The Emergence of Elite Islamic Schools in Contemporary Indonesia:
# A Case Study of Al Azhar Islamic School

By

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Abstract

This study addresses the phenomenon of elite Islamic schools in Indonesia by focusing on Al Azhar Islamic High School in Jakarta. Taking as its starting point the evolution and expansion of Islamic educational institutions in contemporary Indonesia, particularly since the 1970s, it examines the emergence of elite Islamic schools and identifies the unique characteristics that attract many urban, middle-class Muslims to send their children to these schools. In addition, this study attempts to address the lack of research on the history of Islamic education in Indonesia between the years 1970 and 2000. A review of past studies demonstrates that this period has not been critically examined enough.

In looking at the specific example of Al Azhar Islamic High School, an evaluative case study and ethnographic techniques were employed. Interviews, observations, and fieldnotes served as primary resources. As the first elite Islamic school ever founded, it has distinguished itself as a pioneer in providing educational service especially to the urban Muslim society in Jakarta. My central research question was whether the changes that had occurred in the Islamic educational system following the introduction of elite or excellence-oriented schools had really lived up to expectations. More specifically, I inquired into the strengths and weaknesses of elite Islamic schools faced with the task of meeting ongoing and complex challenges in this era of globalization, while at the same time maintaining Islamic teachings and practices.

However, this study found that there is still a gap between the ideals of the elite Islamic school and its ability to pursue its stated goals of education. The lack of human resources and poor communications between school community and government show that these schools have not yet achieved the highest quality standards. The study also reveals that the school has to adopt policies to promote transparency in the organizational and administrative spheres, openness to non-Muslims, and accessibility to other sections of society.

This research makes a contribution to the fields of school reform and school effectiveness. Moreover, the study may also have implications for other social and religious contexts.

Résumé

Cette étude adresse le phénomène des écoles islamiques d'élite en Indonésie en focalisant sur l'école islamique secondaire Al Azhar à Jakarta. Partant de l'évolution et l'expansion des institutions éducationnelles islamiques en Indonésie contemporaine, particulièrement depuis les années 70, elle examine la montée des écoles islamiques d'élite et identifie les caractéristiques uniques qui poussent plusieurs musulmans urbains de classe moyenne à envoyer leurs enfants à ces écoles. De plus, cette étude tend à adresser le manque de recherche sur l'histoire de l'éducation musulmane en Indonésie entre les années 1970 et 2000. Un examen des études existantes à ce sujet montre que cette période n'a pas été suffisamment scrutée.

Pour examiner l'exemple spécifique de l'école islamique secondaire Al Azhar, une étude de cas et des techniques ethnographiques ont été utilisées. Des entrevues, des observations et des notes pratiques ont servis comme ressources primaires. La première école islamique d'élite établie, elle s'est distinguée en tant que pionnière en fournissant un service éducationnel spécialement conçu pour la société urbaine musulmane de Jakarta. Ma question de recherche fondamentale cherchait à savoir si les changements qui s'étaient produits dans le système d'éducation islamique suivant la venue d'écoles d'élite ou d'écoles qui tendent vers l'excellence avaient vraiment vécus jusqu'aux espérances. Plus spécifiquement, j'ai examiné les forces et les faiblesses des écoles islamiques d'élite en présence de la tâche d'être au niveau des défis complexes en cours dans cette ère de globalisation, tout en pouvant maintenir des enseignements et des pratiques islamiques.

Par contre, cette étude a constaté que sa capacité de poursuivre ses objectifs éducatifs ne vit pas aux espérances de l'école islamique d'élite. Le manque de ressources humaines et la mauvaise communication entre communauté écolière et gouvernement démontrent que ces écoles n'ont pas encore atteint les plus hauts degrés de qualité. L'étude montre également que l'école doit adopter des politiques pour pouvoir favoriser la transparence dans les sphères d'organisation et administratives, la franchise aux non musulmans, et l'accessibilité à d'autres sections de la société.

Cette recherche contribue aux domaines de la réforme et de l'efficacité scolaires. D'ailleurs, elle étude peut également avoir des implications dans d'autres contextes sociaux et religieux.

Prologue
In Memory of Indonesian Tsunami Victims

On December 26, 2004, Indonesian students in Montreal held a farewell gathering for Susy Ricciardelli, a much appreciated staff member of the IAIN Indonesia Social Equity Project at McGill University. More than 20 guests arrived, but the occasion became less about saying farewells and good-byes; instead we were glued to the poignant images (on the television screen) of the tsunami disaster that had destroyed Aceh, Indonesia. What should have been a festive day became one of ineffable shock and contemplation, as we were dumbfounded by the sheer magnitude and pervasive scale of the destruction. Canada is on the other side of the globe from Aceh, but at that moment, perhaps, we all tried our best, through the images of the news, to remind ourselves that we were Indonesians, that the people who were dying were our people and that we suffered because of that.

The Indonesian Students' Association (PERMIKA) responded quickly. We launched an "Indonesia Mourns" campaign symbolized by a black poppy as the icon of the campaign. We were on the streets of Montreal and at mourning booths on campus, collecting donations and informing others of this human tragedy. We also worked together with the United Muslim Student Association (UMSA) and organized a fundraising dinner at Concordia University. From the number of guests that attended and the amount of donations collected that night, the event was a success.

The earthquake and subsequent tsunami on December 26th 2004 in Indonesia was a tragedy in human history. In Indonesia alone, the number of dead and missing approached 219,000, with another 500,000 homeless. It caused not only loss of human life, but also severe physical damage: 1.3 million homes and buildings, 8 ports and 4 fuel depots, 85% of the water and 92% of the sanitation system, 120 km of roads and 18 bridges were destroyed (cited from electronic Indonesian news). In the field of education, 1,500 schools in Indonesia were damaged or destroyed in the tsunami, while 150,000 students lost classrooms and schools. Even worse, 2,500 teachers and staff members of schools and universities died, while 40,900 students lost their lives (Christian Children's Fund, Nov, 3, 2005).

Across Aceh, UNICEF has been shipping in tons of educational materials, including 2,000 school tents, 2,000 school-in-a-box kits (each containing learning supplies for 50 students) and 2,000 recreation kits (each with sports and games for 50 children). These supplies will support the more than 100,000 school-children and 4,000 teachers in the affected areas of Aceh. UNICEF is also assisting the Indonesian government with the recruitment and training of 2,000 new teachers and the emotional recovery of teachers who survived the tsunami. According to authorities in Aceh, 1,592 teachers are dead or missing.

In the prologue to this thesis I wanted to offer both the context within which the study was finalized, and also of course pay tribute to the people of Indonesia. I cannot end this thesis without taking us back to the horrific events of 2004 and more recently 2006. My study of one elite Islamic school is not going to change the world. Nonetheless I hope that it offers up something of a sense of the importance of understanding the way schools run.

There is no better way of helping children regain some normalcy than to return to school. "A learning environment allows children to be children again; it gives them a friendly space to escape from the nightmare they have endured. When a school opens in a disaster zone, everyone feels a sense of hope, including parents" (Bellamy, UNICEF-Aid/Disasters News, January 15, 2005). Indeed, getting and keeping children in school is essential not only in emergencies, but to ensure a better quality of life for all children. This disaster also represented a setback to countries that were making good progress with providing quality basic education for all children. Getting children back to school rapidly will minimize this setback.

I hope my work will contribute the ongoing efforts at re-managing and rebuilding schooling in Aceh.

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Glossary & Acronyms

AAIS: Al Azhar Islamic School

Abangan: Sociological term used to denote an Indonesian cultural group of Central Java. According to Clifford Geertz, the *abangan* are superficial Muslims who follow religious practices popular before the arrival of Islam and consisting of Old Javanese, Hindu, and Buddhist forms. Most of them nominally identify themselves as Muslim.

Ablution: Cleaning of some part of the body (face, hand, head, ear and feet) with water before praying

ADIA: Akademi Dinas Ilmu Agama (The Official Academy of Religious Knowledge)

Al-Irsyad: Union for Reformation and Guidance

Bandongan: A method of teaching that motivates students to learn independently. The *kyai* or teacher reads a book (usually in Arabic), translates, and explains it generally in front of students. The students take notes and are allowed to ask questions and more detailed explanation from the *kyai* or teacher.

Bhinneka Tunggal Ika: Indonesia's national slogan (Unity in Diversity)

Da'wah: Islamic term from Arabic, denoting the activity of renewing the faith of individuals and groups of people who already profess the religion by generally propagating the faith.

Depag: Departemen Agama (Ministry of Religious Affairs, MORA)

Depdiknas: Departemen Pendidikan Nasional (Ministry of National Education, MONE)

IAIN: Institut Agama Islam Negeri (State Institute of Islamic Studies)

IKIP: Institut Ilmu Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (Institute for Teachers' Training and Education)

Imam-khatib: Leader of prayer and preacher.

IPB: Institut Pertanian Bogor (Bogor Institute of Agriculture)

ITB: Institut Teknologi Bandung (Bandung Institute of Technology)

Jilbab or hijab: a dress worn by women and equipped with long sleeves and skirt and a covering their hair.

JIS: Jakarta International School

Kitab kuning: Any book written by a classical or medieval Islamic scholar used in *pesantren* teaching

KNPI: Komite National Pemuda Indonesia (The National Committee of Indonesian Youth)

Kyai: A religious leader (Indonesian Islam). A *pesantren* is usually led by a *kyai*, but not every *kyai* leads a *pesantren*

Madrasah: (Arabic) literally means school. In Indonesia, it is an Islamic school with the 'Western' methodologies of instruction and organization often adding a small or larger percentage of 'secular' knowledge.

Madrasah Diniyah: Islamic school that concentrates on teaching religion

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah: Elementary level Islamic school

Madrasah Tsanawiyah: Junior secondary level Islamic school

Madrasah Aliyah: Senior Secondary level Islamic school

Masyumi: Indonesian acronym for Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia (the Consultative Council for Indonesian Muslims). The primary Muslim political party of the 1950s, it was outlawed in 1960 for the association of its leadership with an armed uprising against the Soekarno government.

Muhammadiyah: (Arabic, the Way of Muhammad) is a reformist Muslim organization and one of the most important Muslim organizations involved in educational activities.

NU: Nahdlatul Ulama, the largest traditionalist Muslim organization

UI: Universitas Indonesia (University of Indonesia)

UUSPN: Undang-undang Sistem Pendidikan National (National Education System Act/NESA)

Orde Baru: (New Order) is the official Indonesian designation for the period beginning in 1965 with an alleged Communist coup and ending with the downfall in 1998 of Soeharto, who was president throughout the entire period.

Pancasila: The five principles of Indonesian state ideology:1. Belief in One; 2. Humanity; 3. The unity of Indonesia; 4. Representation based on People's sovereignty; 5. Social Justice.

Pan-Islamism: Spirit of world-wide Islamic union

PAN: Partai Amanat National (National Mandate Party)

PKS: Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (Social Justice Party)

PPP: Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party)

Pengajian: Studying/learning (the word *pengajian* or *ngaji* is used to express the process of learning and reading the Quran and other Islamic knowledge).

Penghulu: Religious officials entrusted with the performance of marriages as well as their dissolution and the calculation of inheritance, etc.

Persyarikatan Ulama: Union of Religious Scholars

Pesantren: Traditional religious boarding school or traditional Islamic educational institution originally popular in Java, although now found all over Indonesia. There is a similar institution in West Sumatra known as the *Surau* (where its main function is actually as a place for prayer) and in Aceh known as *rangkang*.

Priyayi : Aristocrat

PTAIN: Perguruan Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri (The State Higher Education of Islamic Studies)

SI: Sarekat Islam (Islamic Union)

Sekolah: School

Sekolah Negeri: Public School

SMU: Sekolah Menengah Umum (general high school/senior secondary school)

SMUN: Sekolah Menengah Umum Negeri (public general high school/senior secondary school)

SMUI Al Azhar: Sekolah Menengah Umum Islam Al Azhar (Islamic High School of Al Azhar)

Sorogan: A method of teaching that urges/invites student to learn and understand thoughts and concepts in details. *Sorogan* helps students to understand the lesson more deeply than is achieved through *bandongan.*

SPG: Sekolah Pendidikan Guru (School of Teacher Training) equivalent with SMU level.

SPMB: Sistem Penerimaan Mahasiswa Baru (The Acceptance System of New University Students)

Tadarrus: Group recitation of the Quran in turn

Tawhid: The theological concept of the unity of God

UIN: Universitas Islam Negeri (State Islamic University)

Ulema: Muslim scholars

Ummat or ummah: Muslim community

UUSPN: Undang-undang Sistem Pendidikan National (National Educational System Act, NESA)

YPI Al Azhar: Yayasan Pesantren Islam Al Azhar (the Foundation of Al Azhar Islamic Boarding School).

Yayasan Shifa Budi: The Foundation of Shifa Budi

Chapter 1
Islamic Education in Indonesia: Why and How this Study was Created

1. Introduction

This thesis seeks to explore the phenomenon of elite Islamic schools emerging in contemporary Indonesia. This study presents the evolution and expansion of Islamic education, which has radically transformed the educational landscape in Indonesia from the 1970s until recently. A review of past studies demonstrates that the modern period 1970-2000 has received little critical examination. This study attempts to address this gap, as the period under study shows a dramatic shift in educational thinking. An evaluative case study approach and ethnographic techniques are utilized to portray the unique educational characteristics and culture of a particular elite Islamic school, i.e, Al Azhar Islamic School.
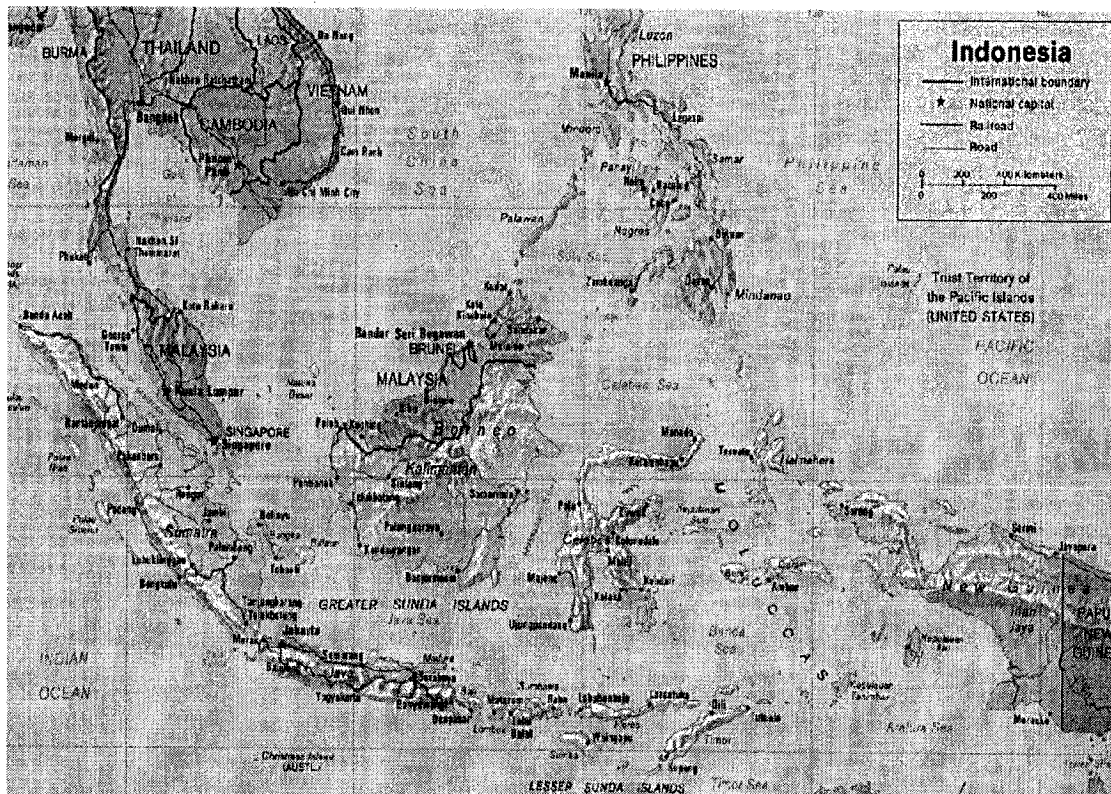
2. Background of the Study

Over the past two decades, elite Islamic schools have come to form an important component of the Islamicization effort in Indonesia. Since the 1990s, many of these institutions have been recognized as leaders in Islamic education. This new type of school was enthusiastically embraced from the start by the Muslim community, especially the middle and upper classes. It was not long before the schools acquired a reputation for "excellence", due to their stringent admission standards, highly qualified teachers, and extensive and outstanding educational facilities such as modern libraries, laboratories, workshops, computers, mosques, and sports facilities. They offer a greater variety of subjects and longer hours of instruction compared to other schools, as well as a curriculum which balances secular and religious subjects. Furthermore, these institutions have been producing students who compare well academically with students in other types of Islamic schools, such as *madrasahs* and *pesantrens*. Some of them could even be considered to be on equal footing with top schools in the general public school system administered by the Departemen Pendidikan Nasional (Ministry of National Education, MONE) and other private schools, especially Catholic and Protestant ones (Azra, 2000).

There are several reasons why the Indonesian Muslim middle and upper classes have embraced the elite Islamic schools. First of all, few among them have been satisfied with the general public school system which pays less attention to religious education. Nor have they ever shown interest in other Islamic schools (*madrasah* and *pesantren*), due these schools' neglect of secular subjects; a failing that has been remedied by elite Islamic schools. Secondly, the Muslim community judges a school's quality by the academic achievement of its students and their acceptance into preferred schools at the next level. Both of these factors are considered important indicators of the quality of the school, and the elite Islamic schools have fared relatively well in these two areas. Thirdly, the emergence of the elite Islamic schools is a response to increased competition in the wake of globalization. Muslim parents worry that children who study in general public schools cannot compete with the graduates of private schools – Catholic and Protestant ones especially – which are purported to have a far superior academic

tradition compared to Muslim schools. The fourth reason is the concern felt within the Muslim community over the negative impact of globalization, especially the promotion of new lifestyles and modes of behaviour that contradict religious values, such as permissiveness, violence, drug and alcohol use, and a redefining of sexual mores. These factors have challenged the Muslim community to establish elite Islamic schools and motivated Muslim parents to enroll their children in such schools (Azra, 2000; Fachruddin, 1998).

The emergence of elite Islamic schools is, therefore, partly a search for an alternative and partly an effort to provide high quality education. The fact remains, however, that these schools are expensive. Thus, only certain people can afford them, whereas in fact, the majority of Muslim families are still poor. The dilemma is how elite Islamic school organizers can offer good facilities and quality education without imposing too great a financial burden on parents – all of whom have a right to expect that their children will receive a good education. Access to these schools is thus a key concern.

3. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study is to understand why elite Islamic schools have emerged in Indonesia and how these schools have created an environment that achieves a balance between academic performance, personal behavior, and religious concerns. This study intends to examine the historical, socio-economic, and political factors that have influenced the emergence of elite Islamic schools in Indonesia. By exploring their strengths and weaknesses from an educational perspective, my study can assist in the improvement of the Islamic educational system in Indonesia. Moreover, based on its findings, the study will propose that a new paradigm of Islamic school be considered by the Muslim community in order to meet the needs of parents and to face global competition. Indeed, the moral and academic development of elite Islamic schools will have a broad impact on the future, not only of the Indonesian Muslim community, but also that of Indonesia as a whole.

4. Focus of the Study

This study revolves around three major related questions:

1) How did the elite Islamic schools evolve and expand?

2) What events contributed to the evolution and expansion of these schools?

