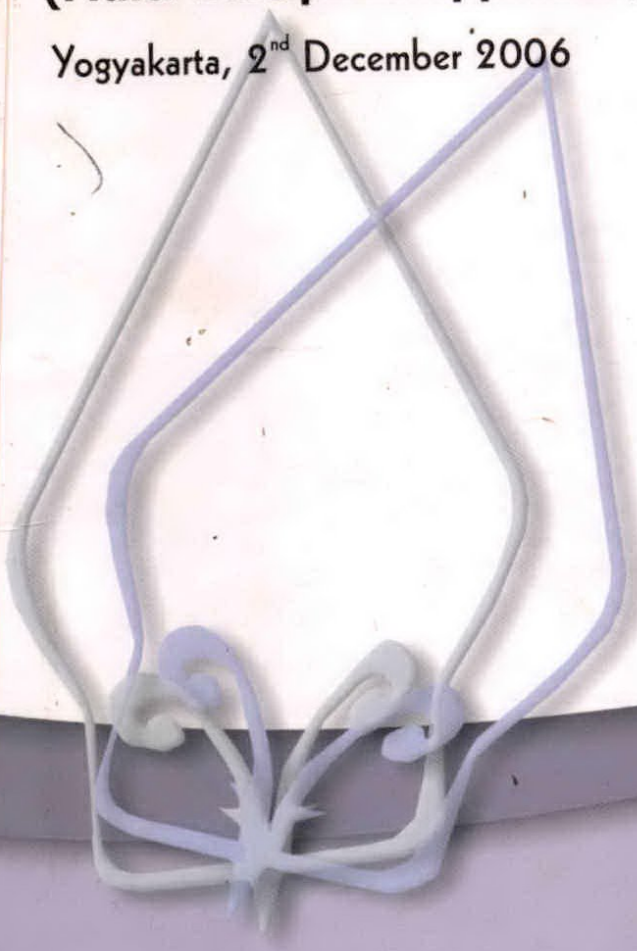


# Proceeding

## International Joint Seminar

**Muslim Countries and Development :  
Achievements, Constraints and Alternative Solutions  
(Multi-Discipline Approach)**

Yogyakarta, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2006



Organized by:



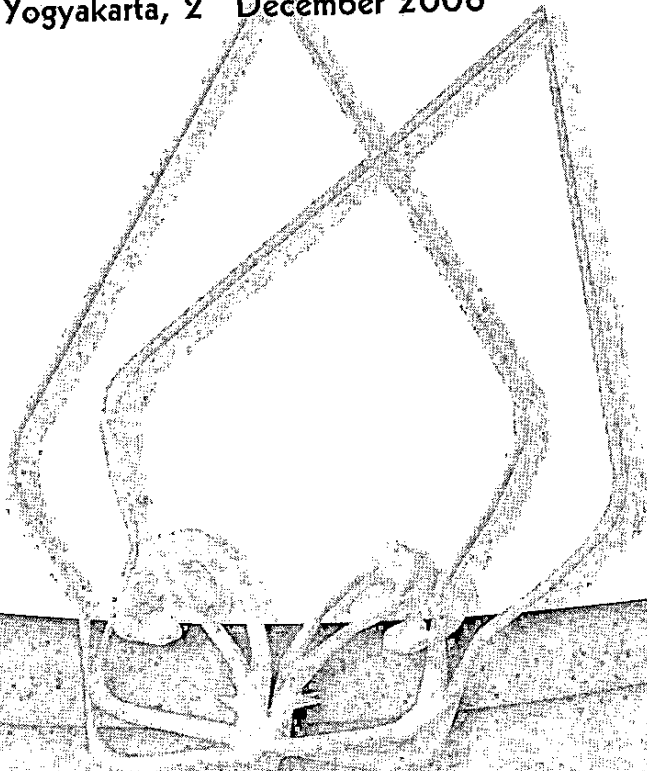
ISBN 979-3700-10-6

# Proceeding

## International Joint Seminar

**Muslim Countries and Development :  
Achievements, Constraints and Alternative Solutions  
(Multi-Discipline Approach)**

Yogyakarta, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2006



**Organized by:**



Universitas  
Muhammadiyah  
Yogyakarta



International  
Islamic  
University  
Malaysia



Education and  
Cultural Attache  
Embassy of The Republic  
Indonesia in Malaysia

**MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR OF  
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH YOGYAKARTA (UMY)**

*Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*

All praise be to Allah SWT, Lord of the world. Peace and blessings on Muhammad SAW, His Servants and Messenger.

First of all, as the rector of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY), I would like to welcome to the honourable guests, Rector, Dean of Postgraduate Studies (CPS), Dean of ISTAC, Dean of IRKHS, Deputy Deans and Head Departments from various Kulliyah, lecturers, postgraduate students of International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), and all participants in this joint seminar.

