necessary for building individuals and societies suitable with the aims of education. These individuals and societies will only be produced through the interaction between educators and learners and social interaction with the environment. This is based on the belief that all human beings must learn and gain knowledge from the cradle to the grave, whether formally or informally (Mohd Roslan, 2014). Muslim and Western societies share similar views that education is the transfer of experience from one generation to the next (S.S. Husain, 2003). In essence, the transfer of experience for Muslims can be divided into two categories. *First*, experience in the form of impermanent knowledge, be it techniques or skills which change over time. *Second*, experience in the form of permanent knowledge, which is based on enduring ethical values contained in the Qur'an and Sunna and which reflect the eternal truth that never changes. Precisely for this reason, faith (*iman*) and knowledge (*ilm*) are indivisible. Faith without knowledge cannot result in a person having a happy life, whereas knowledge without faith will sink a person into ignorance. In the Muslim perception, religion and knowledge or science must complement each other.

However, most Muslim countries, including Indonesia, are seen to have two education systems: religious and secular education. In religious education, the *pesantren* is its fortress. Pesantren are always associated with Nahdlatul Ulama, established in east Java in 1926 (Sharom, 2002). Alternatively, Muhammadiyah, established in 1912 which by established Ahmad Dahlan is the product of two incenses: traditional education and new ideas that come from Islam reform movement emerging in the Middle East and other places based on the tenets of Qur'an and Hadith (Ruswan, 1997) initiated their educational activities in secular schools, from pre-school to higher education. The larger proportion of religious education in Muhammadiyah schools' curriculum is what distinguishes it from state schools, as Muhammadiyah tried to overcome the weaknesses within the pesantren system through an adaptation of the European education system. Muhammadiyah was aiming to produce "*intelektual kyai*" (scholarly Islamic intellectual) or "*kyai intelektual*" (intellectually Islamic scholar).

There are other organizations active in the field of education such as *al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah*, *Persatuan Umat Islam* (Unity of Muslims), *Persatuan Islam* (Islamic Unity), *Darul Dakwah wal Irsyad* (Organization of preachers/DDI), *al-Islam*, *Matla'ul Anwar*, and *al-Rabitah*, among others. Yet the total number of their schools was far less.

The *al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah* educational organization in particular, *Maktab Islamiyah Tapanuli* (MIT), has been established in 1918, before *al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah* itself was officially founded in 1930. It was renowned as the first formal educational institution in Medan, which attempted to bring together traditional and modern systems of education. However, from the perspective of content, what was taught at MIT was similar to traditional pesantren, the difference being the usage of modern facilities such as desk and blackboard. Education

in this Islamic institution was divided into three levels: preparation (*tajhizi*), elementary (*ibtida'i*), and intermediate (*tsanawi*). Due to its popularity, by the 1930s MIT had 1000 students from Medan and its surrounding regions (Chalidja, 2008).

Many Muslims were involved in various higher education institutions, both government and private. For precisely this reason, the perception of Indonesian Muslims was split into three orientations:

- a. Those who considered the *pesantren* education system to be the most ideal and proper to obtain the blessings of Allah. Up to the twentieth century, the *pesantren* (residential learning institutions that focused on religious studies) were the only form of education found in Java, and they traditionally taught an almost exclusively religious curriculum. These autonomous and individually organized schools emphasized specific teachings of the Quran, the Arabic language, and Muslim traditions. They were primarily concerned with teaching students how to live authentic lives as good Muslims (Abdalla 2006).
- b. Those who preferred the Muhammadiyah schools because their curriculum included government and religious schools curriculum. The above nuanced understandings of education highlight that Islamic education is the process of guiding the development of the spiritual and physical aspects of students based on the teachings of Islam by developing and directing their potential. This refers to their basic learning capabilities which will help them bring about change in their personal lives as individuals in the society they live in and develop their relationship with their environment until their character is formed (Roslan, 2014).
- c. Those who chose government schools, because they were cheap, had better quality and offered the hope of work prospects to alumni.

Research Method

This study is a qualitative research. Qualitative research emphasizes description, meaning and understanding of the phenomenon under study. In this qualitative study used an interpretive paradigm (naturalistic). Interpretive study the problems of perspective "in" the subjects studied (inner perspective of human behavior). The location of this research at Islamic higher education in Indonesia through field research and reinforced by research literature.