3) How do these schools work in terms of organization and leadership, curriculum and instruction, teaching-learning methods, and parents' and students' relations with teachers?

These research questions are based on the following assumption about educational change in contemporary Indonesia. Indonesian Muslims are seeking alternative education methods which balance secular and religious concerns, while providing an atmosphere conducive to academic excellence. Furthermore, many Indonesians seek to counter the encroaching values associated with globalization, while at the same time teaching the skills required to compete on the world market.

I interweave historical analysis with treatment of the theories, policies and practices of school reform, around a central focus on improving the Islamic education system. I am interested in exploring how understandings of the practice and development of school reform in the West can be used in relation to Islamic school reform in Indonesia. I also look at the culture of the school, its essential features, its general character, and the values that define its curricular goals and institutional structures. In addition, this study will provide insight into the underlying model of development for elite Islamic schools in Indonesia, and will discuss the implications for educational improvement and quality.

5. Situating the Researcher

I come to this research with my own experiences; not only was I born in Indonesia, but I also lived there and was educated for some years in that nation's Islamic educational institutions. The first twelve years of my schooling – including six years at the elementary level and six years at the secondary level – constitute my direct experience in the field of education under the New Order governments.[1] During these formative years I studied in a *madrasah* (Islamic school). My higher educational experience – I graduated from the State Institute for Islamic Studies in

Jakarta, Indonesia – coincided with the second decade of the New Order government (1975-1985). Since that time I have had the opportunity to witness the debate between government leaders, Muslim leaders and the Muslim community over establishing a new policy on Islamic education. And at the same time there has been increasing development of elite Islamic schools, especially in the cities and urban areas of Indonesia and growing enthusiasm on the part of parents from the middle and upper-classes to send their children to such Islamic schools. As a lecturer who teaches prospective teachers in Islamic schools and general schools, I am in a unique position to understand the management of such schools and their problems. Finally, I am a mother of two children, both of whom studied at one of these Islamic schools at the junior and secondary levels. Why did I decide to send them to an Islamic school? One of the principal reasons was because they had spent a large part of their school life being educated in a Montreal elementary school. This happened because I came to Montreal, for the first time, in July 1991 to do a Masters degree at the Institute of Islamic studies. Being far from my family, my husband and children, was emotionally very difficult for me. Therefore, my husband and I decided to move our family to Montreal in 1992. In Montreal, my children went to St. Patrick School which was, at that time, under the administration of the Catholic Montreal School Board. My husband, in turn, began his Masters program at Concordia University in the Department of Religion in 1993. While my husband and I remained parents who were actively involved in their children's education and upbringing, our own coursework and thesis writing kept us busy. This meant that we had less time to devote to matters such as the children's religious education and the development of formal linguistic skills in Bahasa Indonesia. In July 1997, when both my husband and I had finished our degrees, our family left Montreal to return to Indonesia. I went back to my previous teaching position at the Faculty of Education, State Islamic University while my husband started to work at the University of Paramadina, Jakarta. I had a difficult time finding a good school for my children – my son was going to Grade 6 and my daughter, Grade 4. Safe and reliable transportation, as well as a supportive social and academic environment in school were some of my main concerns. One Islamic private school would not accept my son into Grade 6 directly. The principal said,

"Your son will face difficulties because in Grade 6, students will take the national examinations and your son doesn't know the contents of subjects in the Indonesian curriculum; he cannot even speak Indonesian." He was afraid that my son would fail the exam. The principal asked me to send my son to Grade 5 instead. Finally, I sent my children to a public school which accepted them without any reservations. After 2 years of living with my mother, I moved to my own house, 7 kilometers away from my mother and sent my children to an Islamic school located right in our neighborhood.

So basically, the choice I made to send my two children there was based on two reasons. The first was due to concerns about their safety. To ease my worries, it made sense to enroll my son and daughter in the Islamic school since it was situated just beside our home. The second reason was linked to their primary school experience in Montreal. Their schooling there had not provided them with religious values specific to the Indonesian culture. Placing them in an Islamic school was an effort on my part to inculcate these values in my children while offering them, at the same time, a high quality academic environment. The experience of interacting with an Islamic school as a parent has given me some insight in terms of how a Muslim society manages its school and the school satisfies the needs of students and parents specifically.

My educational background, I believe, also helps me in terms of the Islamic point of view to which this thesis must necessarily refer. My ability to deal with educational issues from an Islamic point of view is due to my long period of study in the field of Islam. This has consisted of more than ten years of learning in Indonesia and at the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University, where I received my M.A. My master's thesis deals with the political participation of Muslim women since the colonial period into the New Order periods. I investigated the reasons for the relatively limited participation of women in politics. I found that there are several factors which account for these low ratios. First, there are socio-cultural values which confine women to the domestic domain. Politics is traditionally viewed as a male field and is considered to be a dirty and violent world which is unfit for women who are pure and delicate. Secondly, there are religious (Islamic) interpretations which

enhance this traditional view of women. Women are allowed to participate in social and political activities as long as they fulfill their family duties. Thirdly, there is a lower rate of education and a lack of professionalism among women. Finally, there is the current political system and culture in Indonesia. Women are obliged to adopt the political doctrines of their husbands if the latter are part of the bureaucratic polity. This makes it difficult for women to develop their political agendas freely and independently (Rifai, 1993).

Those experiences bring me to investigate the discourse on how Indonesian society deals with modernity, globalization, culture and identity, tradition and religion, social movement, and gender issues. I bring also another dimension of understanding to the study of this area. These years of experience and observation have allowed me to explore the nature and problems of Islamic education and present a critical examination of the strengths and weaknesses of the elite Islamic schools in my country, Indonesia.

6. Orientation to the Study

My thesis is an effort to understand, from historical and contemporary perspectives, an interesting phenomenon occurring in Indonesia today. In the past, many wealthy Muslims of both the middle and upper classes sent their children to Catholic or Protestant schools, which have had a far superior academic tradition since the early of the 20th century -- the time of Dutch colonialism. However, now Muslim parents from the middle and upper classes tend to send their children to elite Islamic schools to receive quality education. It is interesting in this light that, now that the economic situation of the Muslim community has improved, many of its members have chosen to assert their religious values by sending their children to Islamic schools.

Basically, there are two systems of schooling in Indonesia; general and religious. The general system provides secular instruction for the most part, although it may provide religious education for as many as 1-2 hours a week. This system is administered by the Ministry of National Education and includes all state schools run by the department and all private denominational and non-denominational schools of

a similar nature. Most of the denominational schools are run by Christian Missionary groups or by the Muhammadiyah,[2] and are grouped into the category of general schooling since their main function is to provide secular knowledge.[3] The religious system includes all Islamic schools, both state and private, as well as schools for religious teacher training such as the Christian Religious Teacher Training School in Java and the Hindu Religious Teacher Training School in Bali. The religious schooling system is supervised and administered by the Departemen Agama (Ministry of Religious Affairs, MORA) (Mudzhar, 1981).

Significant differences exist among the Islamic schools in Indonesia today. One group of Islamic schools has imitated the model of the sekolah negeri (public school) and is administratively and academically under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education. Like the public schools, these Islamic schools offer six years of primary education at the sekolah dasar (elementary school level), three years of junior secondary education at the sekolah menengah pertama (junior secondary school level), and three years of senior secondary education at the sekolah menengah umum (senior secondary school level). All Islamic schools of this type are private and are financially supported by their own school foundations (Azra, 2000).

A second type of Islamic school is the *madrasah*. While *madrasah*, in Arabic, literally means "school", in Indonesia this term refers to a specific type of Islamic school. In the Indonesian archipelago, *madrasahs* have been spreading since the early decades of the twentieth century. In the beginning, they focused exclusively on the study of the Arabic language and Islamic subjects such as Quranic exegesis, the Islamic tradition, Islamic law, Islamic history, and other disciplines. Gradually, over time, the *madrasah* has adopted some of the characteristics of the modern educational system, incorporating secular subjects such as math, geography and physics into its curriculum. The *madrasah* can be a state or privately funded school, yet all of them are supervised by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The *madrasah* offers three levels of education: *madrasah ibtidaiyah* (primary, six years); *madrasah tsanawiyah* (junior, three years); and *madrasah aliyah* (senior, three years) (Azra, 2000).[4]

The National Education Act of 1989 mandated the Islamic schools to follow the educational system of the public schools. Consequently, they had to incorporate

the Ministry of Education's national curriculum. Thus, at the basic level, there is little difference between the two educational systems. However, the Islamic school system places a far greater emphasis on religious subjects, devoting a larger number of classroom hours to their instruction. Hence the difference between them is that the Islamic schools give special attention to religious subjects. The general public schools also offer religious subjects, which are in fact obligatory in the national education system from pre-school until university; however, in these schools instruction in religious subjects is limited to only two hours a week (Azra, 2000).

Of the two kinds of Islamic school, this study will explore and examine the elite Islamic schools, focusing on Al Azhar Islamic School (AAIS) which are funded by private foundations and yet fall under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education. According to the statistic of the general senior secondary school 2001/2002, the province of DKI Jakarta (the capital city/Jakarta special district of Indonesia) has 116 public schools with 109,954 students and 368 private schools (Islam, Christian/Catholic, and non-denominational) with 104,045 students (see, the Center for Educational Data and Information, Ministry of National Education, 2002). The Ministry of National Education established certain criteria for excellent schools, i.e., they must have outstanding academic achievement as indicated by the results of the national examination and non-academic performance, good facilities and resources, strong discipline, and they must be safe. Based on these criteria, Setiadarma and associates designated some schools, public and private, as "excellent schools." 21 out of 116 public schools and 19 out of 368 private schools were given this title. These excellent schools consist of 11 Christian/Catholic schools with 6,040 (9.61%) students, 4 Islamic schools (914 students, 0.8%), and 1 non-denominational school (772 students, 0.7%) (Setiadarma, 2003). This data shows that elite Islamic schools only cover a small percentage of urban society in Jakarta, perhaps, because these Islamic schools emerged in the late of 1980s while Catholic/Christian schools had been built since the colonial period in the beginning of the 20th century (Van Niel, 1960). However, elite Islamic schools have a good reputation among Islamic schools, such as *madrasah* and *pesantren,* even compared to public or Catholic schools (Azra, 2000).

7. Type of Study

The aim of this thesis is to understanding the phenomenon of Indonesia's elite Islamic schools I have approached this task through three interrelated streams of inquiry. My work began with extensive field visits to eight Islamic high schools in Jakarta that represent the diversity of Islamic secondary education. One of the eight Islamic schools that I visited was particularly important in helping me to see and understand the organization and character of an Islamic school through the eyes, voices, and actions of its participants –teachers, principals, students, and parents. These field observations constitute the major data source for the descriptive portion of my research, presented in chapters three and four.

The second major strand of my research involved extensive analysis of educational practitioners and government officials' perspectives on elite Islamic schools and their problems. These analyses form the core of chapter five, which examines the limits and strengths of elite Islamic schools as an alternative education. Together with the data gathered from Al Azhar Islamic School, these interviews also help me to generalize my field observations to several Islamic schools as a whole.

Through these two empirical efforts, I identified a desire to redefine the concept of the Islamic school of the future in three areas, i.e. pedagogy, school organization and leadership, and connections to the broader community. Each of these features contributes in important ways to school functioning. These findings will be presented in chapter six as a contribution to developing elite Islamic schools.

In search of a more complete explanation, I found it necessary to initiate a third stream of inquiry to explore the social and intellectual history of the development of Islamic education and the significant role played by a new middle class of highly educated Muslims in the rise of a new type of Islamic modern school in Indonesia. The history of Islamic education provides essential background for understanding the nature, the administration, and the lessons of Islamic schools for educational reform. Making up this history is a rich set of experiences, ideas, and symbols, which together constitute a tradition that both explains much about the dramatic changes in Islamic schools and continues to shape school life today. This

examination forms the core of chapter two, which looks at the sources of inspiration for the Islamic school's vision of excellence and learning organization.

These lines of inquiry are applied to the study of the elite Islamic school in contemporary Indonesia, and particularly of the Islamic High School of Al-Azhar -- the pioneer of elite Islamic schools that emerged in 1970s-1990s. In the field, ethnographic techniques were employed, consisting of school observation, interviews with the school community, educational practitioners, and government officials. The purpose of these techniques was to cover all school activities and hear the voices of the school community, practitioners and policy makers, whatever their status.

The research is based on two major yet different sources of empirical material. First, I have generated a primary source of data by conducting, transcribing, and analyzing 21 interviews with members of school communities, educational practitioners, and policy makers or government officials from both the Ministries of National Education and Religious Affairs. Second, I employ secondary sources, i.e., written official records produced by the school itself and other sources related to the study. The scope of this study encompassed two aims. The first was to engage with the broader contexts and effects of government policies and community involvement in improving the Islamic education system in general, while the second was to examine how particular subjects (organization and leadership, teaching and learning, curriculum and teacher development) introduced by elite Islamic schools to the Muslim community had evolved since their establishment. This set of data is particularly indicative of the more enduring transformations that elite Islamic schools have effected within the classroom and society.

The nature of this research is exploratory with an emphasis on comprehension of the process studied. The initial research proposal, the type of access to the sources of information, the uses of current theory and the construction of new knowledge are consistent with a narrative qualitative inquiry (Czarniawaska, 1998), "which has allowed me to make connections among lived experiences, larger social and cultural structures, and the here and now. It has also provided me with a way of thinking historically, interactionally and structurally" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. xii). In effect, as my intention is not to explain but to explore, understand and interpret the

selected reality, I have sought connections among different aspects of that reality, such as the past with the present and the future (historical connections), individuals with collectives (interactions), structures with subjects, and parts with the totality (structural connections).

8. Theoretical Framework of the Study

Since this study focuses on an elite Islamic school, it assumes that the school has certain characteristics that differentiate it from other schools. Adopting the literal meaning of the word 'character', as given in the Concise Oxford Dictionary, I can formulate a simple definition for the purpose of the present study. The character of a school may be defined as those features that distinguish it, at least in certain respects, from other schools. In studying the features of some schools, we need to have a clear understanding of their general organization. Considering the school as an organization, we can identify its three most important dimensions: (1) the ideology that determines the aims and objectives; (2) the individuals who provide leadership, viz., chairman of foundation, principal, administrative staff, etc.; and (3) the institutional bodies, viz., government (Ministries of National Education and Religious Affairs), school foundations, parent-teacher associations. In other words, to examine the character of a school, we have to study it from an organizational point of view.

One of the findings revealed in the literature on successful schools (for recent examples, see Bryk and Driscoll, 1988; Darling-Hammond, 1997; and Meier, 1995) is that schools that resemble institutions have central zones of values and beliefs that take on sacred characteristics. As repositories of values, these central zones are sources of identity for parents, teachers, and students, thereby making their school lives more meaningful. Meaningfulness leads to an elevated level of commitment to the school, greater effort, closer bonds with everyone, and a more intensive academic engagement for the student. Schools with this kind of character have unique cultures. They know who they are and are able to develop a common understanding of their purpose. They celebrate their uniqueness as a powerful way to achieve their goals (cited in Sergiovanni, 2000).

Culture is generally thought of as the normative glue that holds a particular school together. With shared visions, values, and beliefs at its heart, culture serves as a compass setting, steering people in a common direction. It provides norms that govern the way people interact with each other. It provides a framework for deciding what does or does not make sense. Culture, as Schein (2004) points out, is "the result of a complex group learning process that is only partially influenced by leader behaviour" (p. 11). As Schein (p. 17) goes on to write:

> *As a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was always learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems* (italics in original).

Similarly, Prosser (1999) mentions that culture is "a way of constructing reality and different cultures are simply alternative constructions of reality." In the past metaphors such as 'climate', 'ethos', 'tone', 'atmosphere', and character have been used to orientate our thinking about schools (p. xii). In practice, the operational definition of culture is seen

> As a system of related sub-systems, which in turn organise the relationships among cultural patterns. Classical sub-systems used by social scientists include *organizing communication, resource allocation, social interaction, reproduction* and *ideology"* (italics in original). Whilst on such extensive sub-systems, the emphasis is placed on *values, beliefs, norms of behaviour, social structure, social system, social groups, status, roles, control systems, rituals, and traditions* (italics in original). (Prosser, 1999, p. xii)

He further mentions that "school culture is not only the particular patterns of perceptions and related to behaviour, but also the system of relationships between those relationships" (Prosser, 1999, p. xii). In practice, therefore, "school culture is often viewed as either a totality and therefore a summation of behaviours *or* as a system of dynamically related sub-cultures" (Prosser, 1999, p. xii).

School effectiveness is used to analyze elite Islamic schools in Indonesia today. School effectiveness is broadly defined by Sergiovanni (2000) as a school's ability to achieve a higher level of thoughtfulness among its students, to foster relationships characterized by caring and civility, and to record increases in the quality of student performance on both conventional and alternative levels of

assessment. As a research paradigm, according to Harris and Bennett (2001), school effectiveness is premised upon the measurement of outcomes and quantifying differences between schools. It is organizationally rather than process based and differs from school improvement in its concentration upon a very limited range of outcomes. In broader terms, the effectiveness research tradition is concerned with the extent to which schools differ from another (p. 8). In the UK, for example, the study found that "effective schools were characterized by the degree of academic emphasis, teacher actions in lessons, the availability of incentives and rewards, good conditions for pupils, and the extent to which children are able to take responsibility" (Harris and Bennett, 2001, p. 9).

9. Education in an Islamic Perspective

This section will describe the meaning and objectives of education within an Islamic point of view; it is an attempt to 'colour in' some of the background for the interviews that I describe in chapter 4. Participants did not necessarily expand on all aspects of religion when I interviewed them, thus, I attempt here as an 'insider' in terms of understanding something of the cultural context, to draw attention to this background so that the outsider reader will also have a deeper understanding of the educational situation.

The Islamic view of education is different from that of Western societies. In the Islamic philosophy of education, wisdom occupies a significant position, for wisdom (*hikmah*) leads, in the light of revelation, to the knowledge of *al-Hakim*, God the All-Wise (Sharifi, 1979, 76-79). Suitably, Islam considers that a human being cannot attain his/her inner perfection only by obtaining acquired knowledge. "Education should aim at the balanced growth of the total personality of man through the training of man's spirit, intellect, the rational self, feelings and bodily senses...The ultimate aim of Muslim education lies in the realization of complete submission to Allah on the level of the individual, the community and humanity at large" (Ashraf, 1985, p. 4; cf. al-Attas, 1979, p. 158). "Believing as it does that the true aim of education is to produce men who have faith as well as knowledge, the one sustaining the other, Islam does not think that the pursuit of knowledge by itself

without reference to the spiritual goal that man must try to attain, can do humanity much good" (Husain and Ashraf, 1979, 37-38).

The concept of education in Islam is derived from the Islamic concept of the human being. The Quran says that God put part of His own soul in humans, thereby making them more blessed than other living creatures (Quran: al-Hijr (15), 29; Al-Mu'minun (23), 12-14; Sad (38), 72). Therefore, in Islam, the human being is first of all seen as composed of soul and body. He/she is a spirit, yet at the same time, material. The material and the spirit should be integrated. The human being has spiritual and rational organs of cognition, namely, the heart and the intellect, and therefore is of a dual nature. Secondly, the human being is considered to be inherently forgetful and prone to falling into injustice and ignorance (Quran: al-Ahzab (33), 72). In this sense, education helps him/her to exert self-control and behave correctly (Kitaji, 1990, p. 51). Thirdly, a human being's most important gift is knowledge which pertains to spiritual as well as intelligible and tangible realities (al-Attas, 1977). Through the process of understanding and practicing knowledge, the human being can cultivate his/her personality and attain inner perfection (Quran: al-Balad (90), 8-9; al-An`am (6), 74-82).