Academic cooperation between UMY and IIUM started several years ago. The cooperation between us is based on a solid foundation; both us are Islamic universities having same missions to develop Islamic society, to prepare future generations of Islamic intellectuals, and to cultivate Islamic civilization. In fact, improving academic quality and strengthening our position as the producers of knowledge and wisdom will offer a meaningful contribution to the development of Islamic civilization. This responsibility is particularly significant especially with the emergence of the information and knowledge society where value adding is mainly generated by the production and the dissemination of knowledge.

Today's joint seminar signifies our attempts to shoulder this responsibility. I am confident to say that this joint program will be a giant step for both of us to open other pathways of cooperation. I am also convinced that through strengthening our collaboration we can learn from each other and continue learning, as far as I am concerned, is a valuable ingredient to develop our universities.

I sincerely wish you good luck and success in joining this program

*Wassalamu'alaikum Wr, Wb.*

**Dr. Khoiruddin Bashori**

*Rector, UMY*



**MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR OF  
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA (IIUM)**

*Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*

In the name of Allah, the most Gracious and the most Merciful. Peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W).

First and foremost, I felt honoured, on behalf of the university to be warmly welcomed and to be given the opportunity to work hand in hand, organizing a respectable conference. Indeed, this is a great achievement towards a warmer bilateral tie between the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) after the MoU Phase.

I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks to Centre for Postgraduate Studies (CPS), Postgraduate Students Society (PGSS), contributors, paper presenters, participants and our Indonesian counterpart for making this program a prestigious event of the year.

This educational and cultural visit is not only an avenue to foster good relationship between organizations and individuals and to learn as much from one another but a step forward in promoting quality graduates who practices their ability outdoor and master his or her studies through first hand experience. The Islamic platform inculcated throughout the educational system namely the Islamization of knowledge, both theoretical and practical, will add value to our graduates. This comprehensive excellent we strived for must always be encouraged through conferences, seminars and intellectual-based activities in line with our lullaby: The journey of a thousand miles begin by a single step, the vision of centuries ahead must start from now.

My utmost support is with you always. Looking forward to a fruitful meeting.

*Ma'assalamah*

*Wassalamu'alaikum Wr, Wb.*

**Prof. Dato' Dr. Syed Arabi Iddid**

*Rector, IIUM*

**MESSAGE FROM EDUCATION AND CULTURAL ATTACHE  
EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA  
KUALA LUMPUR**

*Assalamu 'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*

All praise be to Allah SWT. This is the moment where implementation of MoU between Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) and International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) comes in the form of action by organizing this Joint Seminar. The efforts of both sides to implement the MoU are highly appreciated, especially, in the context of which both universities effort to enhance the quality of education.

Substantially, I believe that this Joint Seminar will bring many benefits. In term of the development of knowledge, it is a means for developing academic quality, for exchanging of information on academic development, as well as for constructing intellectual atmosphere at both universities. In term of international relations, both universities have taken part in increasing close relationship between Malaysia and Indonesia. RUM and UNY as well are using 'soft power' to increase bilateral relations among citizens which brings a lot of benefits for both nations.

Therefore, I hope that both RUM and UMY can make use of this program as a 'kick-off' for other programs in the future, especially in using UMY's vast networks with other Muhammadiyah Universities in various cities in Indonesia as well as IIUM's network. The support of IIUM for UMY also means a progress for IIUM and UMY. I hope such joint program will continue in future for betterment of both Indonesia and Malaysia. Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Kuala Lumpur will always support these efforts.

To our honorable guests, Rector, Dean of Postgraduate Studies (CPS), Dean of ISTAC, Dean of IRKHS, Deputy Deans and Head Departments from various Kulliyah, lecturers and students of IIUM, I warmly welcome you to Yogyakarta. I hope you enjoy your stay in the cultural city of Yogyakarta.

Finally, as the Attache of Education and Cultural, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, Kuala Lumpur, I sincerely wish you good luck *and a successful program with unforgettable memories.*

*Wabillahit Taufiq Wal Hidayah  
Wassalamu 'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.*

**M.Imran Hanafi**

*Education and Cultural Attache, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia*

## MESSAGE FROM DEAN CENTRE FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

*Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*

Praise be to Allah. May the peace and blessings of Allah be on the last prophet and messenger, our master Muhammad and on his household and companions. It is a great privilege for me to foreword this message to this wonderful event that is jointly organized by the Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) and International Islamic University (IIUM).

First and foremost I would like to record my special gratitude to management of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta for their co-operation.

In order to obtain comprehensive excellence, the Centre for Postgraduate studies has always facilitates postgraduate students of the university to achieve the highest quality in their academic work. This seminar is one of the many programs that Centre for postgraduate studies has to ensure quality graduates.

I would therefore like to thank all the participants and programme coordinators who have worked hard to realize this event.

May Allah SWT shower His blessing upon us.