Research Result

The State of Higher Education after Independence

In Indonesia, tertiary education has a diversified structure. Higher Education in Indonesia can be public or private, secular or religious and of types of academic specialization—academy, polytechnic, college, institute and university. The first two types of specialization are vocational, whereas the last three are academic. Vocational programs (D1-D4) lead to diplomas after one to four years of study, whereas a bachelor's degree (S1) lasts four years, with a further two years for a master's degree (S2) and additional three years for a PhD (S3) (OECD/Asian Development Bank 2015). As indicated by Table 1, the number of private colleges is striking, because the rising demand for higher education cannot be filled by the public sector (Welch, 2012).

There were several issues in higher education in Indonesia including: *First*, the pace of growth in higher education (both government and private). According to data from LIPI, in 1950 the number of students was around 1.000. By 1978/79 this had increased to 385 000, and by 1983/84, there were 805.000 university students in Indonesia (Soeharto, 1984). Of course more recently the number has risen dramatically. This increase is a reflection of the explosion in population size since the 1950s, and the difficulty of finding work with only junior high school qualifications. This shift created a problem difficult to overcome, especially related to the output quality of Indonesian education.

Second, low productivity. Of half of the number of high school graduates who go on to study at a tertiary institution, only 20 percent graduated. Although data on dropout rates is difficult to obtain, it can be assumed that the rate is very high. According to a reliable source, of the 250.000 undergraduates in tertiary education, it is estimated that only 40.000 will graduate, of those in any program of study only one-fifth will graduate, so out of every 10 students, eight will drop out (Doddy, 2007). The main cause of high dropouts is the high fees, of which only the middle to upper classes can afford continuously, with the lower classes having difficulty to pay. This is the reason for a high level of educated unemployed, who are in danger of being radicalized due to their disappointment of job availability. Generality, as reported by Emma R. Allen: "However, gains in the quality of education have not been forthcoming. For Indonesia to continue along the path of structural transition, its workers will need to have more sophisticated and specialized skills if labor productivity is to improve. Challenges remain, particularly in terms of the quality of education outcomes. Indonesia's performance in various international education assessment programs has uncovered issues related to the quality of mathematics, science and literacy education. In particular, Indonesia performs well below the OECD average in all assessment areas and there has been little progress in the quality of education outcomes over time. There are also significant disparities in education services across the country, with the eastern parts of Indonesia lagging even further behind. In addition, almost half of the country's primary schools lack access to electricity,

which has implications for access to technology and e-learning” (Emma, 2016).

Third, the quality of lecturers and students. Most of the lecturers are incapable of speaking foreign languages (especially English and Arabic) as well as lack teaching effectiveness. In addition, most of the students have not adopted a reading culture, such that their initiative and creativity are unstimulated, their lecturers being considered as ‘always right’. More interestingly, higher education lecturers are employed by universities to undertake various tasks including teaching, research and administrative jobs. However, teaching is still the main task that they should perform and this is particularly true in the case of universities in Indonesia. Here, lecturers are required not only giving lectures, but they are expected to monitor closely the intellectual enhancement of students.

Lecturers as much as possible can make a sermon to be effective, relevant, and to grow in line with the time. The change is covering many aspects of teaching and learning techniques and curriculum. Conventional teaching methods that rely only on books and lectures do not guarantee the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. Ordinary teaching methods in Islamic subjects are primarily based on the book and lectures only. This inactive presentation often makes students feel tired and sleepy. The sluggishness produced in students leads them to be less receptive even of the essential points of the lecture (Mohd Isa Hamzah, 2014).