Generally speaking, therefore, the human being is characterized in various ways in Islam. Firstly, he/she is characterized as being not only an earthly creature but also a spiritual being. Secondly, he/she is gifted with power with which he/she has to harmonize with the universe under the authority of God. Thirdly, he/she possesses intellectual power which preserves the universal truth through his/her experience, imagination and conceptualization. Fourthly, he/she is essentially free, although all activities are regulated in relation to God, the universe and society. For Muslims, the Prophet is the ideal human being who realized intellectual perfection which was completed by acquiring knowledge (Kitaji, 1990; cf. Husain and Ashraf, 1979).

Outside observers who are not familiar with Islam or Muslim society may wonder how Islamic schools can combine and synthesize seemingly contradictory essentials in its formulation of vision, mission and goals. We have to look at the Islamic world-view and Muslim history to understand this concurrence. The Quran,

the Muslim Holy Book, is not a cosmological text or a universal history in the same sense that the Bible is. Therefore, Muslims have a different understanding of modernity than do Christians. In the Muslim world generally, including in Indonesia, modernization does not necessarily entail the disenchantment with the spiritual or the secularization of life in the sense that it often does in Western societies (Woodward, 2002). In the West, the students of natural science and religious authorities have been at loggerheads for most of the time during the last four hundreds years. Historically, the Western sciences grew up in an atmosphere of religious hostility and, as a result, developed an irrationally intolerant attitude towards all non-empirical knowledge including religion. Muslim society in its days of scientific advancement never experienced such a conflict and therefore never faced any threat from serious scientific pursuits to its religious beliefs. There has been no case in Muslim history comparable to the Church reaction against Galileo and Copernicus in the West (Ahmad, 1990).

The Islamic understanding of the relationship between religious and worldly affairs leaves room for a more principled compromise. The Quranic cosmogony is minimal. While the Quran states clearly that all that exists is the product of God's creative powers, there is no Islamic Book of Genesis. The Prophet Muhammad did not claim to be a scientific authority and even encouraged the quest for empirical knowledge of the natural world even "as far as to China." The Quran stresses natural causality, but also explains that, when it suits His purposes, Allah can suspend the laws of nature that he has established in order to bring humanity closer to Him (Rahman, 1980, p. 66; Cf. Qutb, 1977, p. 54). This perspective motivates an Islamic natural theology in which understanding nature is a way of coming to know Allah. In addition, for many Indonesian Muslims, the Sufi idea of interior (*batin*) and external (*zahir*) realities builds on this dualistic concept of causality, and has long exerted a powerful influence on Indonesian thought. Modernity can be accepted, and indeed embraced, as an element of the phenomenal world (*zahir*) without challenging the internal, mystical truths of the realm of *batin*. Thus the Quranic distinction between naturalistic and religious causality and the subsequent Sufi division of reality enables

Indonesian Muslims in general to avoid conflict between religion and science that occurred in European thought (Woodward, 2002).

In Indonesia, Muslims, including Muslim schools, express their common faith according to one of three major inclinations: fundamentalist, traditionalist, and modernist. Members of each group embrace different ideas of what it means to be a Muslim and therefore the kinds of personal attributes, precepts, and behaviors children and adolescents ought to develop under the aegis of their schools. For example, at fundamentalist Muslim schools, students need to cover their head at school and in daily life. At traditionalist and modernist schools, the religious laws pertaining to daily life, are arguably less demanding and the relationship between religious and secular life is more tolerant. Thus, even within the same religion, the meaning of what it means to be religious has considerable variance and those differing views find their practical expression not only in how their adherents behave in general, but also what is emphasized in schools. For example, in traditional Islamic schools, it is estimated that about 70 percent of the time during the day is devoted to the study of religious texts, whereas in modernist Muslim schools, about 30 percent of the time is devoted to such materials. In fundamentalist schools, moreover, boys and girls are separated, while in traditionalist and modernist, the classes are mixed. Each group has a different view of what God requires, even though each of the three groups honors the same God.

10. Islamic Education in Indonesia: Review of Past Studies

Studies that concentrate on Indonesian Islamic education in the modern era are plentiful in number, but they tend, for the most part, to be historical studies and analyses of educational policy. Mahmud Yunus (1960, 1992, 3rd ed.), the first Indonesian scholar to write on the history of Islamic education in Indonesia, presents a historical study of the subject for the period 1900-1957. He relates how the Muslim community gradually implemented and developed the system of Islamic education in the Muslim community. The author also surveys the types and institutions of Islamic teaching since the coming of Islam to Indonesia, the subjects taught, the methods used, the textbooks read, famous teachers, etc. The first part of his book deals with

Sumatra, the second with Java, the third with the other islands, while the fourth deals with the unity in this great diversity which has been achieved by the work of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Boland, 1982).

Yunus's book is an indispensable reference for the study of the history of Islamic education in Indonesia, for it covers a broad period, from the coming of Islam and its early development in Indonesia to the end of the 1950s. However, it does have a number of shortcomings, not the least of which is its imbalanced focus on the period after the 19th century, while it offers only a glimpse of the preceding era. It also lacks a sound historical methodology in that it neglects such important elements as archives and Dutch documents and is limited to compiling lists of resources. Furthermore, it places undue emphasis on the history of Islamic education in the region of Minangkabau (168 pages of 420 pages). The reason for this was not personal bias, but lack of sufficient information on the history of Islamic education elsewhere in Indonesia. The book's primary focus is religious, investigating as it does the rise and fall of Muslim influence in Indonesian history. The author assumes that Islamic educational methodology lies at the heart of success. By knowing the past, Muslims can fashion a bright future for the generations to come.

Mulyanto Sumardi's *Sejarah Singkat Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia 1945-1975* (A Short History of Islamic Education in Indonesia 1945-1975) builds upon and complements the work of Mahmud Yunus. In many respects the book's discussion of the history of Islamic education overlaps with the latter, especially in its discussion of PTAIN (Perguruan Tinggi Ilmu Agama Islam Negeri, The State of Islamic Higher Education) and ADIA (Akademi Dinas Ilmu Agama, The Official Academy of Religious Knowledge) -- both of them precursors of the IAIN (Institute Agama Islam Negeri, State Institute for Islamic Studies) and the *pondok pesantren*. But as suggested by its title, the study does not cover the period after 1975, a time when the Islamic educational system experienced significant changes. Nor does the book issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and written by Zuhairini et al., *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam* (A History of Islamic Education), discuss developments after 1975. It is an ambitious work, devoting more than half of its attention (125 of pages) to the history of education in the Middle East, especially in Mecca and Medina, from the

period of the Prophet Muhammad up to the golden age of Islam. In the second half, the writers discuss the history of Islamic education in Indonesia, which in many aspects only repeats and simplifies the work of Mahmud Yunus. The book offers no significant new information. After discussing education in the colonial period, it simply goes on to examine the ideological and constitutional basis of the Republic of Indonesia and how this presents opportunities for the growth and development of an Islamic educational system.

Taken together these three books offer a relatively complete description of the history and development of Islamic education in Indonesia from its inception to the mid-1970s. Despite several weaknesses, the books' strong points are the presentation of raw data about the development of Islamic educational curriculum from one period to the next. Unfortunately, an adequate analysis of the data, explaining the transitions and changes in the content of Islamic education, is lacking overall.

Moreover, these books do not critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of the developments and experiments that have marked the history of Islamic education. Furthermore, they do not discuss the influences, impacts, and implications of these changes on the development of Islam in Indonesia as a whole. For instance, none of them address the impact of institutional change on Muslim society in the shift of Islamic education from the *surau* in Minangkabau to modern Islamic schools. On the one hand, the emergence of modern Islamic school, such as the Adabiah School in Padang seemingly produced more successful students, who discarded the traditional look of the scholar and embraced modern developments. On the other, the tendencies of the *surau* may themselves have contributed to the decline of the role of the *ulama* (Muslim leader).

In this context Steenbrink's study, *Pesantren, Madrasah and Sekolah* (1974) is a valuable historical survey of Islamic education. It presents a comprehensive historical analysis of the origins of the various systems of education in present-day Indonesia. Its first chapter offers an analysis of the origins of the two main systems of education still operating in Indonesia today: the Islamic educational system, which grew out of the traditional religious institutions, and the secular system of education, which currently operates along Western lines. Steenbrink sees the development of

modern Indonesian Islamic education as an evolution from the *pesantren* (the traditional boarding-school for mainly religious instruction) to the *madrasah* (a religious school featuring 'Western' methodologies of instruction and organization, often adding a smaller or larger percentage of 'secular' knowledge) and finally to the *sekolah*: the 'secularized' school, offering a limited amount of religious instruction. After this historical survey, the book's second chapter discusses several aspects of the phenomenology of religion, among them the development of religious significance in the system and the content of Islamic education. According to Steenbrink, a process of 'secularization' is developing within the Islamic system of education: while the *madrasah* should be an 'integrated' school of both religious and secular sciences, it is in fact seen more and more as a pure religious school with some minor additions of 'secular' instruction for the sake of social advancement. In the third chapter, he presents a 'theologia specialis religionum', a concrete theology of (non-Christian) religions. His analysis of the recent trends in Islamic education in Indonesia leads him to conclude that Islam in social life plays a diminishing role in the Indonesian social sphere. However, this does not mean a collapse or fading away of Islam in order to make way for something else, e.g., Christianity.

Elizabeth H. Graves's historical study, entitled *The Minangkabau Response to Dutch Colonial Rule in the Nineteenth Century*,[5] analyzes transitions of education, including Islamic education, in West Sumatera. According to her, the Dutch experiment in founding the 'people's schools' (*volkschoolen*), which were better known as "*sekolah-sekolah nagari*" (*nagari* schools) in Minangkabau, was largely responsible for the transformation of the *surau*. Although in the early stages most of these schools relied upon the curriculum of the *surau*, in the later stages of development they adopted the Dutch educational system. This had an immediate impact on Minangkabau society. First, the presence of competing *nagari* schools was a heavy blow to the *surau* educational system, even though the *nagari* schools also enabled Minangkabau society to get a head start in modern education compared to other communities in Indonesia. Secondly, many of the important voices in the intellectual and political discourse on the national awakening and independence movement were Minangkabauese from the *nagari* school system.

The historical approach as represented by Steenbrink (1974) and Graves (1981) needs to be highlighted, if we want to see not only the evolution of Islamic education but also the influence and impact of Islamic education on Islamic society and even Indonesian society as a whole. By doing so, we will be able to see more accurately the position and role of Islamic education in the development of Islam in Indonesia.

11. Overview of Chapters

This dissertation is organized into seven chapters. Chapter one serves as an introduction to the whole thesis. In this chapter, I explain the historical background of the study and its usefulness for improving the Islamic education system in Indonesia. I also define there the general theoretical and methodological framework of the dissertation, and the main research focus on the development of elite Islamic schools in Indonesia's urban centres from the 1970s to the 1990s. This chapter also contains a literature review of works on Indonesia's Islamic education system, providing a conceptual mapping for further analysis. The review focuses on concerns about the Islamic education system in their respective local and national contexts and highlights some unsolved tensions of the Indonesian educational reform in recent years.

In Chapter two I examine the modernization of Islamic education in Indonesia and parts of the Muslim world since the mid-nineteenth century. My aim here is to show how the Muslim community dealt with modernity, the Middle East connection, Dutch colonial policy, and the New Order government's policy in the process of creating Islamic schools and transforming them from traditional to modern institutions in the face of today's competitive global markets. Since conventional histories of Islamic education tend toward a chronology of events and policy developments, I also focus on the current development of Islamic education and the significant role played in it by the new middle class of highly educated Muslims, but especially on the rise of the modern Islamic elite school in Indonesia.

In Chapter three I present the research design for the case study, which focuses on the Islamic High School of Al Azhar. I look at the research site, the methodology and the procedures used for data collection, analyses and interpretation.

It also includes a brief description of the participants and a history of the school and the educational programs and activities offered there.

Chapter four is based mainly on an analysis of interviews and information about the participants' perspectives and representations of Al Azhar School. I present the perspectives of administrators, teachers, students, and parents, involved in the educational program of Al Azhar. As regards their opinions, I focused on: their level of satisfaction with the programs and activities provided by the school organizers; the debate on school uniforms for female students – is it an indication of religiosity or identity?; the caring attitude of teachers in always showing good behavior, passion, and intelligence; the close relations among teachers, students and parents; and the student's own perceptions of school life and academic performance.

In Chapter five I identify the larger context for elite Islamic schools from the perspective of educational practitioners and government officials in both the Ministries of National Education and Religious Affairs. These findings are presented in two ways: first, I explore why the emergence of elite Islamic schools has been perceived as a viable alternative and an innovative option, especially among Islamic schools; and second, I examine representations of practitioners and officials about the limits and possibilities of elite Islamic schools for excellent and innovative education and try to identify why these schools need to effect changes to their vision, organization, pedagogical skills, community participation and networking in order to contribute to the development of the Islamic education system in Indonesia.

Chapter six is generally a discussion and analyses of the findings in chapter 4 and 5. The analyses are based on the perspectives of respondents – either within the school community, educational practitioners, government officials, and the researcher herself. Indeed, in this chapter I propose that future Islamic schools adopt a new structure and systematic reform in order to produce students, who are knowledgeable in secular as well as religious subjects and who, while preserving their national and religious identity, can compete with others in the global world and act as leaders in their own society.

In Chapter seven, the final chapter, I provide a summary and the conclusions of this thesis. It also offers my own evaluation of Indonesian education, some

implications for further research, and a number of suggestions and recommendations for elite Islamic schools.

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[1] The New Order (*Orde Baru*) is the official Indonesian designation for the period beginning in 1965 with an alleged Communist coup and ending with the downfall in 1998 of Soeharto, who was president throughout the entire period.

[2] Muhammadiyah is one of the most important Muslim organizations involved in educational activities.

[3] The preference for using the term 'general' to the term 'secular' is for the reason that there is no such a school of purely secular in character in Indonesia. In fact, in Indonesia the 'general schooling system' is called 'sekolah umum' which literally means 'general schools'. Some writers, such as Deliar Noer (1978) also prefer to use the term 'general' rather than 'secular'.

[4] The age of madrasah students normally range from 7 to 12 years old for Ibtidaiyah (primary) level, from 13-15 for Tsanawiyah (junior) level, and from 16-18 for Aliyah (senior) level

[5] See Graves (1981).

Chapter 2
The Impact of Modernity on Islamic Education in Indonesia

1. Introduction

The process of modernization in Indonesia, promoted by the New Order government since the late 1960s, has had a significant impact on the development of Islamic educational institutions. This chapter will deal with the modernization of Islamic education in Indonesia and parts of the Muslim world since the mid-nineteenth century. It will first seek to describe the development of educational institutions in the Islamic world, the spread of Islam in Indonesia, the encounter with modernity and the Middle East connection, and Dutch colonial policy. This will be followed by an examination of the current development of Islamic education and the significant role played by a new middle class of highly educated Muslims in the rise of a new type of Islamic modern school in Indonesia.

2. The Meaning of Modernity

The terms modern, modernism, modernization, modernity, and related terms, when taken alone, qualified, or compounded, are used every day in the popular media as well as in specialized journals and technical exchanges. In the West, where the term developed, modernity is often confused with modernism, although the two are not synonymous. Sonn (2005) points out that "modernity generally refers to the sociopolitical transformation of Europe that accompanied the scientific and technological developments ensuing from the Enlightenment" (p. 65). That transformation was marked by democracy, the separation of church and state and the emergence of secularism. In addition, Sonn (2005) maintains that "modernism refers to a philosophical approach to certainty that relies primarily on reason rather than revelation" (p. 65; cf. Wilson, 1987, p. 18). Descartes' effort to overcome doubt by identifying self-evident principles is considered as the beginning of modernism. But Sonn (2005) emphasizes that it is usually identified with Kant's critical analysis of epistemological, ethical, and aesthetic judgments. This intellectual approach to certainty is recognized as the basis for the development of modernity. However, the

meanings of 'modernisms and 'modernity' are merged in everyday usage. This is particularly evident in the Islamists' discussion of modernity. The Arabic term `asriya is commonly used to translate 'modernity' and 'modernism' (Sonn, 2005, p. 65).

In his discussion of the modernizing force of Islam, Utvik (2003) refers to modernization as the historical process of technological and economic change and the attendant process of social and political change. These processes are marked by a society where market relations dominate production and exchange, cities contain the bulk of the population and industry is the dominant branch of production. The processes are also signified by the break-up of tightly-knit traditional units, the increased mobility of the population and the growth and centralization of the state apparatus (Utvik, 2003). This paradigm of modernization begins by establishing a dichotomy between tradition and modernity, and sees an evolutionary movement from the former to the latter. In order to modernize, traditional societies need to adopt the same organizational structures and social and political values of the West (Gunatilleke, 1983; Robison, 1997).

Modernity plays the cultural role or roles characteristic of a religion. As a consequence, "modernity is seen as a rival to traditional or 'authentic' religion. An important implication of this view is that religion in a modern society is regarded dichotomously. Either an individual or a group is thought to be 'for' modernity (and thus against traditional religious commitments) or 'for' traditional religion (and thus antipathetic toward modernity in any and all forms)" (Sonn, 2005, 80). But as we will see, the general Muslim response to modernity in Indonesia and elsewhere has not constituted either an entire rejection or a complete and uncritical celebration of it. Of course, in the early encounter between Islam and modernity there were dichotomous responses to modernity either in favour --along with distasteful attitudes toward traditional religious commitments-- or against it-- along with a strong reassertion of traditions, frequently on a reduced basis. However, nowadays it is realized that modernity can take a variety of forms shaped by the broad cultural traditions of the population involved. That is just what Islamic modernity is doing in recent times. It appears that Islamic countries such as Indonesia, in the course of their history, have

been developing their own models of modernity, ones that value the role of reason and are pluralist as well as religious, but reject secularism (Hunter, 2005; Sonn, 2005; Wilson, 1987).

In Islamic discourse, modernity/modernism often includes modernization, as well as scientific and technological development. But overall Islamic discussions of modernity focus on the fundamental issues of rationalism, secularism, and democracy. Sonn (2005) points out that, while there are no inherent barriers in Islam to these elements of Western modernity, the expressions of these phenomena are not necessarily identical in Western and Islamic societies. In particular, Islam's ideology and historical experience result in distinctly Islamic approaches to secularism as an element of Western modernity (Sonn, 2005). Obviously, modernity explicitly identifies with openness and a commitment to the new as opposed to the old, and hence tends to affect religion in varied ways (Wilson, 1987). This chapter refers to the kind of intense social and cultural change, especially in the field of education that characterizes Muslim societies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

3. Modernization of Educational Institutions in the Islamic World

In parts of the Islamic world, the beginnings of a modernization process date back to the mid-nineteenth century, if not earlier. Although there have been sustained efforts at modernization in the Muslim world, it lags behind not only the advanced Western countries in every aspect of modernization but also such East Asian countries as Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, and China. Modern Muslim theorists have adopted two differing approaches to modernity in general and modern knowledge in particular:

> (1) that the acquisition of modern knowledge be limited to the practical technological sphere, since at the level of pure thought Muslims do not need Western intellectual products; and (2) that Muslims without fear can and ought to acquire not only Western technology but also its intellectualism. (Rahman, 1982, p. 46)

There are various nuances to these views and many middle positions. For example, one of these positions is that, besides technology, pure science is also good but not

the pure rationality of the modern West, while another is the more recent view that technology may even be harmful without adequate ethical training (Rahman, 1982).