*Wassalamu'alaikum Wr, Wb.*

**Prof. Dato' Dr. Wan Rafei Abdul Rahman**  
*Dean, Centre For Postgraduate Studies*

**MESSAGE FROM THE ACTIVE  
PRESIDENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS'**

*Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*

On behalf of Postgraduate Students' Society (PGSS), my gratitude and appreciation to our beloved Dean of Studies, the Embassy of Indonesia in Kuala Lumpur, Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta and the organizing committee of IIUM and the Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta for their huge success. Postgraduate Students' Society (PGSS) under the supervision of the Center for Postgraduate Studies (CPG) is pleased to host this event.

As I strongly believe that the initial stages of unity are the key to building the new generation, who will represent the future more, such programs, not only achieve the mission of our universities but to achieve the global mission and vision. Therefore, I believe today, we have to have understanding and then only we can appreciate our diverse cultures. We should acknowledge the different strengths and weaknesses through knowledge in this age of information. I am sure this joint seminar will initiate unity among the future generations along with integrating them.

Thank you,

**Mohd Nabi Habibi**

*Active President Postgraduate Students' Society (PGSS)*



## MESSAGE FROM PROGRAM DIRECTOR

*Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.*

Praise be to Allah. May the peace and blessings of Allah be on the last Prophet and Messenger, our master Muhammad and on his household and companions.

Honestly speaking, we are pleased to be trusted by Postgraduate Students' Society (PGSS) and Centre for Postgraduate Studies (CPS) to organize the programme named Educational and Cultural Visit to Yogyakarta, Indonesia. For this, We express our gratitude to the management of both PGSS and CPS. This programme is of immense value. It has the potentials to promote intellectual endeavor, develop leadership capabilities and enrich cross-cultural understandings. We sincerely believe and hope that program of this kind will be organized in a regular fashion in future.

It is a great privilege for us to play twofold role in organizing this event: *as a host* and *as guest*. In fact, this is a fascinating experience to manage this event. Since our inception here, we have found meaningful interaction of students in an interweaving of cultures into complicated, yet beautiful, embroidery of social fabric. We are proud to say that this dearly loved university has produced graduates of high quality, who are distinct from those of the local universities.

Finally, we wish to express our special thanks to Bapak M.Imran Hanafi, Education and Cultural Attache of Indonesian Embassy, Bapak Herdaus, S.H., Assistant of Immigration Attache of Indonesian Embassy, Bapak Tharian Taharuddin for their immensely valuable assistance and co-operation in making this program a success. I sincerely appreciate all local committees at Yogyakarta, the colleagues and program coordinators and committee members who worked diligently to materialize this event. We wish to pass on good wishes to the PGSS for their valuable efforts it expended for this event.

May Allah s.w.t shower His blessing upon us.

*Wassalam,*

**Nasrullah**

*Programme Director*

**Todi Kurniawan**

*Co-Programme Director*



# Contents

## SCIENCES, TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

- Surface Waves Technology in Civil Engineering Applications**  
*Sri Atmaja P. Rosyidi* 1-13
- Development of Earthquake Disaster Management  
System in Bantul: Study on Housing and Infrastructures  
Damages for Their Reconstruction**  
*Sri Atmaja P. Rosyidi, Surya Budi Lesmana, Chu-Chieh Jay Lin* 14-25
- Cardiovascular Reactivity in Normotensive Young Adults  
with Family History of Hypertension.**  
*Noriah M. Noor, Ikhlas M. Jenie, Tariq A. Razak* 26-37
- Prevention of HIV/AIDS in Malaysia in The Light of  
Qur'anic Solutions: The Role of Islamic Students of  
International Islamic University Malaysia**  
*Asmawati Muhamad, Israr Ahmad Khan* 38-54
- Fluorescence Detection of Human Premalignant and  
Malignant Lesions**  
*Torla Hasan* 55-70
- The Roles of Urban Architectural Landscape on  
Shallow Groundwater, Case Study Jakarta Indonesia**  
*Muhammad Koeswadi* 71-83
- The Islamicization of Architecture and Environmental  
Design Education: Case Study of Kulliyah  
of Architecture and Environmental Design (Kaed),  
International Islamic University Malaysia**  
*Mansor Ibrahim, Maheran Yaman* 84-97
- Moringa Oleifera Seeds for Use in Water Treatment**  
*Eman N. Ali, Suleyman A. Muyibi, Hamzah M. Salleh* 98-103
- Nursing and Its Contribution to The Health of Ummah**