On the other hand, the condition of privately-run higher education institution seems to be worse than state-run higher education institution. The private institution’s main problem seems to be financial as their main funding source comes from students. Some even rely totally on funding from student enrolments. As a consequence, students who drop out from privately-run universities experience greater feelings of trauma than those who dropout from government-funded universities, as they have paid higher fees for their education. In addition, the over-excessive supervision and regulation by Kopertais (Coordinator of Private Islamic Higher Education) has caused them to lose their independence to conform to narrow written criteria, without any consideration of education quality. There notes critical: “Indonesian universities have also performed poorly in international university rankings. The Times Higher Education rated no Indonesian institutions among its top 400 global universities or top 100 Asian universities in 2013. Likewise, the Shanghai Jiao Tong Ranking reported no Indonesian universities among its global top 500. The QS World Ranking, on the other hand, lists the University of Indonesia 64th in Asia (309th globally), the Bandung Institute of Technology 129th (461-470 globally), Gadjahmada University 133rd (501-550), and Airlangga University 145th (01+). Indonesia finished bottom out of 50 countries in the 2013 edition of the University ranking 21th, which grades national higher education systems on investment, research output, gender balance, international connectivity and other measures. It scored particularly poorly on the first two metrics. Data from Indonesia’s Directorate General of Higher Education shows that there is significant inequality in the distribution of institutions throughout the country, with poorer regions having the fewest institutions of higher education, and a number of provinces within these regions having no public institutions at all. As an archipelago of more than 18,000 islands, distributing educational opportunities evenly is a tough task, especially with an estimated 700 different languages spoken across the country.

Another important issue is student apathy, an effect of the *Dewan Mahasiswa* (Student Council) dissolution in 1978 and the call for students to back to campus. This rule politically disempowered students, and lead to an apathetic indifference in relation to social problems. Furthermore, strict guidance and political control from the government meant that higher educational institutions were no longer free to develop independent of the ephemeral political agenda of the time. While according to Baboucarr Njie, that: “The history of higher education in Indonesia is traced to the 19th century with the opening of the first higher education institution by the Dutch colonial government which was aimed at training indigenous doctors (Nizam, 2006). However the specific aim of this programmed meant that it was way too short of the expertise required at the health sector for which it was set let alone cater to the comprehensive educational framework in Indonesia. Hence many public and private universities were opened after independence in 1945, to bolster the philosophy and spirit of independence while catering to the training needs of the larger population of Indonesians”.

These include Indonesian Islamic University (1945) in Yogyakarta and National University (1949) in Jakarta, Gadjahmada University(1949), Indonesia University (1950), Airlangga University (1954), Hassanuddin University (1956), Bandung Institute of Technology (1959), and Bogor Agricultural University (1963). Today there are over 4,000 institutions of higher learning in diverse subject areas in Indonesia. Over time, out of the need to appraise the growing number of higher education providers in the country, the Indonesian National Accreditation Board for Higher Education (BAN-PT) was established in 1994 by the National Education Act No. 2/1989 and Government Regulation on Higher Education No. 60/1999 for the assessment of the quality of higher education which include the state universities, private and religious institutes. BAN-PT has modeled its current quality assurance method of accreditation from international best practices thanks to its efforts of comparative studies and benchmarking against reputable quality assurance agencies (Barbour, 2015).

Islamic Higher Education, a term borrowed from Husain and Ashraf, (2003). There is a great challenge that struck Islamic education today: The position of Islamic education within the larger educational system. In

addition, in many instances the educational system does not recognize Islamic education institutions' degrees or limits their usefulness. On the other hand, general education systems usually limit access to Islamic education in general education schools, which opens the door for seeking knowledge about Islam from sources that may be militant or radical. Finally, as Islamic education has not received much attention compared to general education, the management system faces several challenges; Islamic education processes and pedagogy in some religious circles, a belief continues to exist that religious education is The Knowledge (*'Ilm*). This attitude reflects negatively on efforts to modernize Islamic educational systems. In addition, a common pedagogy used is based on memorization, with less emphasis on individual contributions. Another major prevalent challenge is punishment of students in Islamic education institutions, which is almost a chronic problem in the entire Muslim world. Finally, as a result of ages of stagnation, teaching methods in Islamic education institutions have not seen improvement (Seyyed, 2015).

In general was caught in a conflict between tradition and modernity. There were two dominant education systems: a) Traditional education limited to classical Islamic knowledge and with no serious interest in adopting or integrating new methods in gaining new knowledge, which resulted in a failure to cope with the challenges of modernity in terms of substance or methodology; b) Modern education essentially borrowed from the west, which resulted in a partial or totally secular higher education. The alumni of the latter education system tend to not know Islamic intellectual and religious heritage.