The first approach was considered the patently correct answer to the problem of the modernization of education in the early phase of Ottoman Turkish modernism, in which "modern education was identified with 'useful skills' and 'practical knowledge" (Rahman, 1982, 47-49). The second approach was adopted by the Young Ottomans such as Ziya Pasha (d. 1880) and Namik Kemal (d. 1888), Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d. 1898) from India and Muhammad Abduh (d. 1905) from Egypt. They took the stance that political, scientific and social modernization along with technological innovation should be carried out simultaneously while the cultural integrity of the nation should remain intact. They advocated the introduction of rational and empirical sciences into the curriculum, the popularization of scientific knowledge, and the teaching of foreign languages. They also enthusiastically preached the cultivation of science and appropriation of the scientific spirit of the West, which they saw as being in accordance with the spirit of scientific inquiry demanded by the Qur'ān (see Rahman, 1982, pp. 50-51). Therefore, they stressed modernization coupled with Islamic and national elements in education (see Rahman, 1982, pp. 49 and 51). Their ideas have continued to be, more or less, the standard response of Muslims up to the present time when encountering the incessant problems of modern education.[1] It was in effect, these modernist intellectuals who eased the adoption of modern science for educating the younger generation.

The Muslim encounter with modernity was foreshadowed by a series of military victories of European powers in wars against Muslims armies, especially those of the Ottoman Empire. The Treaty of Carlowitz, signed on January 26, 1699, and the French invasion of Egypt in 1798 taught Muslims some harsh lessons. The Islamic nations gradually started to realize that they were unable to compete militarily against the European-Christian powers (see Lewis, 2002, pp. 19 and 21).

In response to these developments, the ruling elites of the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and Iran in the late 18th and early 19th centuries made deliberate attempts at reforms aimed at imitating and adopting certain select elements from the civilization of Western Europe (see Lewis, 2002, pp. 16 and 26). They initiated efforts to

modernize their armies and navies, and started military reforms as a part of the process of modernization. Students were sent to European universities in order to learn modern knowledge and technology (see Algar, 1969; Lewis, 2002; Lewis, 1968; Menashri, 1992).

The second phase of the Muslim encounter with modernity was during the golden age of missionary and minority community schools.[2] In response, Muslim reformers initiated a number of reforms in their own educational institutions. In Egypt, a number of reforms of al-Azhar – the oldest and most prestigious Islamic university – were undertaken. During the first half of the nineteenth century, a college of languages was opened at al-Azhar University where the French constitution and French civil law were translated into Arabic. Muhammad Abduh (d. 1905) tried to reform al-Azhar in terms of a primarily intellectual and positive renaissance of Islam, and was particularly anxious to keep al-Azhar independent of government interference. The palace and most sheikhs resisted his efforts, and Abduh was forced to resign from the Council of al-Azhar in March 1905 (Rahman, 1982).

In India, the British experimented with reformed Muslim madrasahs and Hindu Sanskrit schools in India from the 1780s to the 1830s. However, a new al-Azhar-like Muslim college at Deoband, which offered a traditional religious education, received no state support (Reid, 1995). Under the leadership of Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d. 1898), a group of Indian Muslims founded the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in 1875, located in the town of Aligarh. Through this college, Sayyid Ahmad Khan tried to integrate religious beliefs with a modern scientific outlook (Lelyveld, 1978; Rahman, 1982). But as a reaction to what was regarded as the extreme Westernism of the early Aligarh graduates, Muhammad Shibli Nu'mani, the Indian historian of Islam and of Persian literature, developed a new educational ideology that placed a greater emphasis on secular Arabic literature in order to acquaint the Muslim youth with Islamic culture and to develop self-confidence and pride in the achievements of the Muslim past. He pioneered a new educational institution, called the Nadwat al-'Ulama (the Assembly of the Ulema) at Lucknow (Rahman, 1982).

In the third phase of the Muslim encounter with modernity, which started with de-colonization, newly independent states moved to unify their educational systems by subordinating missionary, minority, and Islamic schools to state control. In Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (d. 1938) imposed national curricula on foreign and minority schools in the 1920s. In the new Republic of Turkey, based as it was on secular principles, all religious schools and *madrasahs,* run either by the Ministry of *Awqaf* (Pious Endowments) or even by private *awqaf,* were closed and turned into secular institutions (Rahman, 1982; Lewis, 1968). In Egypt, religious education moved in the opposite direction to that of Turkey during the first half of twentieth century. In reaction to the criticism of Muhammad Abduh and others, the public school system incorporated courses in Islam in order to become more Islamic and national (Rahman: 1982, 62-63). In Iran, Shah Reza Khan nationalized primary and secondary schools in the 1930s. Through the passage of several laws, Iranian various governments sought to bring the Islamic educational system under their control in organization and curriculum, but to little or no avail. Traditional education in Iran had not suffered the same disintegration and decline as that experienced in the rest of the Muslim world. The religious establishment, however, lost its age-old monopoly over education at all levels and had to watch it being reduced by the Shah's government (Menashri, 1992; Rahman, 1982).

But it soon appeared that the pattern of Western secularization could not be completely applied in Muslim societies. Not until the late forties and early fifties was Islamic education resumed, when, under sheer public pressure, a new system of *imam-khatib* schools[3] was started in Turkey – a system that has continued to expand up to the present. In October 1950 it was decided to make religious education compulsory for the fourth and fifth classes of the primary schools. For the rest of the school year, religious instruction remained optional.[4]

The government of Egypt also reorganized, consolidated, and expanded al-Azhar, its official Islamic institution. In 1961, a law was enacted to institute a school of medicine, a school of agriculture, and a school of engineering as part of al-Azhar University. A tangible benefit of these changes was that a worthwhile class of professionals (doctors, engineers, and agriculturists) was created with a really solid

knowledge of Islam as compared with the products of the general system (Rahman, 1982).

The Islamic revolution in 1979 introduced significant changes both in the style and the content of the educational system in Iran. For the leaders of the Islamic Republic, the revolution reflected their intent to bring all spheres of life into conformity with Islamic tenets and ideals. Yet the new Islamic government did not uproot the modern education system or wholly reverse the process (Menashri, 1992).

In India, Aligarh was by far the most important educational institution. By 1920, it had become a university. But because it had served as the nerve center of the Muslim nationalist movement leading to the creation of Pakistan, post-independence, the Indian government took a series of measures to 'reform' Aligarh, basically bringing in large numbers of non-Muslim, especially Hindu, students (Rahman, 1982, 75-76).

After the creation of Pakistan, it might have been expected that an Islamic system of education would have evolved there, one truer to Islamic ideals, yet sufficiently progressive to enable necessary modernization. But despite this it seems that successive Pakistani governments have failed to institute that kind of educational system. Nevertheless, after the creation of Pakistan, the University of the Punjab created an *Islamiyat* Department in 1950, while those of Peshawar and Karachi followed in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Finally, in 1980, the government created the International Islamic University in Islamabad (Rahman, 1982).

4. The Spread of Islam in Indonesia

Before the coming of Islam, people in the Indonesian archipelago were Hindu, Buddhist or animist. Hindu-Buddhist states left major literary and artistic legacies that continued to flourish long after the arrival and growth of Islam. The social, administrative and political traditions of these states also had an abiding influence. Among the greatest of the states were the Sumatran Buddhist trading state of Srivijaya (f. 7th CE) and the Javanese Hindu-Buddhist state of Majapahit (13th-15th CE). In present day Indonesia, Bali is the only island where Hindus constitute the majority of the population (Ricklefs, 1993, 2001).

The spread of Islam in the Malay Archipelago (Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, and Philippines) is largely believed to have been mostly the work of Muslim traders and Sufis. Muslim traders had apparently been present in some parts of Indonesia for several centuries before Islam became established within the local communities. Two processes of Islamisation probably occurred: on the one hand, indigenous Indonesians came into contact with Islam and made an act of conversion. On the other, foreign Asians (Arabs, Indians, Chinese, and Persians) who were already Muslim settled permanently in an Indonesian area, intermarried and adopted local lifestyles. The first evidence of Indonesian Muslims is in the northern part of Sumatra. The Venetian traveler Marco Polo in 1292 found that Perlak was a Muslim town. The gravestone of the first Muslim ruler of Samudra, Sultan Malik al-Salih, dates back to AH 696 (the Islamic calendar) or AD 1297 (Ricklefs, 2001; Schreike, 1966; Wertheim, 1969).

However, significant Indonesian conversions to Islam began only in the thirteenth century, and were intensified in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Some scholars also suggest that many Indonesians were attracted to the new faith, whose egalitarian ethos supposedly provided relief from the Hindu caste system. Islamisation in Indonesia was mostly a peaceful process, since there is no evidence of conquest by foreign Islamic military expeditions. However, once an Indonesian Islamic state was founded, it sometimes fought kingdoms in other areas. The roots of these struggles were perhaps more commonly dynastic, strategic and economic. When a war was won by an Islamic sultanate, Islamisation often followed afterward. It is also interesting that Western, especially Portuguese, penetration of the archipelago had strong consequences for the further spread of Islam in the region. A large number of Indonesian kings and princes embraced Islam as a political move to counter the threat posed by Christian nations. Islamisation in Indonesia is a gradual process which has continued down to the present day (Reid, 1993; Ricklefs, 2001; Wertheim, 1969).

All Indonesian Muslims, (then as well as now) were in principle Sunnis and were followers of the Shāfi'ī school of law, while many pious Indonesians were also involved in Sufi (Islamic mysticism). But behind seeming uniformity lay much

diversity, heterodoxy, heresy and ignorance, a fact that later encouraged major reformist movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In terms of the religious reform movement and modernist ideas, the Middle East and Singapore played an influential role in Indonesia. In 1906, the Malay-language paper *al-Imām* began to be published in Singapore, with the first really serious presentation of a modernist analysis of social, religious and economic issues. Among the Muslims involved in *al-Imām* was the Minangkabau scholar Shaikh Tahir bin Jalaluddin (1869-1957), who was influenced by Muhammad `Abduh's ideas. He was also a close friend of Rashid Riḍā, a disciple of Abduh.

Although the Minangkabau area of West Sumatra played a leading role in the early reform movement, its most significant modernist organization is Muhammadiyah. It was established in Yogyakarta, Java in 1912 by Ahmad Dahlan, who came from the religious establishment of the Yogyakarta Sultanate. Muhammadiyah threw its energies into educational and welfare efforts, economic enterprises, and into a missionary program of its own to counteract Christianizing efforts of Western missionaries and local superstitions. Modernist Muslim leaders such as those in Muhammadiyah realized that mystical, dogmatic and traditional Islam could never be attractive to the increasing number of Indonesian secular intellectuals who were influenced by Western concepts of modernism. For them, reason was of primary importance; their loyalty might be gained only by a rational approach to Islam. If Islam was to be preserved against the rising secular and Christian trends, then Islamic modernism must be introduced into Indonesian society. It was by its emphasis on rationalism and its opposition to superstition that the Muhammadiyah was able to attract Indonesian intellectuals into its fold. As a reaction toward modernist movements and events in Turkey and Mecca, orthodox Shāfi`ī leaders took steps towards reform by founding the Nahḍat al-`Ulamā' (NU) in 1926 in East Java to defend the interests of orthodox Muslims. The NU adopted some of the practices of the Muhammadiyah, such as having the Friday sermon delivered in the local tongue and/or the Malay/Indonesian languages and engaging in popular education, care for the needy and economic enterprises. The opposition between the

two trends has gradually and steadily continually begun to fade (Nasution, 1965;Ricklefs, 2001; Wertheim, 1969).

Another organization was Sarekat Dagang Islamiyah (SDI) or Islamic Commercial Union, established first in Batavia (Jakarta) in 1909 and then in Buitenzorg (Bogor) in 1910 by Tirtoadisurjo. Both were designed to support Indonesian traders. In 1912 the organization changed its name to Sarekat Islam (SI) or Islamic Union and from that time on, under the leadership of Tjokroaminoto, it grew rapidly across Java even spreading to the outer islands (Hefner, 2000; Ricklefs, 1993; Wertheim, 1969).

During the liberal democracy period Masyumi, the Muslim modernist party, and the NU, the party of Muslim traditionalists along two other smaller Islamic parties, represented Muslim political interests and tried to win constitutional acknowledgement of Islamic law through democratic means. However, the 1955 elections yielded not a Muslim victory, but a standoff between the Muslims and their Nationalist and Communist rivals. The proportion of the vote for Muslim parties was almost exactly equal to that for the Nationalist, Communist, and Christian parties. The elections had not given Muslim parties their expected victory. The Constituent Assembly, which was charged with drafting a new constitution, reached agreement on most constitutional details, but was deadlocked on the vexing issue of Islam and state (Fealy, 2004; Hefner, 2000; Ricklefs, 2001).

In the period of Guided Democracy (1959-1966), President Soekarno banned Masyumi and the PSI (Indonesian Socialist Party) because of their objection to the authoritarian concept of Guided Democracy. These two parties most closely identified with constitutional democratic procedure and clean government, and both were sympathetic to the Western powers. They were also the most committed to economic development. The NU and two other Islamic parties survived due to their acceptance of the President's terms (Hefner, 2000; Ricklefs, 2001; Wertheim, 1969).

The emergence of the army-dominated 'New Order' government, with its economic development and modernization programs (1966-1998), had a mixed impact on Muslim groups. On the one hand they were excluded from positions of real political power by the government, and then gradually pushed into a position of open

hostility to the Soeharto regime during the 1970s over various issues of great concern to them. On the other hand, they benefited from a shift in the religious landscape during this period, as increasing numbers of so called 'statistical' (*abangan* in Clifford Geertz's (1976) term as opponent of *santri* or pious Muslims) or nominal Muslims sought to deepen their faith and adhere more closely to the prescriptions of Islam (Hefner, 2002). There was a steady rise in Muslim consciousness and ritual formalism, especially among the urban middle classes and the student population. In recent years, there has also been a notable Islamic political revival. Between March and May 1998, Muslim students played an important role in the reform movement by forging cross-campus networks and leading protest actions against Soeharto in his final weeks of office. The leader of the reform movement itself was Muhammad Amien Rais, the chairman of Muhammadiyah, a reformist Muslim organization. After the restoration of democracy, Abdurrahman Wahid, leader of the NU (the largest Islamic organization), was elected to the presidency in 1999. Since 1999, several bids have been made (unsuccessfully) to reinsert a clause that would have obliged Muslims to implement the *sharia* as agreed upon before independence. But most Indonesian Muslims and the present Islamic political parties today accept the legitimacy of Indonesia as neither a secular nation-state nor an Islamic one. The principle of Belief in One and Only One God in the State ideology, Pancasila, and the existence of the Ministry of Religious Affairs guarantee the importance of religions, especially Islam, in the idea and practice of the nation (Fealy, 2004; Hefner, 2000; Mackie and MacIntyre, 1994; Porter, 2002).

5. The Encounter with Modernity and the Middle East Connection

Indonesian Muslims' encounter with modernity started with the coming of the Europeans to the Indonesian archipelago. Interestingly, this phenomenon led Muslims to adopt orthodox teachings and later, modern Islamic ideas, from the Middle East. Western sea transportation and regular shipping traffic between Europe and the East made it possible for Muslims to visit the holy city of Mecca (Nasution, 1965; Ricklefs, 2001). In the sixteenth century, among the Indonesian Muslims who went to Mecca, there were many who made a longer stay in order to complete their studies in

religion. Some of them even chose (for religious reasons) to spend their entire lives in the holy city of Mecca. Through the channels of these Indonesian Muslims, orthodoxy spread in the archipelago (Azra, 2004; Benda, 1958; Hurgronje, 1970; Landon, 1948; Ricklefs, 2001). All sorts of Arabic dogmatic, juridical and orthodox as well as mystical essays were translated into Malay and spread among the people. At the same time, a number of orthodox Arabs from the Hadramaut region of Yemen migrated to Indonesia, especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some of them, who were merchants, preached orthodox Islamic teachings among the Indonesians. Thus the *pesantrens* (religious boarding schools), through the influx of *kitab kuning*[5] literature, gradually became more orthodox, and so too did many of the common people who were influenced by Arabs from Hadramaut (Hurgronje, 1970).

Meanwhile, in the second half of the nineteenth century, Muhammad Abduh launched the modern Islamic reform movement in Egypt. He and his followers had an unnoticed but tremendous influence upon Islamic thinking in Indonesia. It was the Egyptian periodical *al-Manar* that initially brought this new thought to a larger public, not only to Egyptians, but also to Arabs in other countries, including Arab emigrants abroad, and to Indonesian Muslims who had studied at al-Azhar or in Mecca. Quite a few copies of it slipped through Dutch customs into the hands of young Indonesians in their own country. These influences from Arab countries began to take hold at about the beginning of this century and also further spread orthodox and modern Islam in Indonesia (Adams, 1968; Boland, 1982; Gibb, 1975).

The Dutch government developed an interest in educating Indonesians during the middle of the 19th century. A few Indonesians, selected from the highest elements of society, were permitted to attend the European primary schools that had existed in Java since 1816. These schools were designed to train scribes and administrators and drew their students exclusively from those *priyayi* (aristocrat) families whose hereditary rights made them eligible for such positions. The practice of bringing young *priyayi* into the homes of Europeans to be trained in European traditions and manners continued. In 1879 the *Hoofdenschoolen* or Chiefs' Schools were established. These were specifically designed to train the sons of Regents for administrative posts. Although they constituted an improvement over the earlier

school system, and were preferable from the standpoint of efficiency to the local Muslim schools, they were qualitatively and quantitatively far from adequate (van Niel, 1960).

The new orientation in Dutch colonial policy led to the official adoption of the 'Ethical Policy' in 1901. This latter called for further economic development of Indonesia by private capital and for granting greater autonomy to local residents, which could include the delegation of power by Dutch to Indonesian officials (Benda, 1958, p. 27-28). It was under the stimulus of the Ethical Policy that Hurgronje (Dutch scholar who was expert in Islam and a political advisor of Dutch colonial government) offered his advice on an Islamic policy for the Dutch government that would help it cope with local rebellions under religious leaders and deal with the idea of Pan-Islamism (Nasution, 1965). He urged that the Dutch administration would be wise to separate purely religious matters from politics in its policy toward Islam in Indonesia. With regard to the former, the government should adopt a policy of neutrality, although in political matters it had to reject any foreign interference from Turkey or other countries and curb any political uprising on the part of the Indonesian Muslims; if necessary, by force. In the eyes of Hurgronje, however, the permanent solution would lie in the assimilation of Indonesians into Dutch civilization: a complete unity between the subjects of the Queen in the West and those in the East. This aim could only be achieved, it was thought, by the introduction and promotion of Western education in Indonesia (Hurgronje, 1970).

The end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century was a period of rapid development in religious and nationalist schools, due largely to the implementation of Hurgronje's policy along with the expansion of Western education. Western education was introduced as early as 1893 with the foundation of Indonesian primary schools in which instruction was given in Malay. In the late 1920s, several tertiary educational institutions for Indonesians were already established.[6] The schools founded by the Dutch administration, however, were far from being sufficient to meet the needs of the millions of Indonesians for a better education. In consequence, private schools, termed by the administration as *wilde scholen* (wild schools) came into existence. Some of these private schools like those

of the Muhammadiyah and secular nationalistic Taman Siswa schools came to receive government subsidies and to come under government supervision. They were, consequently, excluded from the category of *wilde scholen* (Nasution, 1965).

6. Reform of Islamic Education in the Colonial Period

The development of modern Indonesian Islamic education may be described as an evolution from the *pesantren* in Java (the traditional boarding-school for mainly religious instruction), to the *madrasah* (the religious school with 'Western' methodologies of instruction and organization along with, often enough, a larger percentage of 'secular' knowledge) and finally to the *sekolah* or 'secularized' school, offering a limited amount of religious instruction. In other areas the religious traditional boarding-schools go by different names.