## **ECONOMICS AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES**

- The Role and Pitfalls of E-Government in Indonesia**  
*Punang Amaripuja* 115-126
- Market Integration and Dynamic Linkages Between Shariah-Compliance Stocks and Interest Rate: Empirical Evidence on The Kuala Lumpur Syariah Index (Klsi) Malaysia**  
*Muchamad Imam Bintoro* 127-134
- The Emerging Issues on The Objectives and Characteristics if Islamic Accounting for Islamic Business Organizations and Its Impact in Indonesia Islamic Accounting Development**  
*Rizal Yaya* 135-150
- Relationship Between Organizational Justice in Performance Appraisal Context and Outcomes; Study on Islamic University in Yogyakarta**  
*Heru Kurnianto Tjahjono* 151-164
- Making The Development More Sustainable and The Role of Women in Islam**  
*Masyhudi Muqorobin* 165-185
- The Analysis of Exchange Rate Fluctuations and Its Implications on Indonesian Economy Empirical Evidence and Islamic Economic Perspective**  
*Imamudin Yuliadi* 186-202
- Value for Money: For The Nigerian Construction Clients**  
*Olanrewaju Abdul Lateef, Kharuddin Bdul Rashid* 203-215
- Environment Related Trade Barriers (Etbs): The Impact on Muslim Countries**  
*Noor Aini Bt. Zakaria, Rokiah Alavi* 216-225
- Toward An Ideal Balance of Islamic Banking Products Portfolio The Case of Sharia Bank Industry in Indonesia**  
*Muhammad Akhyar Adnan* 226-236
- On The Unique Mindset of A Muslim Business Entrepreneur: A Micro Developmental View**  
*Sabri Osman, Abu Sa'im Md. Shohabuddin* 237-255

<b>Inter-Regional Economic Cooperation Among The Oic Member States: Iternative Solution Towards Poverty Alleviation</b> <i>Muhammad Ghali Ahmed</i>	256-263
<b>The Impact of Rising Oil Prices on The Malaysian and Indonesian Economy</b> <i>Mohd Edil Abd. Sukor</i>	264-277
<b>Ways to Improve Economic Growth in The Third World Nation: Nigeria</b> <i>Sherif Abdul Raheem Ajiteru, El-Fatih Abdel Salam</i>	278-292
<b>Synthesising A Corporate Paradox, Profit Maximisation Versus Social Responsibility: Based on The Quran</b> <i>Siti Maimon Haji Kamso</i>	293-305
<b>POLITICS AND LEGAL ENFORCEMENT ISSUES</b>	
<b>Legal Analysis on The Concept and The Practice of Impeachment: A Comparative Study Between Abdurrahman Wahid Case and William Jefferson Clinton Case</b> <i>Iwan Satriawan</i>	307-339
<b>Perda Syariah' V.S. Constitution: The Study of The Implementation of Perda Syariah (Sharia Byelaw) in Indonesia</b> <i>M. Endriyo Susila, Yordan Gunawan</i>	340-349
<b>State and Islamic Human Development (A Political Perspective)</b> <i>Tulus Warsito</i>	350-365
<b>The Perplexed Issues of Morality and Law: The Case of Ooi Kean Thong</b> <i>Mohd Iqbal Bin Abdul Wahab, Ahmad Ibrahim</i>	366-375
<b>The Ruling on Refusal to Take An Oath in Islamic Jurisprudence and Its Application in The Shari'Ah Courts in Malaysia and Philippines</b> <i>Badruddin Paguimanan Ahmad, Arif Ali Arif Fiqh, Usul Al-Fiqh</i>	376-396
<b>Constraints and Political Developments in Afghanistan, 2001-2006: A Critical Appraisal</b> <i>Mohd Nabi Habibi, El-Fateh Abdul Salam</i>	397-406
<b>Why Does Islamization of Political Science Matter?</b> <i>Ali Muhammad, Wahabuddin Ra'ees</i>	407-413

**The Struggle for Regional Dominance in The Horn of Africa;  
Its Historical Roots and Future Scenarios**  
*Ahmed Omar Abdalleh@fahad, N.M. Yassin Ahmed Ibrahim* 414-421

**The New Roles The Muslim Plays in Competitive and Relatively  
Repressive International Relations.**  
*Dr. Bambang Cipto* 422-427

## **SOCIAL, RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL ISSUES**

**An Instrument to Measure Work Values Among  
Malaysian Workers**  
*Wan Rafaei Abdul Rahman, Che Su Binti Mustaffa* 429-434

**Islamic Education for All: An Overview of Approaches  
Taken Towards Systematizing Inclusive Islamic Education  
in Singapore**  
*Sharifah Thuraiya Su'ad Ahmad Alhabshi, Mohyani Razikin* 435-442

**Muslim Education in The Autonomous Region  
in Southern Philippines: Problems and Solutions**  
*Jeehan Daisy Jane C. Orcullo, Ismaiel Hassanein Ahmed* 443-448

**The Role of Concordance in Education:  
A Case Study of The Meaning of If and Whether**  
*Suryanto* 449-480

**Poverty, Muslim Activism, and Social Welfare The Philanthropic  
Vision of Charitable Institutions in Indonesian Islam  
(The Case Study of Muhammadiyah)**  
*Hilman Latief* 481-492