The dichotomy of the two education systems widened the separation between "*ilmu-ilmu agama*" (religious knowledge) and "*ilmu-ilmu umum*" (general knowledge). In turn, there was an effort to create a third system which integrates the two. At least three models have been developed. **First**, the model with both systems and their corresponding knowledge structure as one. "*Ilmu-ilmu umum*" (secular knowledge) were institutionalized into many faculties while "*ilmu-ilmu agama*" (religious knowledge) were institutionalized into one faculty (examples: UII Yogyakarta, UNISBA Bandung). This structure still resulted in further dichotomies between faculties, and there is a tendency for the religious faculty to be marginalized due to the low number of its students. **Second**, the model based on the idea of Islamization of knowledge by Ismail al-Faruqi, In his endeavor to Islamize and integrate the discipline of revealed and human knowledge, al -Faruqi had strived to project its framework based on the worldview of tawhid that governed its fundamental structure (Wan, 2015) and Al-Faruqi's determination and constant effort to introduce the discipline of religion had critically led to the establishment of the Department of Religion in Temple University in the United States and Naquib Alatas, Al-Attas maintains that knowledge is not totally and purely the product of the human mind and experience but is also based on revealed truth. Knowledge continuously requires direction, supervision and confirmation from the revealed truth (Rosnani, 200).

This is so because the metaphysics of Islam is not only based upon reason and experience but also finny grounded upon Revelation in which religious knowledge general knowledge are unified in an integrated domain. This model proposes that knowledge is organized through faculties of revealed knowledge and faculties of non-revealed knowledge. This model poses several problems and questions, such as: whether knowledge has a particular unified epistemology, the limits of the Islamization of knowledge, and the subjects of knowledge to be Islamized.

Third, the model in which religious knowledge is the point of departure and centre of all discourse and knowledge and academic process, with general knowledge as a supplement integrated into the curriculum and aids in the understanding of the normative structure of religion (example: UIN and STAIN). This model seeks to rectify the common perception that UIN and STAIN are only academic institutions teaching 'pure religion' such that their alumni are categorized as religious graduates despite the fact that they have professional skills not limited to religious study such as English, mathematics, and science.

The Growth of Higher Education in the Era of National Development

The social and economic development of nations is fundamentally an education process in which people learn to create new institutions, utilize new technologies, cope with their environment, and alter their patterns of behavior. Education in a broad sense improves the capabilities of individuals and the capacity of institutions, and becomes a catalyst for the closely interrelated economic, social, cultural, and demographic changes that become defined as national development. Precisely how these changes occur is not fully known, and this problem often frustrates attempts at national policy making and planning. However, the evidence is substantial that schooling and other forms of education can, in a supporting environment, make major contributions to the complex processes of technology transfer, economic productivity, individual earnings, reduction of poverty, development of healthy families, creation and sharing of values, learning the responsibilities of citizenship, and enhancement of the quality of life. Yet researchers and scholars also find that education can have negative effects. When formal education is unevenly distributed and is based on inequitable selection practices, it may perpetuate and legitimize social and wealth divisions in society. Further, formal schooling, along with modern media and aspects of global culture, appears to draw children and youth away from their cultural origins and traditional

familial customs. Parents from some communities, when faced with school fees and school-leaver unemployment, withdraw their children from school to help them seek alternative paths to their future (Don, 2002).

In the period of national development, the Indonesian higher education system had to contend with several problems, such as: a) Explosion in the number of students demanding education; b) Necessity to improve the quality of teaching; c) Efforts to revise the curriculum to be relevant to development goals.

Since the majority of Indonesians are Muslim, it can be said that the problems faced by the Indonesian higher education system are chiefly the problem of the Indonesian Muslims (Safruddin, 2002). In addition, it cannot be denied that Islamic organizations played a great role in the establishment of private higher education institutions. For example: the Muhammadiyah universities in Solo, Jakarta and Yogyakarta, among others; the Ibn Khaldun university in Jakarta and Bogor; the Islamic universities of Bandung (UNISBA), Yogyakarta (UII), Semarang (UNISULA), Bogor (UIB), Medan (UISU and UNIVA, among others) and Makassar (UMI) (Amien Rais, pp. 22). In general, as an institute of higher education will only be accredited by the state if it has the same curriculum as a state university (additional subjects may be offered), it can be seen that private universities are in effect duplicates of state universities.