In Minangkabau (West Sumatra), the traditional Islamic schools is called the *surau*, and in Aceh, *rangkang*. They are boarding schools, usually to be found a little way outside a village or town and forming their own settlement (Boland, 1982, p. 114).[7] The *pesantren/surau/dayah/rangkang* was the oldest pattern of traditional religious school existing in Indonesia. But in the Dutch colonial period, none of the Islamic religious educational institutions were officially recognized as truly educational institutions. The Dutch colonial government saw them rather as purely religious institutions that could potentially be centers of social unrest against the Dutch establishment. Some writers claim that this type of institution was a duplication of what had been founded by monks or priests during the Hindu-Buddhist period (Chumaidy, 1976; Geertz, 1963).

It is not known exactly who pioneered the establishment of the pesantren institution after the coming of Islam. Some local traditions relate that it was Shaykh Malik Ibrahim, one of the *Wali Songo* (nine saints), who first established the *pesantren* as the primary Islamic religious school (Aboebakar, 1957). However, no one can deny that it was only later in the 19th century, once pilgrims began visiting and returning from Mecca, that the institution truly began to flourish (Chumaidy, 1976).

The Indonesian *pesantren* at first limited itself to religious instruction and the observance of religious duties. Teachers and pupils formed a living and working community, cultivating the land of the *pesantren* in order to be self-supporting. There were *pesantrens* at the elementary, secondary and higher levels, though there are only a few of the last type (Boland, 1982). The *pesantren* was usually located in the countryside. It generally consisted of a mosque, a house for the head *kiyai*, and a set of dormitories for the housing of the *santris* (students). These buildings and the mosque as well were usually built with funds from a pious foundation (*waqf*) or donations given by rich parents of students. The *pesantren* was important for shaping an Islamic philosophy of life and a way of life determined by Islam (Boland, 1982; Chumaidy, 1976; Geertz, 1963).

The manner of study in the *pesantren* was unlike that in an ordinary school. There were no particular rules or instructions binding the *santris*. They were free to choose their subjects or teachers. There were no questions, examinations, or control over the progress of the students, no diploma was given, and there was no limit to the number of years before graduation. Pupils could enter and leave whenever they liked. Study for them was regarded as a religious duty. Many of those who entered a *pesantren* only did so in order to share in the beneficent influence (Indonesian berkat, literally blessing) of the leader, the *kiyai*. Therefore the diploma that they expected was not to be received in this world from the hands of their teachers, but in the hereafter directly from God. As a consequence of this free system, some *santris* became learned scholars of Islamic religious sciences in a relatively short time, while others, despite their lengthy stay in the *pesantren*, went back to their village without having acquired any knowledge at all (Boland, 1982; Chumaidy, 1976).

The common subjects in the religious sciences taught in the *pesantren* were the Qur'an along with its *tafsir* (exegesis) and the *tajwid* (the correct reading of the Quran), *hadith* (traditions) with the sciences auxiliary to it, *fiqh* (religious law) including the *fara'id* (laws of inheritance), the *usul* (roots) and the *qawa'id* (principles) of *fiqh*, linguistic sciences including inflexions (*sarf*), grammar (*nahw*) and rhetoric (*balaghah*), theology ('*ilm al-kalam*), logic (*mantiq*), ethics (*akhlaq*) and mysticism (*tasawwuf*) and sometimes also astronomy (*falak*), which stressed in

particular the method for calculating the times of prayer and fasting. Some *pesantrens* used to specialize in certain subjects, and a keen student would travel from one pesantren to another in order to benefit from the expertise in each (Chumaedy, 1976).

According to Yunus (1960), it can be said that in about 1900 education in the *pesantrens* was still delivered in a very old-fashioned way. The Quran and other religious texts were read out by a teacher and memorized by the pupils. From 1900 onward the influence of famous Indonesian teachers (*shaykhs*) who had gone to Mecca became more noticeable in Indonesia, as many *hajis* (people who had gone on pilgrimage or hajj) from Indonesia had gone to study for years in Mecca, in order to be able to pass on their knowledge as a *kiyai* in their own *pesantren* in Indonesia. Originally, a given subject was usually taught with the help of only one book (for example, the "Tafsir Jalālayn" as a Quran commentary). After 1900 it became usual for teachers and pupils to use more than one book (for instance, the commentary of al-Baydawī) (Boland, 1982).

From the 1900s onward, all sorts of innovations began to take place, first of all in outward appearance with the founding of a new type of *pesantren*, built as a school and therefore called a *madrasah*. In these *madrasahs*, instruction was given in classrooms equipped with benches, tables and a black-board. These changes may seem unimportant, but their significance becomes clear if we remember that they were in part the focus of a dispute that had arisen in Minangkabau (West Sumatra) between the *kaum tua* (old guard) and the *kaum muda* (younger generation). The debate revolved around questions such as whether it was allowable or not to wear Western trousers, a shirt with collar and tie, and so on; later, for instance, the use of motorcycles became a point of fierce controversy. In the new *madrasahs*, the curriculum gradually broadened, but at the turn of the century, instruction was still restricted to religious subjects and oriented toward Mecca (Boland, 1982).

Little by little, but accelerating after 1930, the modernization of *pesantrens* was accomplished in some cases by adding a *madrasah*, by the use of books from Egypt (Cairo) and by the addition of secular subjects (or, to use the Indonesian word, 'general knowledge'). Since then many *pesantrens* have combined traditional Islamic education with the modern or Western educational model. In these modern

pesantrens, the two models are integrated into one harmonious unit. This synthesis had an impact on the roles of *kiyais*, principals, and teachers compared to their roles in traditional *pesantrens* or *madrasahs*. Even today, the ratio between religious and general subjects in these *madrasahs* is still the object of much discussion and differs considerably from one to another institution (Boland, 1982). [8]

The *madrasah* differs from the *pesantren* in other ways as well. In the *madrasah*, there are a set number of years needed for graduation as well as methods of instruction, regular attendance, fees and the like. The *madrasah* follows the same classical system of teaching as the general schooling system does. It does not provide boarding facilities. It employs a team of teachers instead of a single teacher-leader type as in the *pesantren*, and does not rely on a familial system of leadership. It has a set curriculum which is not determined by the individual interest of teachers and which consists partly of secular knowledge (between 50% to 70%). It does not necessarily use Arabic textbooks. The *madrasah* has a grading system divided between the so called *Ibtidaiyah* at the primary level, *Tsanawiyah* at the junior secondary level, and *Aliyah* at the senior secondary level. The language of instruction used in the *madrasah* is Indonesian, rather than local languages. Regular attendance of students is required and every month the student has to pay a certain amount of money. Clearly, the *madrasah* system is closer to the general schooling system in most ways except for the fact that much of the emphasis in its curriculum is still on Islamic teaching. Most *pesantrens* now have *madrasahs*, and at the same time, maintain the old educational system of *pesantrens*, such as providing dormitories for the housing of the *santris* (the students) and teaching Islamic sciences from classical Arabic books under the guidance of a *kiyai* (Chumaidy, 1976).

There were two types of *madrasahs* in the early history of its foundation. The first was a *madrasah* established independently of the *pesantren*, which was usually located in a town or city, district or village; while the second was a *madrasah* which was attached to a particular *pesantren*. In the beginning of the twentieth century, the types of *madrasah* became also more varied. The Jam'iat Khair (Jam'iyyat al-Khayr, union for the Good) in Jakarta was probably the first *madrasah* founded in Indonesia. Following a more modern system of Islamic education, its curriculum was similar to

that of the Dutch-sponsored schools except for its inclusion of Islamic subjects. Jamiat Khair elementary school was founded in 1905 by the Arab community in Jakarta. It was not a school of an exclusively religious character, but rather an ordinary elementary school where various subjects, like arithmetic, history, and geography, were taught. A curriculum was established and organized classes introduced. "The medium of instruction was Indonesian, or rather Malay, for the *lingua franca* even among Arab children in Indonesia was either Malay or a regional dialect, depending on the region in which they lived. Dutch was not taught; instead, English was compulsory" (Noer, 1973, p. 59). The Jamiat Khair invited teachers from other areas (Sumatra) and abroad (Tunisia and Sudan) to teach at this school. One of them was a certain al-Hasjimi (al-Hāshimī), a native of Tunisia and one-time rebel against the French colonial government there. He came to Indonesia in about 1911 and introduced sports and a scout movement in the school. He was said to have been the founder of the first scout movement among Indonesian Muslims (Noer, 1973).

In the Minangkabau area of Sumatra, the first modern Islamic school was founded by Haji Abdullah Ahmad in 1909, the so-called Adabiyah school. This school offered religious as well as general subjects at the same time. In the beginning it was expected that the school would be able to maintain its identity as a reformist school and would be successful in achieving its main objective, i.e., to offer better education in Minangkabau, Sumatra,[9] but when it received a government subsidy and a Dutch head in 1915, it fell outside the religious reform movement. In 1915, Zainuddin Labai Al-Yunusi (1890-1924), a self-made young man, opened his well known Diniyah school at Padang Panjang which provided instruction to both boys and girls and which radically departed from the prevalent "*surau*" (traditional school, like the *pesantren* in Java) system by introducing desks and chairs and the grade/class system. A general curriculum composed of languages (including English), mathematics, history and geography, was taught in addition to religion (Noer, 1973).[10]

In 1923, a sister of Al-Yunusi, Rahmah el-Yunusiah, founded the Diniyah Putri (Diniyah for Girls) in Padang Panjang, with seventy-one pupils initially, consisting mostly of young housewives (Abdullah, 1971, p. 55; Yunus, 1992, p. 68).

The establishment of this school and its subsequent success not only made its founder one of the most important female educational pioneers in modern Indonesian history, but also supplied recruits to the movement formed of educated women known as *Kaum Muda* (younger generation), which played an important role in the wider Minangkabau social and political movement (Abdullah, 1971, p. 56).

The Sumatra Thawalib of Padang Panjang was established by H. Rasul (H. Abdul Karim Amrullah, 1879-1945) in 1918. It was originally an ordinary traditional Minangkabau *madrasah* called Surau Jembatan Besi, with an emphasis on law and theology (Noer, 1973; Djamal, 1975). By the mid-1920's, the Sumatra Thawalib of Padang Panjang and other Thawalib schools had succeeded in transforming themselves into 'modern' religious schools. Arabic was stressed so that students could have independent access to the sources of Islam. Besides improvements in teaching methods and a continued emphasis on the need for modern sciences, the Thawalib schools began to use some important new textbooks. The students of the lower classes had, in addition to the old titles, new books written by their own teachers, such as, Hadji Rasul and his associates. Students in the two highest grades studied from books written by great Islamic theologians and philosophers such as al-Ghazali (d. 1111), Ibn Rushd (d. 1198) and Ibn Sina (d. 1037). In Quranic exegesis, the Thawalib schools used *Tafsir al-Manar* – the work of the pioneers of the Islamic modernist movement in Egypt, Shaikh Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Ridha (d. 1935) (Noer, 1973; Ricklefs, 1993; Yunus, 1992). The teachings of the revolutionary Pan-Islamist *'alim* (scholar), al-Afghani, were also available and known to Thawalib students. The literature used in the Thawalib schools belonged unquestionably to a 'golden age' of Muslim theology and philosophy as well as a period of Islamic modernist thought (Abdullah, 1971, p. 59). It can be concluded that modernists such as Haji Rasul and others developed modern Islamic education in Minangkabau, Sumatra. In 1916 a system of graded classes was introduced. In 1919, desks and a more elaborate curriculum were introduced. Egyptian textbooks began to be used and subjects such as geography and history were added to the religious subjects (Ricklefs, 1993).

In Yogyakarta, the Muhammadiyah (Way of Muhammad) organization started to establish schools in 1920 that met the requirements and standards of Western education and included in their curriculum essential religious education. The Muhammadiyah believed that for the development of the country, it was imperative that the population had first to be educated (Nasution, 1965). Being conscious of the importance of teachers, Ahmad Dachlan – a leader of the Muhammadiyah – began at an early stage to give religious instruction in the government *Kweekschool* (Teacher's Training School) at Yogyakarta, so that *Kweekschool* graduates who became teachers in elementary schools might understand religion. He also opened training schools for male teachers (*mu'allimi>n*) and for the female teachers (*mu'allima>t*) along the lines of the very complicated Dutch educational system. Parallel to these training schools for men and women, schools for male (*muballigh>in*) and female missionaries (*muballigha>t*) were also set up.[11]

In 1913, the first *Al-Irsyad* (Jam'iyyat al-Iṣlāḥ wal-Irshād or Union for Reformation and Guidance) School was founded in Jakarta by Shaykh·Ahmad Surkati, a native of Sudan (1872-1943) who had fallen out with his former employers in *Jami'at al-Khair*. *Al-Irsyad* established coeducational schools taught in Malay, Arabic and Dutch, most of them in Java. Although most of its students were Arabs, some Indonesians also attended (Ricklefs, 1993). These were primary and elementary schools along with a teacher's training school; in addition there was a *takhassus* division (a two-year course) where students could specialize in religion, education or literature. However, it took years before such a fixed structure could be established (Noer, 1973).

The Persyarikatan Ulama (Union of Religious Scholars), the reform movement in the Majalengka area of West Java, was started on the initiative of Haji Abdul Halim. In 1911, six months after his arrival home from Mecca, he had founded an organization, Hayatul Qulub, which contributed both to the economic as well as the educational field.[12] In 1916 a school called *Jam'iyat I'anat al-Muta'allimin* was set up and was very favorably received by other religious teachers in the area. Its system of classes, as well as the co-educational system which Halim introduced into the five-year course institution, was, however, much resented. To improve the quality

of the school, Halim contacted the Jami'at Khair and al-Irsyad of Jakarta. The organization, renamed Persyarikatan Ulama, showed its interest in economics, a fact that was reflected in the curriculum of the organization's educational institution, Santi Asrama (Abode of Peace). Halim founded Santi Asrama, taking Tagore's[13] Shantiniketan as a model for the improvement of his school system. It was divided into three sections: primary, elementary, and secondary. In addition to the ordinary curriculum found in other Persyarikatan Ulama schools, i.e. in religion and other subjects, the students were given instruction in agriculture, woodcrafts, handicrafts, trade, weaving etc. depending on the predisposition of the students. They had to stay in a dormitory under strict discipline, especially regarding as their time schedule and ethical conduct (Noer, 1973; Ricklefts, 1993, 2001).

Another reformist organization, Persatuan Islam (Persis, Muslim Unity) was established in Bandung in the early 1920s by Hadji Zamzam and Hadji Muhammad Junus. As was the case with other organizations, Persis devoted its attention to educational activities, *tabligh* (propaganda) and publications. Its first effort in the educational field was to establish a *madrasah*, originally intended for the children of Persis' members but later expanded to admit other children as well. Around 1927, a special class, or rather a discussion group, was organized for young people who had studied at Dutch schools and who wanted to learn more about Islam. In 1930 a kindergarten and an elementary school were established; and in 1931 the *Mulo* junior high school and a teacher's training school were added. This initiative was originally a response to the demand from various quarters for a greater emphasis on Islamic education (Noer, 1973).

The Naḥdat ʿal-ʿUlamāʾ (NU), a traditionalist or classicalist organization, started to modernize its traditional educational institutions (*pesantren*) in 1935. Following the modernization of education carried out by reformist Islamic organizations, and concerned with the increasing number of Indonesians being educated in educational institutions established by the Dutch colonial government, Kiyai Ḥaji ʿAbdul Wāḥid Hāshim set up a new *madrasah* in the Pesantren Tebuireng, Jombang, East Java, called the Madrasah Niẓāmiyyah. But the old system of *pesantren* was also maintained. The subjects taught in the *madrasah*, besides the

Islamic sciences, were the secular ones taught in the government schools. One of the crucial steps taken by the *madrasahs* in the circle of traditionalist Muslims was the inclusion of the English and Dutch languages, in addition to Indonesian and Arabic, in the curriculum. It was no surprise that the innovation provoked criticism from some of the NU's kiyais. They accused 'Abdul Wāḥid Hāshim of having contaminated the pesantren with worldly affairs (Chumaidy, 1976; Zaini, 1998).

In conclusion, the Islamic traditional educational systems, *pesantrens* and then *madrasahs*, are not a passive or stagnant institution. They have been able to reform or modernize themselves and have overcome changes and new developments including the introduction of the Western educational system.

7. Independence and the New Order Government Policy toward Islamic Education

Indonesia's independence in 1945 opened an opportunity to all Indonesians to acquire education, something most Indonesians had had no access to before. In January 1946, the Ministry of Religious Affairs was established with Mohammad Rasyidi as its first Minister. All religious matters that were formerly the responsibility of other governmental bodies, such as the appointment of *penghulu* (religious officials entrusted with the performance of marriages as well as their dissolution, the calculation of inheritance, etc.) and the appointment of *imams* to mosques, were now transferred to the new Ministry. Its activities included the administration, guidance and supervision of religious education in government and private schools as well as in *madrasahs*, the training of religious teachers and *penghulus,* the administration and supervision of marriages and divorces and the administration and supervision of religious jurisdiction (Nasution, 1965). Moreover, religious education, which came under the jurisdiction of the Ministry, constituted a significant field of activity in which to propagate Islamic ideas.

The agreement between the Minister of Religious Affairs, K.H. A. Wahid Hasyim, and the Minister of Education, Professor Dr. Bahder Djohan, in 1950 might have had tremendous effects. It was agreed at the time that religious schools would offer general education and conversely, general schools would include religious

education. Accordingly, many *santri* (practicing Muslims) parents sent their children to modern schools because there was no longer any concern that they would not receive religious instruction.[14]

The process of modernization in Indonesia, promoted by the New Order government since the late 1960s, had a significant impact on the field of education in general, including the development of Islamic educational institutions. The expansion of education reached a point where universal primary education had been almost attained (Hull and Jones, 1993). In its educational policies, the New Order regime adopted a set of arrangements compatible with its political and economic policies. The regime's primary objective was to create stability for the sake of achieving economic progress through growth-oriented development. It tried to develop a cadre of administrators and technocrats, both in the government bureaucracy and educational institutions, who would have no attachment to political parties and would contribute to the state's development goals. The regime thus initially viewed both 'political' Islam and 'traditional' Islam as obstructions to its vision of a standardized, national system based on western models of education (Porter, 2002).

The New Order government perceived education as an integral part of preparing citizens to become the next generation of 'development-oriented' technocrats, intellectuals and administrators (Porter, 2002, p. 52). Thus, by stages, the regime brought academic and, to a lesser extent, student life within the state's purview, disengaged it from independent political and organizational activity, and sought to re-orient it to the New Order ideology of Pancasila and development, thereby removing the political and ideological influence of Islam from education through educational reorientation programs (Porter, 2002). In the following paragraphs I will focus primarily on the effect of this broad government policy on Islamic education.

Indonesia has had a 'dual' system of education which is largely rooted in the period of Dutch colonialism. The Ministry of Religious Affairs oversees, among other things, Islamic education while the Ministry of National Education administers general education. The government committed itself early to the necessity of professional management and administration to handle modern bureaucracy.

Therefore, the first step taken by the government was to change the leadership of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The government in 1971 appointed Abdul Mukti Ali,[15] a leading scholar in the field of Islamic theology, as the next Minister of Religious Affairs (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003; Porter, 2002).