**Persuasive Communication in Preaching  
(Case Study Abdullah Gymnastiar and Ja'far Umar Thalib)**  
*Twediana Budi Hapsari, M.Si* 493-505

**School Cost Escalation : Critical Ideas for Financial Reform  
in Indonesia**  
*Nurwanto* 506-515

**Empowering The Ummah Through Non Governmental  
Organization: The Role of Muslim Intellectuals**  
*Ariff Bin Osman* 516-522

**Muslim Countries and Development "Barriers to Development:  
How to Address Illiteracy and Poverty in Comoro Islands"**



## Islamic Education for All: An Overview of Approaches Taken Towards Systematizing Inclusive Islamic Education in Singapore

Sharifah Thuraiya S. A. Alhabshi\*, Mohyani Razikin  
Institute of Education (INSTED)  
International Islamic University Malaysia

### Abstract

*This paper highlights the issues; challenges and constraints faced by the Singaporean Muslim Community in implementing a systematized Islamic Education for the entire Muslim community in Singapore. Specifically, it portrays major efforts that the Singaporean Muslims had made to enable Islamic Education to have a significant place in the society. There are six full-time Islamic schools called the Madrasah, in Singapore. All the Madrasahs faced challenges posed not only by the government but challenges that came from within the Muslim community itself. Examples of challenges faced from both angles are: a) The questioning of the reliability and competency of the graduates from these Madrasahs and the significance of their contributions towards the country's socio-economic growth and development; b) Curriculum and contents of Madrasah education, which, according to the general civic society, are not on par with the curriculum of the government schools. Madrasahs were viewed as an institution of Islamic education that train children to be well-versed in the so-called "traditional" subjects i.e. the Qur'an, Hadith, Arabic language and literature, Theology, Jurisprudence, and etc; c) Imposition of Compulsory Education (CE) in 2000, which alarmed the Islamic Schools. Another issue was education of the rest of the Muslims who were not trained in the Madrasah and those who had not attended any part time Islamic education programme organized by mosques or private institutions. The core issue to be deliberated in this paper will be the specific effort made by the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) i.e. the institutionalization of Islamic Education and revising the curriculum of the full-time Madrasahs in Singapore, which is currently in progress.*

**Keywords:** Islamic Education; Curriculum; Teaching methodology.

### Introduction

From more than a thousand four hundred years ago, the rise of Islam reaches entire human race. Today, we are witnessing the existence of Muslims all around the world. Islam is neither about politics per se, nor solely about economics. Islam is rather a wholly matter of life. Its spread centers on educating the human mind, body and soul. Throughout the years since the decease of the holy Prophet (pbuh)<sup>1</sup> the preaching of Islam has been circling the concept of methodology and interpreting contents.

---

\*Corresponding Author: shreya81@yahoo.com

The quantity, validity and reliability of its contents have never been a mind boggling issue for Muslims. Hence, today, when we talk about irrelevance of the teaching of Islam to that of the modern world and generation, we are talking about the irrelevance of teaching or preaching methodology, not about the teaching or preaching contents. Today, in every part of the world, Muslims live either as the majority or minority of the nation. As environment varies from one nation to another, teaching methodology varies from one situation to another. At any circumstances, Islam suits in. The question is how the Muslims tackle the circumstances right. In this paper, we shall highlight the circumstances Muslims in Singapore face in their effort to educating the Muslims and measures they have taken to overcome those circumstances.

### **Background Information of Islamic Schools in Singapore**

Just like the other countries in the Malay World<sup>2</sup>, Islam came through various means – mainly facilitated by traders – as early as the 18<sup>th</sup> century C.E. The ulema<sup>3</sup> were usually the pioneers who initiated the teaching of Qur'an through small classes and eventually schools, some of which are still prominent today. There were the Malay schools and religious classes conducted in mosques and houses. It is not meant here to elaborate further on the history of the early settlement of the ulema' and the early schools in Singapore<sup>4</sup>. To mention that Islamic schools in Singapore are a historical preservation from the ulema' would suffice as a preamble of this chapter.

The early Malay schools were set up by the so-called religious Malay teachers where children attending were taught to read and understand the messages of the holy Qur'an. Malay Language was seldom taught<sup>5</sup>. Later in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, new Islamic schools called madrasahs emerged where Islamic, Malay and Arabic were taught. Whilst Malay Schools extinct to make way for the national schools, Madrasahs co-exist. Today, there are six full-time Madrasahs registered with the Singapore Ministry of Education. English, Mathematics and Science are taught in the Madrasahs to keep them on par with the national system.

The Muslims in Singapore constituted about 16% of the population. The six Madrasahs are for sure insufficient to cater all Muslim children and provide them with proper Islamic education. Thus, apart from these Madrasahs, there are 27 mosques that provide part-time Madrasah for children who attended full-time national schools. Some of the remaining Muslim children would enroll for part-time Islamic education in small private institutions set up by individuals.