In the GBHN (State Policy Guidelines) that formed the foundation of the Pelita (Five-Year Development), it was explicitly and implicitly stated that education must be developed to create a modern economy based on the three aims of development and the eight paths to equity. Soedjatmoko's analysis showed that the development of higher education in the late 1960s, 1970s, and particularly in the mid-1980s has produced manpower quicker than the ability of the Indonesian economy to absorb it, resulting in a group of educated unemployed (Soedjatmoko, 2009). In those decades, unemployed high school graduates considered a university degree as a path to employment. Hence, they enrolled in great numbers in Indonesian universities. However they found out later when they graduated from these universities that employment was still difficult to find. They were also dissatisfied with available employment opportunities which provide mostly low salary. It must also be understood that the problem of unemployment is not the direct responsibility of the education sector alone. Its alleviation can be undertaken by allocating government funding from non-productive education sector to productive employment sectors, especially those which needs a large number of people. This way, the funding can be used more beneficially and efficiently.

Recent Indonesian education system is based on third-world development ideology of the 1970s, with modern economic sector determining the development process, its profit trickling down into traditional economic sector. Now, what needed is a new development ideology and strategy, which makes necessary the centralization of development resources to improve the lives of those who work in the traditional economic sector. Another aspect of this new development strategy is the attention given to not only "human resource development", but also "human resource utilization".

Evidently, the production of quality human resources to face the free market era has become important. In Seattle, the United States in 1993, the former Indonesian President Suharto with several heads of state had agreed to: (a) find solutions to numerous issues, regional and global economic challenges; (b) increase economic cooperation through multilateral trade system; (c) reduce barriers in trade and investment cooperation such that goods, services and capitals can travel freely in Asia and the Pacific; (d) convince every citizen that they will benefit from economic growth, increased educational and training quality, economic cooperation through transportation and telecommunication infrastructure, and sustainable utilization of existing resources.

The global pressure to increase human resource quality will even be more intense in this 21st century when the free market that had been planned for ASEAN in 2003 comes into existence in 2020 (Hafid, 2009). Without innovative and strategic moves to increase human resource quality, Indonesia may become a victim of the global pressure.

As such, a thorough education reformation is necessary (including Islamic education) in every level (including higher education). There are at least two main reasons: (a) Muslim society needs quality education Islamic in nature at every level, one that can develop Islamic values in a scholarly manner to produce critical and rational graduates as exhorted in the Qur'an and Sunna. These graduates must have foresight and insight, attentive and perceptive to developments of science and technology, internalizing their faith and piety in all aspects of life; (b) The awareness of society on the importance of religious and secular education integration (which foundation can be found in Law Number 2 Year 1989 and Law Number 20 Year 2003 on the National Education System). Based on the Ministry of Religious Affairs' (MORA) data, the *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (Islamic Junior High School) student participation rate was about 8% before the year 2000 and about 10-11% after the year 2000. The same participation rate could be observed at the higher level of *Madrasah Aliyah* (Islamic Senior High School) and tertiary institution (IAIN and STAIN).

Higher Education in the Reformation Era: Pioneering a New Paradigm

Indonesia is possibly one of the most dynamics countries in the world in the sense that the government

endeavor to implement higher education reform is facing serious resistance from various groups in the society. Waves of student demonstrations occurred not only at universities which have already had legal status as the BHMN (State-owned Legal Entity) but also at non-BHMN universities. Some issues which were raised during the demonstrations and orations are amongst others: government is not responsible for public educations, poor people will suffer with the new system, intervention of foreign capital in education (IMF, World Bank, WTO, etc.), commercialization of education by neo-liberalism regime, rejecting the BHMN, amending the SISDIKNAS (National Education System) Law, rejecting the draft of BHP (Education Legal Institution) Law.

The existence and development of modern higher education institutions in Indonesia cannot be separated by western colonialism, especially the Dutch. Although Indonesia has long education history, there is no truly Indonesian university in origin. As in other Asian countries, almost all higher education institutions are based on European academic models and traditions (Philip, 2004).