Mukti Ali presided over the process of modernization of this ministry and the educational institutions under its jurisdiction. He first instituted a process of rationalization of the bureaucracy by appointing those who had graduated from western universities as his staff in the ministry and in academic positions. He then set about rationalizing the educational institutions themselves through a modernization and reorientation of Islamic education (Porter, 2002).[16]

The modernizers[17] embarked on a program to restructure Islamic education, partly in order to replace the 'legalistic' orientation of classical Islamic methodologies with a comparative, 'scientific' approach to Islamic studies that would be more conducive to development goals.[18] These modernizers regarded the prevalence of jurisprudence-centered approaches as responsible for creating 'narrow-minded' scholars and graduates, who, it was thought, were not equipped to deal with the contemporary challenges faced by an industrializing and increasingly urban society.[19]

By the 1970s, the Ministry of Religious Affairs was pursuing several policy initiatives that aimed to improve the quality of private religious educational institutions and state educational institutions under its control, primarily by bringing those institutions more into line with western interdisciplinary curricula from the primary and secondary through to the tertiary levels. On March 24, 1975 the Ministers of Education and Culture, Religious Affairs and Home Affairs issued a 'Joint Decree' stipulating that a *madrasah's* curriculum should consist of 70% secular subjects and 30% religious subjects. The Joint Decree, consequently, also stipulated the equivalence of the certificate of a *madrasah* with that of a secular school (public school) at every level. Theoretically at least, the joint decision was intended to bridge the gap between the religious and general school systems. At the practical level, it was designed to enable *madrasah* students to smoothly shift their studies, if they so wished, to general schools and vice versa (Mudzhar, 1981; Zuhdi, 2006). At the end

of the last level of schooling before university, a graduate of a *Madrasah Aliyah* (Islamic Senior Secondary School) could enter a public university such as the University of Indonesia, the Bogor Istitute of Agriculture, or the University of Gajahmada.At the same time, a graduate of a Sekolah Menengah Umum (Public Senior Secondary School) could be accepted into an IAIN (State Institute of Islamic Studies) or private Islamic higher education/school (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003; Porter, 2002).

Despite many criticisms,[20] the decision opened more options for *madrasah* graduates to continue their studies. Many of them chose to compete with graduates from general schools to study in general universities instead of IAINs, which for many years had been the traditional choice of most *madrasah* students. Many of those who graduated from *madrasahs* were indeed accepted at these universities. As early as the second-half of the 1970s, The Bogor Institute of Agriculture (IPB) started accepting graduates from *madrasahs* to join its talent screening program as graduates from general high schools had been doing for years. The program was designed to give students a chance to study in IPB without enrolment testing, basing itself on the students' academic standings as they appeared in their report cards. This policy was soon followed by other secular universities. Thus, the government decision of 1975 and its subsequent decisions have had a significant effect on the increase in the number of university students in non-religious universities coming from a *santri* background.

In addition, for the first time the Ministry of Religious Affairs presided over policies for the creation of a cadre of western educated Muslim intellectuals by sending IAIN lecturers – most of them IAIN graduates – to Western universities to pursue their graduate degrees. Mukti Ali (Minister of Religious Affairs) also gave attention to the development of the ministry's research and development division in order to advance social and comparative religious studies (Porter, 2002).

With the decree, the New Order government had merely tried to establish a common standard of education and create "a distinctive national identity, national unity and patriotism" (Porter, 2002, p. 52). But after Daoed Joesoef became Minister of Education and Culture in 1978, newer attempts involved not only modernizing

education, but also secularizing the education system. Joesoef regarded many 'Islamic' practices as being responsible for holding back Indonesian education from achieving international standards. The government set in train a program of 'normalization' of campuses. It wanted to create on university campuses a 'scientific community' that required students to concentrate solely on academic pursuits. He abolished the Muslim fasting month as a school holiday and refused Muslim requests for mosques on campuses. In this way, normalization can be seen as part of a program to reduce religious (Islamic) content at educational institutions with the aim of creating a national education system. These initiatives of the Minister of Education and Culture to de-politicize campus life thus went hand in hand with efforts to de-Islamicize and secularize education. But instead of having the effect of secularizing the educational system, the policy became a magnet for the struggle by Muslims for socio-cultural and moral-spiritual revitalization. The educational system was made to become more attuned to Muslim aspirations as support for the idea of modernization led to the spread of Islamic educational institutions. Strong resistance from Muslim organizations and the Minister of Religious Affairs at that time, Alamsyah Ratu Perwiranegara, forced the regime to set aside most of the Education Minister's initiatives for secularizing the Indonesian educational system (Porter, 2002). Even legislation passed in 1989 upheld the 1966 government decision on the compulsory nature of religious instructions in schools (Porter, 2002).

The Minister of Religious Affairs Munawir Syadzali (who served for two terms, 1983-1993) directed the introduction of educational programs that aimed to deepen people's understanding of the "essence" or "substance" of religion. In this way, it was hoped that Indonesian Muslims would be educated out of their "narrow" comprehension of scripture-based formalism, which had led them to attach great importance to the ideal of Islamic institutions regulating the affairs of the state (Porter, 2002, p. 58).

Munawir also re-instituted the policy begun by Mukti Ali of sending IAIN graduates to western institutions. He shared with his predecessors the vision of developing IAIN graduates.[21] From the late-1980s through to the 1990s, the IAINs increasingly became centers of the Islamic sciences, developed according to models

borrowed from Islamic centers of learning in the West. He also presided over the pedagogical approach that acknowledged Islam as an important source of moral values for state and society. In 1987, in response to some concerns among Muslim leaders, that a *madrasah* graduate would acquire less religious knowledge than he was supposed to master, and that Muslim society would cease to produce a sufficient number of qualified *ulema* (Muslim scholars), the ministry launched a new type of senior Islamic high school that provided 70 percent religious and Arabic studies in its curriculum and only 30 percent secular subjects. This initiative was a partial reversal of the earlier policy that saw Islamic schools offer 30 percent religious and 70 percent secular subjects, respectively (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003; Porter, 2002).

However, the policy also reflected other considerations—namely, the upgrading of religious content at Islamic schools came from awareness in government circles that secular campuses had become a breeding ground for 'radical' and 'fundamentalist' religious sentiment and goals, especially among students trained in the physical and technical sciences. Many of these groups were committed to more fundamental and purist goals for the realization of an Islamic society untainted by a secular state (Porter, 2002, p. 60).[22] The government, through the Ministry of Religious Affairs, tried to counter this fundamentalist trend which flourished in many secular universities. Moreover, Munawir's reorientation of religious policy sought to re-take the initiative from student groups and Islamic organizations by increasing the state's involvement in the moral development and management of Islamic society and religious pedagogy (Porter, 2002).

In March 1989, the government passed the National Educational System Act (NESA) No. 2/1989. This would have a significant effect on the development of state-run education systems. First, this act re-emphasized the role of religious education in Indonesian national education. This type of education would fall within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Secondly, this Act (section 39 clause 2b) also states that "curriculum of every type, line, and stage of education should contain religious instruction as a compulsory subject" (Ministry of Education and Culture: 1995, p. 16; Rahim, 2001; Zuhdi, 2006). Finally, this act (clause 11) reinforces the position of the *madrasah* and IAIN as together forming a subsystem of

the national educational system. Therefore, the *madrasah* is also responsible for providing nine-year obligatory education for every Indonesian (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003; Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995).

NESA substantially transformed the *madrasah's* identity – from an Islamic educational institution it became a "general school with specific Islamic character" (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003, p. 72). Once again, this required changes in the *madrasah's* curriculum structure. As a general school, the *madrasah's* curriculum had to be the same as that of a general school under the Ministry of National Education. However, because it was required to have a specifically Islamic character, the *madrasah's* curriculum still contained religious subjects. Consequently, its students attended more lessons than students of a general school. Furthermore, graduates from the *madrasah* now gained more skills and provisions to enter general universities (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003).

The government reorganized education by upgrading religious sciences and studies at state-run Islamic institutions, in keeping with what had already been carried out in the 1970s but under different political circumstances – that is, in the light of a growing political rapprochement between the state and Islam. The upgrading of religious sciences aimed to improve the quality of education at IAINs, by adopting the methodologies of Islamic sciences as taught in western centers of Islamic learning, including Canada, US, Britain, the Netherlands and Australia. Thus, the IAINs progressively improved their quality as centers of Islamic learning[23] (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003).

New Order initiatives to reorient Islamic education and modernize education in general have greatly contributed to the growth in numbers of highly educated Muslims. This increase comes from two sources: general educational institutions and Islamic educational institutions, such as *pesantrens* and *madrasahs*.

Pesantrens and *madrasahs* have been expanding steadily in number especially in the last three decades, according to data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The data clearly indicates the significant growth of *pesantrens and madrasahs* and their ability to accept students and to play a greater role in educating people. In the year 1977, number of *pesantrens/madrasahs* was about 4,195 and number of their

students was about 677,384. Those numbers increased significantly in the year 1981, when number of *pesantrens/madrasahs* was about 5,661, and their students were about 938,397. In the year 1985 number of *pesantrens/madrasahs* increased to 6,239 and number of students were about 1,084,801. Meanwhile in the year 1997 data in the Minister of Religious Affairs indicated that number of *pesantrens/madrasahs* was 9,388 and their students were 1,770,768. As a result, in the last two decades (1977-1997), the number of *pesantrens/madrasahs* reached to 224% and the students climbed to 261% (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003, p. 68).

The significance of these institutions, both private and public, is very clear from their overall number compared to that of general schools under the Ministry of National Education's supervision. According to the data of the years 1994-1995, Ministry of National Education supervised 149,646 elementary schools both private and public ones throughout Indonesia. The number of students was 26,200,023. Meanwhile, the number of junior high schools, both private and public, was 19,442 which all absorbed 6,392,417 students. On the other hand, Ministry of Religious Affairs supervised 24,232 *pesantrens/madrasahs* (607 public/state-funded and 23,625 private) in the level of elementary ones (*Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*) which absorbed 3,521,836 students. On the level of junior high schools (*Madrasah Tsanawiyah*) there were 8,129 (582 state-funded and 7,547 private) which absorbed 1,353,229 students (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003, p. 69).

The most remarkable response has been on the part of Muslim communities that have built private *madrasahs* and *pesantrens*. An increasing number of *pesantrens* also include *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*, *Tsanawiyah*, and *Aliyah*, and even a general/secular school as part of their campus. Over the past two decades however, one of the most important developments is the growing numbers of so called Elite Islamic Schools, Integrated Islamic Schools, Excellent Islamic Schools, and in some cases, Islamic Boarding Schools. These schools have produced quite a large number of secondary/high school graduates who continue on to secular universities.

In higher education, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has developed the IAIN into an academic institution that does not restrict itself to religious subjects. Many of the IAINs have opened departments for general studies such as mathematics, physics,

social sciences, etc., to accommodate *madrasah* graduates. It has taken other measures, such as recruiting graduates from Western universities like Harun Nasution.[24] Another policy was to send graduates of IAINs to Western universities such as the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University. In turn, these graduates from Western universities, on their return, have greatly influenced the policies of religious institutional development, especially in the IAIN. They have and continue to develop in state-run IAINs a much broader understanding of the philosophical, theological and historical perspectives of religion. As a result, graduates of IAINs tend to hold more moderate and tolerant views of Islam regarding other religions and the state (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003; Porter, 2002). In addition, the program has been influential in improving the quality and quantity of the human resources of IAINs and of Indonesia in general. For example, in 1972, only one year after Mukti Ali was appointed as its head, the ministry had already sent about 55 IAIN lecturers and its own officials to study abroad. Mukti Ali's program was continued by Munawir Syadzali beginning in 1985. Some lecturers were sent to study in the US, Australia, and Turkey. The biggest program involved cooperation between McGill University and the IAIN system. From its inception in 1989 to the year 2001, the cooperation effort, which was signed by the Government of Canada (Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA) and the Ministry of Religious Affairs, had given scholarships to 99 lecturers at IAINs, allowing them to continue their studies in the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University. Other programs have included, library and management courses, lecturer exchanges, and the publication of anthologies on Islamic studies and other topics. During this same period the program has produced 12 PhDs, 82 MAs, and 5 diploma holders in Islamic Studies. The program has also given scholarships to 75 IAIN librarians (26 of them women) to continue their studies at the University of Indonesia, Jakarta (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003).

In general, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has implemented five programs to ameliorate the IAINs: first, institutional development; second, enhancing the quality of lecturers; third, participation in spreading new ideas; fourth, curriculum development; and, fifth, mastering methodology as an approach to studying Islam and

other fields. In institutional development some cooperation programs have been set up with both national and international institutions.[25]

Since the mid-1970s the Jakarta and Yogyakarta IAINs have operated graduate programs to assist the improvement of their academic quality and other IAINs throughout Indonesia. Students, most of them IAIN lecturers who came to study in the programs, have increased steadily in number from year to year.[26] In addition, the number of IAIN lecturers who hold Ph.D. and M.A. degrees has increased tremendously.[27]

One of the most spectacular achievements of the IAINs since the 1970s has been the intense participation of IAIN students, graduates, and lecturers in the religious, social, cultural and political discourses of the country. Many of their columns appear in national and regional newspapers and magazines. Many graduates and lecturers of IAINs also publish scientific articles in national and international journals such as *Studia Islamika* (IAIN Jakarta), *al-Jāmi'ah* (IAIN Yogyakarta), *Islamic Studies* (Islamabad, Pakistan), *Hamdard Islamicus* (Karachi, Pakistan), *Journal of Islamic Studies* (Oxford), *Muslim-Christian Relations* (Birmingham, England), and *Qur'anic Studies* (London) (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003). Their writings are increasingly concerned with questions regarding the proper role of Islam in national development and how Islamic values can be reconciled with Western rationalism, rather than with the nature of an Islamic state. They employ a combination of empirical and historical approaches in formulating their vision of Muslim society and Indonesia. Their writings are believed to have influenced views on religion and state, and have impacted on intellectual discourses and national issues. Thus, the IAINs may be considered to play an important role in the dynamics of Islamic intellectual discourses in Indonesia, since they emphasize a broader definition and understanding of Islam (Martin, Woodward, and Atmaja, 1997; Jabali and Jamhari, 1424/2003).

Increasing numbers of highly educated Muslims are also graduating from general educational institutions. Since Indonesia became an internationally recognized sovereign state in December 1949, general education has been open to all citizens regardless of their social background, including ordinary Muslims. A large

number of educated Muslims started to emerge in the middle of the 1960s. In those years, the numbers of *sarjana muda* (BA) and *sarjana lengkap* (Drs.) holders was overwhelming (Hasbullah, 2000; Lev, 1992). In the 1970s and 1980s the number of Ph.D. holders increased. Most of the latter now hold academic positions. They constitute the emerging Muslim middle class who, in the following decades, would start to influence significantly, among others, general educational institutions.

The overwhelming presence of many university lecturers/professors and students coming from a *santri* background has influenced the atmosphere on many of Indonesia's campuses.[28] Since the 1970s, Islamic activities have flourished in and around university campuses in different cities such as Yogyakarta, Jakarta, and Bandung. The Salman Mosque in ITB is something of a pioneer of campus-centered Islamic activities. It conducts various social, academic, educational and publication activities for students and non-students. The example of Salman Mosque was soon followed by other campus mosques in Jakarta, Bogor, Yogyakarta, Semarang, Surabaya, Malang, Medan, Makassar and other cities throughout Indonesia. Subsequently, mosques, both on and off campus, became a new focus of socio-religious-political activities and discussion groups and helped fuel an Islamic awakening among students.

Besides the 14 IAINs founded by the government, the number of private Islamic general universities has also increased since independence. The first private Islamic general university was founded in Yogyakarta. It was planned by a group of Muslim leaders in Jakarta in April 1945, four months prior to the declaration of Indonesian independence. On July 8, 1945, this institution of Islamic higher learning, called Sekolah Tinggi Islam (College of Islamic Studies), was officially founded in Yogyakarta, although it was not until April 10, 1946 that the college started to function. Eventually, on March 10, 1948, the college was transformed into a university called the Islamic University of Indonesia (UII, Universitas Islam Indonesia) with four faculties: Islamic Studies, Law, Economics, and Education (Mudzhar, 2003). To date, UII has been the leading private Islamic general university in Indonesia. Other private Islamic general universities are found in almost every big city throughout Indonesia. There is no doubt that the presence of the universities has

had a significant effect on the number of educated Muslims and the stronger role of Islam in Indonesian society as a whole through the emergence of a Muslim middle class.[29] In the following sections, we will examine this phenomenon and explore how it is linked to the establishment of elite Islamic schools.

8. The Rise of the Muslim Middle Class and the Emergence of Elite Islamic Schools

The foundation of elite Islamic schools may be attributed to the role played by the Muslim middle class in the late 1970s and especially the 1980s and 1990s. The phenomenon has been associated with the success of development efforts under the New Order regime and was a significant development in the history of Indonesia. In the earlier years of the New Order regime, the strongly Islamic (*santri*) portion of the Indonesian population was excluded from positions of real political power by Soeharto, so that they gradually found themselves marginalized politically. Perhaps taking note of Snouck Hurgronje's (1970) ideas regarding Islam as employed by the Dutch colonial government, the New Order regime also showed respect for Islam as a private religious practice, but it was also determined not to allow it to become a powerful political force. The Muslim political parties were compelled by the government to coalesce against their wishes in the PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan) or United Development Party in 1973 as part of the regime's corporatist strategy. They were gradually pushed into a position of open hostility to the Soeharto regime during the 1970s over various issues of great concern to them. However, for the past two decades, there has been a shift in the religious landscape, as increasing numbers of so called 'statistical' (*abangan* in Clifford Geertz's (1976) term as opposed to *santri* (pious) or nominal Muslims have sought to deepen their faith and adhere more closely to the prescriptions of Islam (Hefner, 2002). There has been a steady rise in Muslim consciousness and ritual practices,[30] especially among the urban middle classes and student population. The success of the New Order government in economic development, managing its political system and the emergence of a new generation of Islamic leaders are considered some of the factors

that brought about the rise of a Muslim middle class (Mackie and MacIntyre, 1994; Porter, 2002; Ricklefs, 1993).

The new Muslim middle class tends to send its children to reputable schools, in line with its status. Although one of the most significant achievements of the New Order regime has been the expansion of education, most public schools have serious problems of quality such as, the high proportion of inadequately trained teachers and the very basic school buildings. None of the schools operating – public general schools, private general Islamic schools, private and public *madrasahs* – seem fully to satisfy the taste and needs of many members of the Muslim middle and upper classes.[31] No wonder that members of the Indonesian middle class, including the Muslims, choose to send their children to reputed public and private schools, or international schools, in order to provide them with an excellence education. Many of them also send their children abroad to foreign countries such as Singapore, North America and Western Europe. But many of the Muslim middle class choose to found schools with better trained teachers, better equipped buildings, and a more comprehensive curriculum compared to conventional Islamic schools. Muslim middle class parents want their children to be well-educated and at the same time, well-cultivated in Islam. They want their children to acquire moral excellence and loftiness of character and exist in a favourable intellectual environment which, they expect, will lead to happiness in their life.[32]

The pioneer elite Islamic school is the Islamic School of al-Azhar which is located in the Al Azhar Great Mosque complex in Kebayoran Baru, an affluent area in South Jakarta. Founded in the early 1960s, the name of the school was inspired by the University of al-Azhar in Cairo, Egypt, in recognition of a visit by the *Sheikh* of al-Azhar to Jakarta. It was built in the spirit of Islamic modernism by the late Prof. Hamka, who received his Doctor Honoris Causa from the University of al-Azhar in the late 1970s and was the general chairman of the Council of Indonesian *ulama* (religious scholars). Until the end of the 1980s, the school of al-Azhar was the model for Islamic schools in the rest of Indonesia. The Islamic School of al-Azhar expanded rapidly, establishing branches in Surabaya, Semarang, Cirebon, Sukabumi, Serang, and Bekasi, while a number of other schools became affiliated with the system of Al

Azhar, including pre-schools, elementary and secondary schools (Azra, 2000, 74-75). Other elite Islamic schools are the SMU (senior secondary school) Insan Cendekia (f. in 1994) in Serpong, West Java, the Islamic School of al-Izhar in Pondok Labu, South Jakarta (f. 1987), the SMU (senior secondary school) Madania, located in Parung, West Java (f. 1996), Nurul Fikri Islamic School in Cimanggis, West Java (f. 1990s), and the SMU (senior secondary school) Muthahhari in Bandung, West Java (f. in the 1990s). There are also elite Islamic schools in other big cities in Central Java, such as Yogyakarta, and in East Java as well. Indeed, the development of these schools attracted me to look closer into the characteristics and the culture of the school.