#### **Challenges faced:**

##### **The Madrasah**

One of the main challenges faced by the Madrasah is the questioning of the reliability and competency of their graduates and the significance of their contributions towards the country's socio-economic growth and development<sup>6</sup>. As described by the Singapore Islamic Religious Council (MUIS)<sup>7</sup>, the madrasahs are intended to produce the religious elites to lead the community on religious

matters<sup>8</sup>. This posts a question of the oversupplying of Muslim scholars. Another question is regarding the rest of the graduates who do not become scholars and find difficulties in getting jobs. Madrasahs were viewed as an institution of Islamic education that train children to be well-versed in the so-called "traditional" subjects i.e. the Qur'an, Hadith, Arabic language and literature, Theology, Jurisprudence, and etc. This curriculum and contents of Madrasah education, according to the general civic society, are not on par with the curriculum of the national schools. Despite recognizing that these Madrasah have added English Language, Mathematics and Science in the curriculum, the increasing number of Madrasah dropouts further complicated the situation<sup>9</sup>. Madrasahs were also alarmed by the decision to impose Compulsory Education (CE) which was initiated in 2000<sup>10</sup>.

### 1- Part-time Madrasah in mosques

The part-time Madrasahs conducted in some of the mosques are adopting the system of the national schools in terms of having examination at the middle and end of each year. In 1992, the mosque Madrasah PSLE<sup>11</sup> was introduced. Consequently, the children and teenagers attending part-time Madrasah in mosques faced tensed schooling life as they complained about the burden of having to take two examinations at a time i.e.; national school examination as well as Madrasah examination. The data describing the number of teenagers attending part-time Madrasah as of 2004 showed a percentage of 17% excluding those attending full-time Madrasah<sup>12</sup>. Deducting 4% children attending full time Madrasah, the rest 79% of Muslim teenagers were not attending any formal Madrasah. This posts a challenge on the approach taken by the Mosque Madrasahs to make the part-time Islamic School less burden and appealing to modern Muslim teenagers.

Using the Malay language as the medium of instruction, the mosque Madrasahs are also challenged by the fact that they place less focus on non-Malay Muslim children i.e. the Indian Muslims and children of the newly converted Muslims who are not able to converse and understand the Malay language. The Muslim Converts' Association of Singapore (Darul Arqam) stated that the average number of people converted to Islam is 500 per annum since the 1990s<sup>13</sup>. The children of these converts need to be equally provided with Islamic education as other Muslim children who are mostly Malays.

### 2- Social problems

The data provided by the Research and Statistics unit of the Singapore Subordinate Courts summarized the profile of Beyond Parental Control juveniles where most cases involved Muslims. In 2002, 54.1% of the cases were inflicted by Muslim teenagers mostly of age between 13 and 15 years. The Buddhists and Taoists came next but only with the percentage of 21.1% of the BPC juveniles<sup>14</sup>. Similar situation also prevails to drug addiction, divorce and teenage abortion rates. This point would suffice to describe the widespread awareness by most leading Muslim organizations in Singapore to help improve the situation. One of the moves is the implementation of Islamic education system that aims at every individual Muslim. Social problems are social responsibility and thus education

should not be restricted to children and teenagers but need to be expanded to parents and adults as well.

### Measures Taken

Challenges faced by Madrasah were taken up by every responsible member of the Muslim society. MUIS as the leading organization has taken up measures to improve the situation by providing professional training for Madrasah teachers. The programme successfully made more of the teachers qualified and well trained to prepare the students for the national challenge. At the same time, the Madrasah Strategic Unit of MUIS has embarked on a curriculum development project to re-look into the contents of Madrasah curriculum so as to ensure its relevance to students' experience in the modern world as well as to enhance thinking skills among Madrasah students<sup>15</sup>.

The other more serious challenges – the competency of the mosque Madrasahs and the tackling of the rest of Muslims who had never gone through any formal Islamic education system – were taken up by MUIS through its Islamic Education Strategic Unit, headed by Sharifah Farah Syed Mahmood Aljunied. The unit has developed a curriculum called the Singapore Islamic Education System (SIES), which (as they coined it) serves to prepare Muslims of different age groups to understand, appreciate and practice Islam better in the light of present and future challenges. So far, the IESU has developed programmes that aim to suit the hearts of the young ones and the teenagers. Programmes for primary school students and youths have recently been launched. The SIES places more emphasis on teaching methodology where teachers are trained for the programme and external expert bodies are consulted to design the programme that harmonizes with the hearts of the recipients<sup>16</sup>.

Below are some of the contents of the SIES conceptual framework developed by the Islamic Education Strategic Unit, MUIS<sup>17</sup>.