It cannot be denied that the present higher education system in Indonesia is influenced by colonial era legacy as well as American and European education system. The current system has neglected the real problems faced by the Indonesian society, especially the Muslims. Poverty and unemployment have become perpetual problems which cannot be overcome by Western-oriented higher education designed to fulfill the needs of the modern economic sector. There is a need for a change of strategy and education system, including in terms of curriculum. An effort to accomplish these objectives must be based on religious and cultural tradition which needs to be reinterpreted creatively, as this is one of the main problems faced by Indonesian Muslims. The renewal and development of higher education depends on the ways in which the religious and traditional challenges are dealt with.

Hence, a "new paradigm" is a necessity which must be possessed and developed by every higher education institutions, be they private or public institution (including UIN, IAIN and STAIN). In this context, Azra's analysis, based on the principles contained in "*World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action, UNESCO, 1998*", declared in "*World Conference on Higher Education*" (Paris, 5-9 October 1998), is agreed with. In the declaration, the university and its inhabitants must be able to maintain and develop their vital function ethically and scientifically in their activities; able to speak up on ethical, cultural, and social issues independently; aware and responsible of their intellectual capacity and moral prestige; actively spreading the universal values of peace, justice, freedom, equality, and solidarity. In practical terms, the university is expected to develop simultaneously five types of intelligence: intellectual, emotional, practical, social, as well as spiritual and moral. Education should also be centered on the students (*student-centered education*) (Azra, 2012).

The new paradigm should be used as a framework and basis for university development in formulating key programs, such as: (a) continuous increase in management quality, in which autonomy, accountability, and accreditation are among the most important components; (b) increase in productivity; (c) increase in relevance; (d) increase in education access opportunity; (e) increase in service to society; (f) increase in scientific knowledge; (g) increase in ability. This paradigm aims to provide a guideline to strengthen universities based on the principles of decentralization and continuous evaluation. In addition, it also regulates the role of the state/government which conceptually and practically should no longer control and micro-manage university, but provide incentive such that human and financial resources are allocated to vital priorities.

Education reform should also performed thoroughly on all aspects of education, such as: education philosophy and policy; community based education system; empowerment of teaching/educational staff; school based management system; new paradigm implementation; education financing system. In this context, it is recommended to adopt two strategies, defensive and recovery strategy, to maintain achievement and increase quality.

In this new paradigm, the mission and function of the university is formulated specifically as follows:

First, to educate students and citizens to fulfill all human needs through relevant offerings, including professional education and training which combines knowledge and high-level skills through subjects which are continuously planned and evaluated to respond to the demands of current and future society.,

Second, to provide opportunities of lifelong education, Lifelong education can be provided through informal, formal and non-formal education processes. Hence, lifelong education can be defined as a process of both deliberate and unintentional opportunities influencing learning throughout one's life span (Muhammad, 2009). And to enter and exit into the education system optimally and flexibly, to provide opportunity for individual development and social mobility, to participate actively in society through worldly vision and localized capacity for development.

Third, to advance and spread knowledge through research and provide relevant expertise to help society in social, economic, and cultural development, as well as science, technology, social, humanities, and the creative arts development.

Fourth, help to understand, interpret, maintain, strengthen, develop, and spread history and culture in national, regional, and international setting, in the framework of pluralism and diversity. Diversity is the

central concern of almost all social, political and cultural theorists. The common argument of them is that thinking, perception, action and adjudication differs from culture to culture and society to society. Indicating their objections against the foundational concerns of philosophical epistemology that talks about objectivity and grounded its methodology in natural sciences to study human affairs, critics have brought forth the argument of plurality and relativity of human affairs. This claim is very much grounded in their opposition to this assumption: that certainty, not paradox and contradiction, is the foundational criterion of our beliefs to be named as knowledge. The simple reason here is that there is a genuine difference between understanding nature as possessing objective explainable phenomena and the human world rich with even deeper complexities than nature. The claim is that these complexities are either intractable or unfathomable in nature. In this sense, both the structure of our knowledge and our social frameworks are infested with diverse mechanisms. Any attempt in the name of reason and rationality to unify or synchronize them is subject to error. This is a counter argument to the very argument of error in epistemology; that our perceptions and actions have to be backed by irrefutable reason(s) (Sreelakha, 2014).