9. Summary

This chapter attempted to demonstrate that the process of modernization in Indonesia had been promoted by the New Order government since the late 1960s. It has had a significant impact on the development of Islamic educational institutions, like *pesantren*, *madrasah*, and *sekolah*. These developments have been actually increasing since the spread of Islam in Indonesia, the Middle East connection, Dutch colonial policy, and the encounter with modernity. In this chapter I have also presented the impact that political and economic situation and globalization have had on the current development of Islamic education and the significant role played by a new middle class of highly educated Muslims in the rise of a new type of Islamic modern school in Indonesia.

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[1] In Iran, for example, the Islamic Republic government tried to separate Western culture, which it rejects, from Western science and technology which it is willing to absorb (Menashri, 1992, p. viii and 17).

[2] Banned from proselytizing to Muslims, Catholic and Protestant missionaries either tried to convert Jews and Eastern Christians or emphasized a humanitarian mission of medicine and schools for all. The missionaries also led the way in education for girls -- with the first state girls schools being established in Istanbul, Cairo, and Tehran in 1858, 1873, and 1897/98, respectively (Reid, 1995, pp. 413-414).

[3] School for training leader of prayer and preacher.

[4] This "return" of Islam—and the recent ascendancy of political Islam in Turkey-- showed how strong Islam is in Turkey, despite its suppression by Kemal Ataturk for a quarter of a century (Rahman, 1982, pp. 93-94).

[5] *Kitab kuning* is any book written by a classical or medieval Islamic scholar used in *pesantren* teaching..

[6] In 1900-1902 the *Dokter Djawa School,* an institution for training vaccinators was reorganized into the *School Tot Opleiding Van Indische Artsen,* abbreviated as *Stovia,* a school for training doctors, in which the Indonesian sense of unity and nationalism originated. Other schools followed the agricultural school in 1903, the veterinary school in 1907 and the law school in 1908. Colleges were introduced in 1920's, that of engineering in Bandung in 1902, that of law in 1924 and that of medicine in 1927 (van Neil, 1960, pp. 28, 49, 51-55, 222 and 228 passim).

[7] According to Yunus (1992) the names *surau* and *rangkang* still occur, but the word *pesantren* has already become a common Indonesian word. Officially the term *pondok pesantren* (*santri* hostel) is used.

[8] The notable example of that kind of *pesantrens* is Pondok Pesantren Modern or Pondok Modern Gontor *(PMG),* the first, and until now, leading, modern *pesantren* in Java.

[9] For further discussion on the Adabiyah School, see Noer, 1973, 65-66; Yunus, 1992, pp. 156-158.

[10] At the elementary levels, the pupils used books which were especially written by Zainuddin Labay and his colleagues. The upper classes used new textbooks from Egypt (Noer, 1973).

[11] In this way the Muhammadiya*h* creates a new type of educated Muslim acquainted with both religious and natural sciences: a Muslim armed with religion and un-ashamed to call himself a Muslim in front of others, since he understands that his religion is in harmony with the modern age (Nasution, 1965, 37-38).

[12] During his three-year stay in the Holy City of Mecca, Halim became acquainted with writings of Muhammad Abduh and Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, although he always adhered to the Sha>fi`i> madzhab (Noer, 1973, 69).

[13] Greatest writer in modern Indian literature, Bengali poet, novelist, educator, and an early advocate of Independence for India. Tagaore won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. Two years later he was awarded the knighthood, but he surrendered it in 1919 as a protest against the Massacre of Amritsar, where British troops killed some 400 Indian demonstrators. Tagore's influence over Gandhi and the founders of modern India was enormous, but his reputation in the West as a mystic has perhaps mislead his Western readers to ignore his role as a reformer and critic of colonialism.

[14] Most practicing Muslims (*santris*) in the colonial period resisted modern education as it was seen as something 'foreign', connected with the Dutch colonial government who are 'unbelievers' (Ali, 2000, pp. 372-376; Abdullah, 1972, pp. 179-245).

[15] A graduate from McGill University in 1957, studying under the eminent Islamicist, Professor Wilfred Cantwell Smith, at the Institute of Islamic Studies, he pioneered the science of comparative religions in Indonesia.

[16] This included recruitment of graduates from western universities into academic position (with no background of political activism), who shared the New Order's anti-party and its vision for modernization.

[17] They are people such as Mukti Ali, Kafrawi Ridwan, Muljanto Sumardi, Harun Nasution, and much later Munawir Sjadzali.

[18] They designed a program of Islamic Studies which employed various approaches (historical, sociological, anthropological, critical and comparative studies with other religions etc) and covered many aspects of Islam (philosophy, mysticism, history, art and literature) to replace the confessional and legal-jurisprudential orientation of prevalent Islamic studies in the 1950s and 1960s.

[19] The government was concerned that this preoccupation with a legalistic approach to Islamic education had encouraged psychological attachment to the ideological and political goals of establishing an Islamic state (Porter, 2002, p. 55).

[20] There are at least three questions concerning the implementation of the joint decision: (1) the teachers of the secular subjects are still the ones previously trained in the Islamic religious educational institutions, (2) only about 2 per cent of the *madrasahs* are run by the state so that even if the joint decision was efficiently implemented, it would only reach a small proportion of the *madrasah* population, (3) the fact that there is a very strong belief in Indonesia that any *madrasah* graduate is necessarily unequipped with secular knowledge (Mudzhar, 1981, pp. 46-47).

[21] See note no. 10.

[22] Some groups urge their female members to wear *hijab* (veil) and simple clothing as well as avoid the use of cosmetics. Others emphasize the application of severe punishment for theft and adultery, the prohibition of gambling and the establishment of a non-interest banking system.

[23] The best example of upgrading of religious sciences to improve the quality of education at IAINs, is the cooperation since 1989 between IAIN and McGill University, Montreal, sponsored by the Indonesian government and Canadian International Development Agency/CIDA (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003, pp. 25-27).

[24] Harun Nasution was the first Indonesian who got a PhD from the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University in 1967. He implemented and elaborated upon the comparative approach studies of religion. In 1973, Nasution became Rector of the IAIN Jakarta serving under Mukti Ali. He wrote a textbook for a new IAIN curriculum, which was to be based roughly on the curriculum of the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill. The textbook was entitled 'Islam Viewed from Various Aspects, which sought to apply a 'comprehensive', 'comparative', and 'rational' understanding of Islamic knowledge, philosophy, theology, mysticism and history (Martin, Woodward, and Atmaja, 1997, pp. 158-160; Porter, 2002, p. 56).

[25] Such as McGill University, INIS (Netherlands), University of Indonesia (Jakarta), University of Gajah Mada, State University of Yogyakarta, Indonesian Islamic University (Yogyakarta), Al-Azhar University (Cairo), The Ford Foundation, The Asia Foundation (Jabali and Jamhari,2003, pp. 27-28).

[26] The total number of graduate students at IAIN Jakarta from 1970s until 1999 was around 700. The total number of graduate students at IAIN Yogyakarta from 1970s until 1999 was 150 (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003, pp. 29-30).

[27] In IAIN Jakarta for instance, the number of Ph.D. holders in 1984/1985 was 7. In 1988/1989 the number became 12, and in 1998/1999 it became 36. Meanwhile the number of M.A. holders has also increased. In 1984/1985 the number was 10. It became 19 in 1988/1989, and it became 76 in 1998/1999. In 1998/1999 the number of Ph.D. holders in IAIN Yogyakarta was 11, in IAIN Banjarmasin (South Kalimantan) 5, in IAIN Surabaya (East Java) 17, IAIN Makassar (South Sulawesi) 27, in IAIN Padang 13, in IAIN Bandung (West Java) 15, and IAIN Medan 16 (Jabali and Jamhari, 2003, pp. 30-31).

[28] The number of high school and university students has increased from year to year. In 1969 the number of high school students was 530,982, and in 1996 the number became 4,225,823. University students were 176,900 in 1969 and the number became 2,303,469 in 1996. If we assume conservatively that at least 70% of them were Muslims, the effect would be tremendous on the field of education and society (Suryadi, 1999, pp. 170-171).

[29] There are more than 30 private Islamic universities throughout Indonesia.

[30] Many modern Muslims in Indonesia are more self-conscious of being Muslims and they are motivated to express that consciousness in many ritual practices such as five times of obligatory prayers daily, Friday prayer congregation, and performing hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca.

[31] There are, however, some excellent *madrasahs*. *Madrasah* Pembangunan (*Madrasah* of Development) in Ciputat, south of Jakarta is one of the most competent and popular *madrasahs*. Another favorite and high qualified *madrasahs* is *Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah* Negeri 1 (Public Elementary *Madrasah* 1) in Malang, East Java. Ministry of Religious Affairs now makes those *madrasahs* to become model for other *madrasahs* in Indonesia (Azra, 2000, pp. 77-79).

[32] See Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of *cultural reproduction* and *cultural capital* to see this phenomenon (Abercrombie, Hill, and Turner, 2000, pp. 81-82; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, pp. 8-9, 10, 26, 31-36, 59 and 210).

Chapter 3

Doing Fieldwork: A Case Study of Al Azhar Islamic School

Traditional ethnographic case studies focus on description and explanation; their goal is to reconstruct and classify reality in order to integrate data into a set of theoretical constructs. Such work is typically inductive, generative and constructive (Goetz and LeCompte, 1981, p. 54)

Descriptions are complex, holistic and involving a myriad of interconnected variables (Stake, 1978).

1. Introduction

In this chapter I focus on the details of the fieldwork that I carried out in 2003. It provides the sources and descriptions of different stages of data collection; the interview guide and process; the description of research settings and participants; and the process of analyzing and interpreting the data. Following on my analysis in the previous chapter of the development and transformation of Islamic education, it offers a qualitative inquiry into the phenomenon of the emergence of elite Islamic schools in contemporary Indonesia, focusing mainly on the character and culture of Al Azhar Islamic School (from this point onwards, identified as AAIS), which has attracted many Muslims from middle and upper class communities, especially in the urban area of Jakarta, Indonesia.

2. Overview of the Methodology
2.1. Case Study and Educational Evaluation Approach

Why did I employ an evaluative case study approach for this study? The answer to this question lies in the fact that this approach is useful in the study of individuals, organizations, societies, cultures, or human affairs (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Merriam, 1988; Patton, 1990; Stake, 1978; Yin, 1994). As a study of a particular case, it is an empirical inquiry into a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context. In a case study, "boundaries are not clearly evident between phenomenon and context, and multiple sources of evidence are used" (Yin, 1994, p.

23). There were also other reasons for selecting the case study method. Stake (1978) for instance argues that "a case study enhances our knowledge of humanity only if its object becomes accessible to us through the attitudes that are founded on the relation between life, expression, and understanding" (p. 5). Thus, "a case study is both a process of inquiry and the product of that inquiry" (Stake, 2003, p. 136). Due to the constraints of time and finance for this study, I only employed some ethnographic techniques in terms of interviews to cover school life and activities.

I have also tried to draw on what Eliot Eisner (1991) calls an "educational connoisseurship" or "educational criticism" approach to examining educational context. Educational criticism as a form of qualitative research that relies on the abilities of the researcher to study school life in much the same way that "an art critic studies a painting or symphonic work" (Hacth, 2002, p. 29). The researcher as connoisseur or expert uses qualitative methods to study a program or organization, but does so from a particular perspective drawing heavily on his or her own judgements about what constitutes excellence. This is a practical and personalistic version of *"orientational qualitative inquiry"* (Patton, 2002, p. 172) or *"prefigured"* educational criticism (Eisner 1985, p. 184). Indeed, the connoisseur approach has many elements that relate to naturalistic inquiry (Patton, 2002) and construct stories or portraits of what they experienced and understood in the settings explored (Hacth, 2002, p. 29).

2.2. Case Studies of Schools

There are a number of examples of case studies of schools that have contributed to exploring this work methodologically. One study sought to capture the culture of the schools, the essential features, the general character, the values that define the curricular goals and institutional structures, and the individual styles and rituals. Another study focus on the relationship between religious doctrine and educational practice; the development of the school in terms of its founding, governance, curriculum, and campus life; and the historical and sociological traditions of schools in the village and the city. These studies use several approaches,

such as the ethnographic case study; phenomenology and grounded theory; thick description; participant observation; aesthetic and experiential dimensions. The following are an example of case studies that concentrate on school life and practices that provide valuable insights into my research. I will describe the similarities in the following section.

Kelly's (1997) study on "A Muslim School in Montreal" is almost similar to my study. She and I focus on the characteristics of Islamic schools and why do parents send their children to the Islamic schools. Her research is based primarily on fieldwork among the students, teachers, and families associated with a well-established Muslim co-educational (mixed-sex) school offering both primary and secondary education. The fieldwork began in July 1996 and continued throughout the 1996-1997 school year. Much of the data presented is culled from interviews with community members and participant observation at a Muslim school.

One of the most surprising findings of her fieldwork in the Muslim school was that many – about one third – of the children came from Muslim families that are not more religious than most, and certainly not more religiously observant than many devout families who send their children to public or private non-Muslim schools. In fact, one story she was told highlights the argument that religious practice is probably not the primary issue involved in many parents' decisions to choose Muslim schooling. One girl attended the school for several years, and like many of the female students, she wore a headscarf only at school. However, sometime after graduating, she decided that she would wear the *hijab* (head scarves) "full time." Her parents, who had nonetheless chosen to send her to the Islamic school, where the *hijab* is promoted as proper dress for Muslim women, objected strenuously.

Kelly's field research focused on an Islamic atmosphere that was created formally through classes in Islamic studies, Qur'an, and Arabic; twice daily communal prayers and time-table adjustments for Muslim holidays; and the wearing of the *hijab* by girls and Muslim female teachers. Informally it was established through teachers' incorporation of Muslim experiences into their lesson plans and through shared expectations of Muslim social interaction. Interviews with parents

revealed that while formally religious aspects of the school were important, Arabic language classes, academic standards, behavioural and moral norms, integration, and a sense of belonging to a wider community were equally important. Vilification of Muslims in the media and fears that these attitudes were present in the public school system had caused some families to leave the public system. Parents believed that their children were receiving a good academic education and were nurtured rather than excluded as members of a minority religious/cultural group.

Longacre's study (1993) is also an interesting one. This is a history of Wilson College, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, from 1868 until 1981. It attempts to discover why Wilson, a small, private liberal arts college for women, managed to survive despite financial and enrolment problems which forced many other institutions to close in the 1960s and 1970s. Her study locates Wilson historically among institutions of higher learning in the United States. It traces the development of the college in terms of its founding, governance, curriculum, and campus life; and examines events leading up to Wilson's near demise in 1979. Wilson's small size, its practice of encouraging congenial interaction between students and faculty, its commitment to teaching, its long term affiliation with the Presbyterian Church, and its close ties with the community of Chambersburg are cited as factors contributing to Wilson's renaissance.

What makes Wilson more interesting than other small women's colleges of its class was the fact that its alumnae, students, and faculty successfully fought the Trustees' decision to close the college because of financial pressures and dwindling enrolment. In 1979 Wilson became the only college in the United States ever ordered to remain open by a court of law.

The Good High School (Lightfoot, 1983) offers portraits of six American high schools. The author sought to capture the culture of the schools, the essential features, the general character, the values that define the curricular goals and institutional structures, and the individual styles and rituals. She also attempted to trace the connections between individuals and the institution – how the inhabitants create the

school's culture and how they are shaped by it as well as how individual personality and style influence the collective character of the school.

An essential element for creating a portrait, according to Lightfoot (1983) is the process of human interaction. As a social scientist, she tried to develop a form of inquiry that would embrace many of the descriptive, aesthetic, and experiential dimensions. She entered into relationships with the subjects on an empathetic level while maintaining a full and critical awareness and a discerning gaze. Therefore, she created portraits that would inspire shock and recognition in the subjects, and new understandings and insights in the viewers or readers. For this purpose, she utilized not only the techniques of observation, interviewing, and ethnographic description. Finally, this study offered a rare view of human experience in each of these high schools. It was an important step for social scientists, who had tended to use methods of analysis that have precluded the perspectives and voices of school populations. It was also a critical lens for teachers and administrators who rarely have the opportunity to see their schools "whole" because in the immediacy of practice they must inevitably accept the narrow view connected with their roles.

A book similar in intent to my research is Alan Peshkin's (1986) book, *God's Choice: the Total World of a Fundamentalist Christian School*, which is also a highly regarded example of a qualitative case study. It examines the Bethany Baptist Academy, its faculty and students, and the Christian school movement in general. Examining the relationship between religious doctrine and educational practice, he attempts to show what a fundamentalist Christian school is really like, and to identify its most typical characteristics. He also tries to establish what it is that makes such schools attractive to many Americans.

According to him, if a school is founded on what a given religion regards as absolute truth, it must follow that its doctrine is not subject to critical scrutiny. For adherents of that religion, the only proper response to such doctrine is belief and obedience, and the best means of establishing this response is the total institution. With its basis in Scripture interpreted literally, the fundamentalist Christian school is operated as an institution with one doctrine, one truth, and one way. A setting like

this provides an opportunity to learn how parents and school authorities justify rejecting the diversity that is not only allowed but often celebrated in the public school.

Peshkin also attempted to follow the advice of Pastor Muller, being as faithful as he could in attending Sunday school, Sunday morning and evening services, and Wednesday evening services followed by the men's prayer group, and in reading the Bible daily. In this sense, he tried not to be a stranger. But when he left he was still largely a stranger to everyone, a consequence of the curious way that fieldworkers have of being present without really being present. Indeed, even being a member of the same community does not guarantee one insider status and easy access to the school community. From my experience I was a stranger too in the Islamic School of Al Azhar, since I was not associated with its programs and activities.

I found my self facing the same feelings and challenges as Peshkin, but with one big difference. I was a Muslim in an Islamic school and thus took for granted the rules, the reality of people, and the traditions of school life. This also enabled me to build relationships with the leader and the community surrounding the school. Peshkin (1980) on the other hand admitted:

> I am a Jew – which is to say that I was born of Jewish parents and grandparents; I grew up in an overwhelmingly Jewish neighborhood in Chicago; married a Jewish girl, joined a temple, and sent my children to Sunday school. (p. 17)

He spent eighteen months as a participant observer in the life of the Bethany church community. A participant observer should commit to understanding other people on their own terms; to respect their values and decisions; to be as patient and comprehensive in the gathering of data; and ultimately, to consider the meaning of the phenomena. Peshkin agreed with the anthropologist Robert Jay's view that fieldwork is not "two unrelated things – reportable knowledge and personal adventure" (Jay, 1974 cited in Peshkin, 1986, p.16) and endorsed Jay's view that the two can be joined "consciously" and "publicly" without damaging either.