### The Singapore Islamic Education System: A Conceptual Framework

The curriculum that we aspire is that which is founded on the understanding that Islam is a religion that enjoins goodness to humanity, where Muslims are active contributors to the development and upliftment of human civilization. It upholds justice and brotherhood. An education that develops a Muslim intellectually, spiritually and emotionally. One that brings him/her closer to his/her Creator and develops him/her into a responsible social being. This however is not possible without dynamic knowledge and the internalization of Islamic values and moral teachings. It encourages learning and development, consistent with the teachings of Islam; an education that is relevant to its time and era and integrates knowledge, life and social skills, so as to generate responsible members of the community, nation and the world.

### Core Values, Learning Principles

The curriculum design and approach must be one that is inspiring, exciting and attractive to the learners, and also relevant to the needs of the time. Some elements of the design are as follows:



**A- Paradigm of discovery:** Wonder, Plan, Investigate, Reflect, Share, Act.

**B- Values/Character Education:** Beliefs, Duties and Responsibilities, Virtues, Prohibitions Manners, Feelings, Attitudes, Life and Literacy Skills.

**C- Powerful Ideas:** God, The World & Me, Knowing Yourself, Becoming a Moral Person, Understanding and Being Understood, Getting along with Others, A Sense of Belonging, Drawing Strength from the Past, Islam for All Times & Places, Caring for Allah's Creation, Facing the Challenge, Making a Difference, Taking the Lead.

**D- Effective teaching and Learning:** Meaningful, Integrative, Values-based, Challenging, and Active.

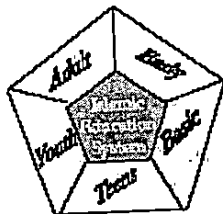
**E- Instruction:** Higher-order Thinking, Deep Knowledge, Substantive Conversations, Real-World Connections.

**F- Assessment:** Organisation of Materials, Consideration of Alternatives, Quality of Content and Process, Elaborated Communication, Connections to Society and the World, Audience, Beyond the Classroom.

The approach is one that includes the inculcation (thinking) of values, modeling (seeing) these values so that children can see it in practice and facilitate (doing) it by giving the children opportunities to personally engage in the moral process – thinking, decision making and action vis-à-vis important moral issues. This is the intuitive instructional model proposed by the Qur'an and followed by the earlier generations of Muslim scholars:

### Comprehensive Islamic Education Programmes

Core Programmes for Islamic Education System, Singapore:



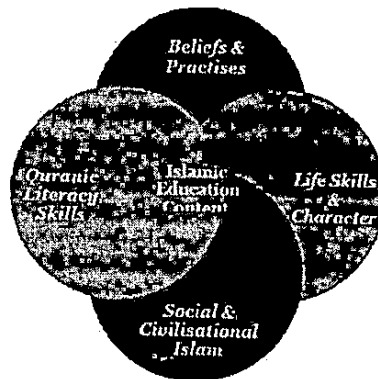
### Desired Outcomes

The curriculum aims to produce Muslims who are:

- Moral individuals, responsible towards their Creator and to all His creations.
- Imbued with Taqwa, self-monitored (muraqabah) and conscientious.
- Active and responsible partners in human endeavours participating in community and nation building, and as global citizens.
- Able to explain and communicate with others the teachings of Islam in an informed and logical manner.
- Practicing Muslims, committed to the betterment of human life.

### Content & Approach

The curriculum aims to provide rich and enriching learning experiences. One that encourages learning and experiential learning.



The above content would be taught using the following approaches:

- a. Holistic development and learning (age appropriate and thematic)
- b. Integrated learning (religious and life skills – Quran and Sunnah as the anchor)
- c. Value-based learning (moral and character building)
- d. Active learning (experiential and hands on)
- e. Interactive learning (participation and discussions)
- f. Self-directed and Life long learning (independent, reflective, critical and on-going).

However, most crucial is the inculcation of the following elements in all lessons and activities:

- a. Inculcation (Thinking)
- b. Modelling (Seeing)
- c. Facilitation (Doing)
- d. Development using the following approach:

- i. Wonder
- ii. Plan
- iii. Investigate
- iv. Reflect
- v. Share.
- vi. Act

#### **Medium of Instruction**

The medium of instruction for all IE programmes (except Quranic literacy skills which will be in Arabic) would be English. This is to ensure that it would be able to reach out to Muslims of all Races, which is in line with Islam's position as universal religion. However, due consideration shall be given should the need arise for the programme to be translated into other languages.

### Assessment

Students will be assessed using a variety of assessment tools that may include projects, portfolios, assignments, quizzes, checklists and others. Programmes are not assessed through examinations as the purpose of IE programmes is to nurture practicing muslims who understand and appreciate the beauty of the teachings of Islam.