Fifth, help to protect and strengthen social values by inculcating in youths democratic citizenship. Civic Education is an important component of education that cultivates citizens to participate in the public life of a democracy, to use their rights and to discharge their responsibilities with the necessary knowledge and skills. American schools have advanced a distinctively civic mission since the earliest days of this Republic. It was immediately recognized that a free society must ultimately depend on its citizens, and that the way to infuse the people with the necessary qualities is through education. As one step of this education process, higher education has been assuming the mission to foster citizens with the spirit to lead. The literature on this contribution, and civic education in general, is characterized by its broad time range, its composition of diverse voices from all kinds of participating social units (from individual to government), and the existence of rich international and comparative studies (Branson, 1998).

Sixth, to contribute to the development and enhancement of education in every level, including training for teaching staff.

In regards of university development, this new paradigm should be based on three main pillars, which are related to each other and should be realized simultaneously:

1. *Greater autonomy*, not only in terms of management, but also in deciding/choosing the relevant curriculum to suit the working world. Universities not only function to increase the quality of human resource through mastery in science and technology, as well as social science and humanities, but also to develop these disciplines through research and development.
2. *Greater accountability*, not only related to the government as education and resource/funding provider, but also with the wider professional world. Not only accountable in funding utilization, but also in knowledge development, as well as education content and program.
3. *Greater quality assurance*, guarantee of quality through continuous internal evaluation as well as external evaluation by the National Accreditation Agency – Higher Education Institute. Universities should develop a more flexible standard to adapt and adjust to the working world.

Particularly for Islamic higher education institution, this new paradigm is especially relevant as can be seen from the new trends in Islamic studies development, as follows:

1. Numerous approaches to understand Islam (the combination of normative approach and socio-historical analysis), which has positive influence on the study topic breadth and analytical depth. Study of contemporary issue based on classical text has been the main approach of research in UIN, IAIN and STAIN.
2. The development of multiple views and arguments resulting in polyphonic understanding for the rich and diverse Islamic intellectual tradition. This understanding has resulted in an Islam based on tolerance and inclusiveness in Indonesia.
3. UIN, IAIN and STAIN has decided to become academic institutions (without putting aside the role of propagation) by conducting religious research based on academic approach. The study programs developed are no longer about Islamic studies, but also disciplines related to social and religious issues.
4. UIN, IAIN and STAIN become a center of excellence for Islamic education and research in Indonesia through the development of local context and local content of Indonesian Islam. As such, they become a center for the development of rooted cultural Islam in Indonesia.

Conclusion

It must be realized that even though Muslims are the majority in Indonesia, the efforts of developing higher education, especially Islamic Higher Education is very challenging. If the Muslims are not to be so called as "majority in number, but minority in education quality," it is time to make use of the full potential of the majority to strengthen the foundation and provide the direction for the Higher Education System in Indonesia. In this era of National Development and Reformation, a holistic strategy is needed to prepare for the global present and future.

In this new paradigm, the mission and function of the university is formulated specifically as follows:

First, to educate the students and citizens to fulfill all human needs in relevant offerings, including professional education and training which combines knowledge and high-level skills through subjects which are continuously planned and evaluated to respond to the demands of current and future society.,

Second, to provide opportunities of lifelong education. Lifelong education can be provided through informal, formal and non-formal education processes. Hence, lifelong education can be defined as a process of both deliberate and unintentional opportunities influencing learning throughout one's life span (Muhammad, 2009). And to enter and exit into the education system optimally and flexibly, to provide opportunity for individual development and social mobility, to participate actively in society through worldly vision and localized capacity for development.

Third, to advance and spread knowledge through research and provide relevant expertise to help the society in social, economic and cultural development, as well as science, technology, social, humanities and the creative arts development.

Fourth, help to understand, interpret, maintain, strengthen, develop and spreadout history and culture in national, regional and international setting, in the framework of pluralism and diversity.

Fifth, help to protect and strengthen social values by inculcating in youths democratic citizenship.

Sixth, to contribute the development and enhancement of education in every level, including training for teaching staff.

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