### Conclusion

The Singapore experience in facing and responding the challenges in implementing Islamic education for the entire Muslim society prompts us to conclude that being proactive as opposed to reactive towards challenges is a must for every society to prosper. We have the right to say that there is nothing wrong with the contents of the Qur'an but we might be wrong when choosing the contents to be preached at the right time and to the right audience. We have the right to defend the Quranic methodology of teaching but we might be wrong when using the appropriate methodology at the right time, and to the right audience. When we are challenged, we should re-look into our weaknesses, rather than being defensive of our own weaknesses. Only that we accept the reality of our weakness then we can improve. Being proactive may take time, but at least we are confident that we are on the right track.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Peace be upon him

<sup>2</sup> Malay World is a commonly used term synonymous to Malay Archipelago or 'Nusantara' in Malay. See Lily Zubaidah Rahim, 'The Singapore Dilemma' (1998), New York, Oxford University Press.

<sup>3</sup> Ulama refers to the educated class of Muslim scholars engaged in the several fields of Islamic studies. They are best known as the arbiters of shari'a law. While the ulama are well versed in jurisprudence, some of them also go on to specialize in other sciences, such as philosophy, dialectical theology or Quranic hermeneutics. The fields studied, and the importance given to them, will vary from tradition to tradition, or even from seminary to seminary. Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulama>

<sup>4</sup> For further readings on history of Islamic education and ulama in the Malay world, see Dr. Haji Abdullah Ishak's *Islam di Nusantara* (Islam in the Malay Archipelago) (1990), Malaysia, Al-Rahmaniah. See also <http://www.ibnyahya.com/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://library.thinkquest.org/12405/social.htm>

<sup>6</sup> This challenge was felt after the issue of Compulsory Education was first raised by the then Singapore Prime Minister, Mr. Goh Chok Tong. See <http://www.gov.sg/nd/ND00.htm> for the Prime Minister's National Day Rally 2000 Speech, under the sub-topic 'Compulsory Education'.

<sup>7</sup> Established in 1968 when the Administration of Muslim Law Act (AMLA) came into effect, MUIS is responsible for the promotion of religious, social, educational, economic and cultural activities in accordance with the principles and traditions of Islam as enshrined in the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah. Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MUIS>. Following

the amendments of AMLA in 1990, the structure and organization of the Madrasahs came under the administration of MUIS. See Zuraidah Ibrahim, *Muslims in Singapore: A Shared Vision* (1994), Singapore, MUIS, pp.72-74

- <sup>8</sup> <http://www.muis.gov.sg/cms/services/Madrasahs.aspx?id=205>
- <sup>9</sup> Research findings as of 1999 described dropout rate at 65% who did not complete secondary four, low pass rates for the English, Mathematics and Science, and the insufficient level of critical thinking imbued in Madrasah students. Source: Nuryani Suneh, *Perceptions on Madrasah Education: Parents, Students, Educators and the State* (2002/2003), Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore (Unpublished thesis).
- <sup>10</sup> Wiki: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compulsory\\_education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compulsory_education)
- <sup>11</sup> The mosque Madrasahs are replicating the national Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) – a national examination taken by all primary school students in Singapore near the end of the sixth year, before they leave for secondary school. The national PSLE is administered by the Ministry of Education; which tests the English language, mother tongue languages (Chinese, Malay, or Tamil), mathematics and science. The mosque Madrasahs PSLE (Peperiksaan Bersama Madrasah Masjid) was administered by MUIS with subjects taught in the mosque Madrasahs i.e. Arabic Language, Jawi writing, Diyanah (religious studies), and Sirah (History of Prophet Muhammad pbuh). Source for PSLE: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PSLE>
- <sup>12</sup> [www.rsi.sg/malay/titiktolak/archive/2004/2/.html](http://www.rsi.sg/malay/titiktolak/archive/2004/2/.html)
- <sup>13</sup> <http://straitstimes.asia1.com.sg/singapore/story/0,4386,221055,00.html>
- <sup>14</sup> [http://www.subcourts.gov.sg/research\\_bulletin.htm](http://www.subcourts.gov.sg/research_bulletin.htm)
- <sup>15</sup> Information obtained from Mr. Mohamed Redzuan bin Salleh, Curriculum Development Officer for Madrasah Strategic Unit, MUIS. See also <http://www.muis.gov.sg/cms/services/Madrasahs.aspx?id=2198>
- <sup>16</sup> Information obtained via personal meeting with Ms. Sharifah Farah S. M. Aljunied, Acting Head, Islamic Education Strategic Unit, MUIS. See also <http://www.muis.gov.sg/cms/services/Islamic.aspx?id=117>
- <sup>17</sup> Full concept paper can be obtained at [http://www.muis.gov.sg/cms/uploadedFiles/CorporateGOV/Islamic\\_Education/SIESweb.pdf](http://www.muis.gov.sg/cms/uploadedFiles/CorporateGOV/Islamic_Education/SIESweb.pdf)