In general, Peshkin's study shares many similarities with my own. He and I studied a religious school, private and funded by the community. He used an ethnographic case study approach, while I employ an evaluative case study and

ethnographic techniques to observe school programs and activities, teacher relationship, and students' performance and understanding of their religious teaching, etc. Therefore, while my work is not as deep as Peshkin due to constraints of time, money, and resources, nevertheless he did inspire me to look deeply at the nature and the traditions of Islamic school life and the development of elite Islamic schools in recent years.

The authors of these studies, in general, had objectives that were very similar to my own. I wished to understand the program and performance of the AAIS high school. I was interested in investigating the school organization and leadership, the teaching learning process, the curriculum, the relationship between teachers and students, and parent involvement in the school program. I believe that an evaluative case study method is the method that could best capture these aspects of school life and culture. Based on these goals and the success with which the studies mentioned above had achieved similar objectives. I felt that an evaluative case study was the method that could best serve my purposes.

The study used a qualitative interpretive approach to address the feelings, notions and beliefs of the principal, teachers, parents and students of the AAIS high school as to how this school had become so attractive to the Muslim community, from the middle and upper classes. Qualitative research is by its very nature process-oriented. Much attention is given to details that otherwise are overlooked in a scientific positivistic approach. Aspects such as context, time, individuality, subjectivity and inter-subjectivity are addressed with much concern. The perspectives of principal, teachers, students, and parents on the process of building trust and satisfaction are essential to understanding how schools operate and how they work to become better schools.

I made some limited use of descriptive statistics in order to get an estimate of where students' learning is headed in terms of religious values; the phenomenon of change is a highly subjective experience that requires careful interpretation. The narrative structure of ethnographic writing will compel the writer to do as Davis

(1974) advised: "I do think it is essential that you try somehow to find some kind of story which will give you an opening, a stratagem with respect to the data" (p. 311).

The narrative approach will, thus, insist that the researcher inject much of what respondents actually said during the interviews and will allow the researcher, as well as the reader, to interpret the meaning and significance of their experiences. The narrative style adopted in the present study has resulted in the facts making more sense and being more meaningful, thanks to its reflexivity, subjectivity, holistic style, and researcher implication. The facts-order concept of fieldwork checking leaves lots of room for verification by comparing data with literature in order to sort out lies, ignorance, and assumptions (Van Maanen, 1983).

The validity of this study is strengthened by employing triangulation. Using triangulation, the researcher collects data through a combination of interviews, observations, and document analysis (Merriam, 2002). For example, what someone tells me in an interview can be checked against what I observe in a field visit or what I read or see in documents or artifacts relevant to the investigation. The use of multiple methods also strengthens the internal validity of a study. Further, since reliability often has to do with the instrumentation of the study, and since the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, the researcher can become a more reliable instrument through training and practice. The reliability of documents and personal accounts can also be assessed through various techniques of analysis and triangulation (Merriam, 2002, p. 27).

In this study the respondents' first-hand accounts provides perspectives on what, in their view, constitutes a good school. I could not, however, avoid intersubjectivity (Carspecken, 1996; Kirby and Mckenna, 1989) or reflexivity (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995 p. 16; Altheide and Johnson, 1994; Maguire, 1997). Furthermore, I brought to the context the cultural and educational experiences that both Indonesia and Canada have provided me, thus making it both an insider's and an outsider's account. I was an insider in the sense that I have a common shared knowledge and experience of the region and of Islamic education in general, and an outsider in that my research agenda, although personal, was shaped by my work as a

lecturer in other Islamic educational institutions and was not associated with the elite Islamic schools program. The case study, then, provides a rich narrative filled with respondents' experiences of their achievements, academic and extracurricular activities, teacher relationships with students and parents, and school life.

The research literature, respondents' feelings and opinions, school reports and documentation, and ethnography are all employed in concert to explore and give meaning to respondents' views of educational change in Indonesian Islamic schools. Junker (1960) stresses the place of "theoretical analysis and insightful experience" as follows:

> The problem of learning to be a field observer is like learning to live in society. It is the problem of making good enough guesses from previous experience so that one can get into a social situation in which to get more knowledge or experience to enable him to make good guesses to get into a better situation, ad infinitum (p. xv).

When I decided to conduct research in 2003 into the phenomenon of the emergence of the elite Islamic school and its effect on Islamic education in Indonesia, my task was to try to make sense of what was going on at the AAIS high school that could be described as a departure from old style Islamic education. Was there something new to show that school performance and environment have changed as a result of the changing paradigm of Islamic education in Indonesia? I will be addressing this question in the next chapter.

3. Research Design

3.1. Fieldwork

The fieldwork for this study was conducted in Jakarta from July to October 2003. My work actually began with field visits to eight elite Islamic high schools: Al Azhar, Lazuardi and Al Izhar in Jakarta; Madania and Dwi Warna in Parung; Insan Cendekia in Serpong; and Mutahhari in Bandung in the province of West Java. These schools all display the characteristics of new Islamic schools in contemporary Indonesia. However, because of limited time and finances, I decided to focus on a single school, but one that would best help me to see and understand the operation of the institution

through the eyes, voices, and actions of its participants – principal, teachers, students, and parents. Therefore, the greater part of my research activity was spent on observing the AAIS in Jakarta, which was the pioneer elite Islamic school in contemporary Indonesia. Ultimately, observing is one important way to gain first-hand knowledge of the issues under study (Erickson, 1986; Patton, 1980).

The main objective of my fieldwork was to widen and update my knowledge of the current educational situation in Indonesia. In order to achieve this, I had to meet with government leaders both in the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Religious Affairs who are responsible for the improvement of the national education system in Indonesia. In addition I had to meet with the chairman of the school foundation and members of the school community, such as principal, teachers, staff, students, and parents at the AAIS who are responsible for leading and managing the school programs. Finally I had to meet educational practitioners with experience in developing the national and Islamic education systems. During my visit, I spent almost three months (from July 16 to October 10, 2003) in attempting to gain access, gathering resources, and collecting other information related to my study.

3.2. Sources of Data

This study uses five main data sources. They are: (1) transcripts of audio-taped interviews; (2) field notes; (3) classroom observation; (4) a survey; and (5) documentation in the form of school reports for 2001-2002; the 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 Book of Education Information of Islamic High School of Al Azhar, the 2001-2002 yearbook, and various bulletins.

Data was collected in three stages. The first stage of the study was designed to provide baseline data regarding practical issues including organization, regulations, facilities, instructional program, personnel and enrolment, in order to describe the operation of the school. The data collected in this phase was intended to be descriptive in nature. The second stage of the study was designed to take a deeper look into the characteristics of the AAIS. This entailed semi-structured interviews

with the chairman of the school foundation, the principal, and a small sample of teachers, students, and parents as well as a survey of student's grade 11 results on-site visits to observe the day-to-day life of the school. The third stage was to identify the opinions and expectations on the side of the government – the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs as policy makers – and educational practitioners towards the development of elite Islamic schools: how they work, how they should work, and how issues have been resolved. This stage builds on the findings of the study and focuses on recommendations for policy and change.

I chose educational practitioners and policy makers based on their expertise, their availability, and whether their concerns were relevant to my study. I was lucky, because I know them well and even worked for them for several years before I came to Montreal for the second time. They are Wahyu, Hasan, Bambang, Ali, Rahman, and Sigit (pseudonyms). Wahyu (practitioner) and Hasan (policy maker) were my seniors when I was in the undergraduate program at the State Institute of Islamic studies in Jakarta; Hasan's wife was my colleague/classmate. Bambang (practitioner) was the senior who trained me when I was actively involved in the university's undergraduate student organization and he is also my husband's close friend who manages the University of Paramadina in Jakarta. I know Ali through my husband. He is well known in journalism and publishing. He also manages an Islamic school and Islamic foundations to help the poor. From 1999 until 2001, I worked for the Ministries of National Education and Religious Affairs in Jakarta. During that time, I often met and talked to Sigit (Director General of General Secondary Education) and Rahman (Director of the Development of Islamic Institutions). These relationships, that I had developed, had many advantages for me. First, it was easier to set the time for the interviews. Second, the interaction and communication was informal and therefore I was able to develop my questions and curiosity. And finally, because they knew me on a personal level they were very open to providing me with data and other resources related to the study.

3.3. Interview Guide

Guidelines for all interviews were developed from a list of open-ended questions, which served as an interview guide. Essentially, the guide sought to elicit interviewees' opinions, feelings, and experiences within the context of school life, the school foundation and the community. It also sought to discover the nature of policy makers' contributions to the development of elite Islamic schools and the national system of education in Indonesia. Moreover, given the dialectical interplay between the planning, goals and implementation, questions at the end of the guide were designed to capture the interviewees' reflections on these issues in light of their previous comments.

The interview guide was also designed to elicit concise responses. It was comprised of five sections: General Characteristics of Students and Teachers, School Organisation and Leadership, Curriculum, Teaching-Learning Methods, and Students' and Parents' Relationships with Teachers. The guide also acted as a broad structure for formal taped interviews. The first formal interviews served to test the guide. This was helpful in briefing the remainder of the interviewees about the length of the interview, as well as reconfirming the validity of the research investigation.

Questions asked during interviews were generally centred on academic and personal experiences, the living and learning environment, relationships between teachers and students, teacher development, the curriculum, leadership and organisation, and parent involvement in the school program. I also probed political, economic, socio-economic, cultural and religious issues – both at the level of the school and the nation – level – which influenced the development of AAIS or other elite Islamic schools recently founded in Indonesia.

3.4. Interviews

I used the interview as a tool for this study because of its strength in both qualitative and quantitative research. Researchers tend to rely on the interview as the basic method of data gathering, whether the purpose is to obtain a rich, deep experiential account of an event or episode in the life of a respondent or to garner a

simple point on a scale of 2 to 10 dimensions (Fontana and Frey, 2000, p. 646). Seidman (1991) notes that "We can see how their (people's) individual experiences interact with powerful social and organisational forces that pervade the context in which they live and work..." (p. 103). Furthermore, Hammersley & Atkinson (1983) point out that "assuming we understand how the presence of the researcher shaped the data, we can interpret the latter accordingly and it may provide important insights, allowing us to develop or test elements of our theory" (p. 112).

All of the interviews were conducted on a one-to-one basis in the privacy of each individual at the AAIS High School. Furthermore, all the interviews were audio-recorded to permit the researcher to transcribe the taped contents at a later date. A narrative approach in research involves developing a relationship of trust. As Hammersley & Atkinson (1983) have observed:

> Negotiating access is a balancing act. Gains and losses now and later, as well as ethical and strategic considerations, must be traded off against one another in whatever manner is judged to be most appropriate, given the purpose of research and the circumstances in which it is to be carried out. (p. 72).

Responses from both Ministries of National Education and Religious Affairs, and educational practitioners, constitute the data for analysis of the strengths, limitations, and plans for further development of the elite Islamic schools. These schools represent an alternative school option expected by many in the Muslim community nowadays. The specific relationship of these questions to the literature and interpretations paid off when identifying tendencies, trends, and patterns that showed up during the interviews and the data analysis and writing process. Finding interconnections between observed educational phenomena and the socio-economic, political and religious issues that informed the establishment of elite Islamic schools was definitely due to the application of a "universal mode of systemic inquiry" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p.1).

Following Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) in explicitly acknowledging the researcher's role as an act of research itself and part of the social world under investigation – the notion of reflexivity – I tried to develop an atmosphere of cooperation, within the time available to me. I felt it was essential for me to foster

mutual understanding and open exchanges in an interactive climate. The getting-to-know-each-other phase was characterized by an exchange of personal information and academic interests. Once rapport had been established through sharing experiences of the Islamic education system, the dialogue flowed quite naturally around the respondents' interests and concerns. The second phase was characterized as building time. After listening carefully to respondents' views, I often attempted to rephrase, clarify, and distinguish their responses to obtain greater accuracy. The third phase was more explorative, especially on issues such as those relating to policy implementation, innovation, and the obstacles that are faced by AAIS and other Islamic schools.

4. Gaining Access.

I distinguished the process of gaining entry to the institution of AAIS from the process of gaining the participants' trust. Negotiating entry into the AAIS took place around three scenes: (1) finding an opening, (2) meeting with the head of AAIS, and (3) access attained.

4.1. Finding an Opening

I was on a flight to Indonesia in the third week of July after having arranged for numerous travel needs, supplies and purchases, as well as for board and lodging. It was a very long distance, approximately 21 hours from Montreal to Jakarta, Indonesia. My feelings were mixed. I was happy, worried, and afraid because I had been living for three years in Montreal and was now returning to Indonesia. I was happy because in terms of academic progress, I was moving forward from the status of graduate student to Ph.D candidate. Psychologically, this trip would also be a chance to see family and friends and to connect with other people in my country, Indonesia. On the negative side, I was worried and afraid that I would face difficulties in collecting the data that I needed because I felt like an outsider who had not connected physically and psychologically to elite schools for several years. They

might not allow me to visit the school, to interview people and to observe the classes. They might not even provide me with any sources related to my study.

During fieldwork, I lived with my mother whose house is approximately 15 kilometers away from the AAIS high school and the centre of Jakarta where the people under study lived. My younger brother also helped me by lending his car. Thus, I did not waste my time on the road, caught in traffic jams that always happen in big cities like Jakarta. I managed my time efficiently and effectively to cover all I needed for my research.

To make site visits, conduct interviews, and absorb the feeling of the campus from the inside, I had to find an entrance. Having limited time and budget for the fieldwork – approximately ten weeks – I had to manage as efficiently as I could. Since I was not associated with the AAIS high school program, I arranged a series of meetings to have my project approved and to gain access. First, I met with the Rector and Vice Rector of Academic Affairs at the State Islamic University in Jakarta, where I have been teaching for the past decade, to introduce them to and advise them about my research. From them I received a letter explaining that I was a staff lecturer at the State Islamic University doing research on schools for the Ph.D. program in the Faculty of Education at McGill University, Montreal, Canada. This was a formal introduction, which I used as a way of gaining permission to research at the schools I visited.

In addition, by presenting this letter, I was able to meet with the school foundation responsible for managing the school. It was only then that I made my first actual visit to the Al Azhar campus on July 24, 2003. Yet by the time I was ready to go into the field I still had had no word from the AAIS. I inquired once again on July 28th and still heard nothing. But I felt a strong sense that many of those working to improve the Indonesian education system sorely needed this kind of research. In the meantime, I also met the principal of the AAIS high school and told him about my study and its potentials for improving the Islamic education system in Indonesia. He actually gave his permission to proceed, but first of all, he encouraged me to follow the administrative procedure to enter the school. While awaiting permission from the

institution itself, I contacted six educational leaders and practitioners to ask for their participation in my research. By August 1, 2003 I received a letter from the chairman of YPI Al Azhar (Yayasan Pesantren Islam Al Azhar, the Foundation of Al Azhar Islamic Boarding School) allowing me to conduct research – interviews and observation - in the school. Thus, the first real contact was established. In order to gain respect and trust of this body, I, therefore, established a working relationship with them which gave me license to observe, to question, and to participate in the whole school program. I had achieved what I had set out to accomplish.

Finally, I met with the principal, school counselors, teachers, and the staff of the AAIS high school to introduce my study and gain a greater understanding of school life and activity. This included elements such as teachers, students, and parents' profiles, organization and administration, teaching instruction, and parental involvement.

4.2. Meeting with the Head of AAIS

Although the chairman of YPI Al Azhar consented to introduce me to the principal, this still did not guarantee automatic access to potential interviewees. In fact it was not as easy as I thought it would be, and we were still trying to find our bearings with each other on the first day we met. We talked for a while about the research and were trying to get to know each other within a short time period (maybe 45 minutes). Then, the principal introduced me to the teachers and staff, and again I talked to them about the research and tried to build a working relationship with them. Some of them welcomed me, but others maintained a distance. In the second meeting, because I had limited time to do so, I made a request to schedule appointments with teachers, students, and parents, basically to meet each other. Things started to move forward.

After the principal of the AAIS high school had granted his approval for the study to proceed, the respondents were recruited from teachers, students, and parents that I had reached through various means. First, the nature of the study was conveyed to potential respondents in person through the means identified earlier in this chapter.

I then asked potential respondents questions pertaining to the criteria of their involvement in AAIS, to ensure they qualified for participation. Once their qualifications were verified, I asked potential respondents to participate in a private one-on-one interview at their convenience. All respondents were informed of their rights according to the McGill University research code of ethics and school commission ethics, that participation was voluntary, that they could withdraw from the study at any time, and that their identity would remain confidential.

5. Access Attained

I divide this section into three themes, i.e., the role of the researcher, the description of respondents, and locating the participants.

5.1. The Role of the Researcher: Insider/Outsider: Getting the School Community's Trust

Perhaps one of the greatest challenges in doing fieldwork is to try and effectively locate and define the specific role of the researcher. There are many different roles of the qualitative researcher in the various research traditions. While it is difficult to pin a research style on a single school of thought, I will try to contextualize the background for my thinking of this thesis. I support the *constructivist* or *interpretivist* (italics added) viewpoint which essentially believes that:

> ... to understand this world of meaning one must interpret it. The inquirer must elucidate the process of meaning and construction and clarify what and how meanings are embodied in the language in actions of social actors. To prepare an interpretation is itself to construct a reading of these meanings; it is to offer the inquirer's construction of the constructions of the actors's one studies. (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118.)

Moreover, constructivists are deeply committed to the view that what we take to be objective knowledge and truth is the result of perspective. Knowledge and truth are created, not discovered by the mind (Schwandt, 1994, p. 125). Indeed, constructivists assume a world in which universal, absolute realities are unknowable, and the objects of inquiry are individual perspectives or constructions of reality. Realities are

apprehendable in the form of abstract mental constructions that are experientially based, local, and specific (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The individual constructions of reality compose the knowledge of interest to constructivist researchers. They assert that "knowledge is symbolically constructed and not objective; that understandings of the world are based on conventions; that truth is, in fact, what we agree it is" (Hatch, 1985, p. 161). Researchers and participants are joined together in the process of co-construction. From this perspective, it is impossible and undesirable for researchers to be distant and objective. It is through mutual engagement that researchers and respondents construct the subjective reality that is under investigation (Mishler, 1986).

Being a native Indonesian who was coming home to do research in a familiar place, I knew I would have immediately to control my biases in order to retain a clear purpose and remain in control of my subjectivity carefully when collecting the data and doing my analysis. So I triangulated the participants' narratives, policy documents, institutional data and the research literature to limit my biases. As Simpson (1996) and Reed-Danahay (1997) mention, I would need to maintain a balance between objectivity and the biases of the researcher. I realized that I was facing what other qualitative writers have described as the "insider/outsider" phenomenon (Carspecken, 1996; Eisner, 1991; and Maguire, 1997). I was an insider in the sense that I shared with the subjects a common knowledge and experience of the region and Islamic education in general, but an outsider in that my research agenda, although personal, was shaped by my work as a lecturer in other Islamic educational institutions. Furthermore, as an insider to the culture of the site, I was familiar with the use of Indonesian by the respondents, the catchwords and pet phrases, and the verbal and non-verbal expressions that facilitate relations amongst people in the Indonesian milieu. Even though I was comfortable in the environment, I took nothing for granted, because I had no connections with the school community and programs.

In explaining further my role as "insider/outsider", I will define an insider as a member of a group and an outsider as one who is not part of a group (Carspecken,

1996; Eisner, 1991; and Maguire, 1997). To convey my membership in the study participant's group, I was included by virtue of my Indonesian birth and as a former student in Islamic educational institutions. As mentioned before, my lived experience as a lecturer at the Islamic educational institutions, as a mother of two children who attended such Islamic schools some years ago, and as a graduate student, added other dimensions to my identity as researcher.

I spoke to the study participants and listened to them, answering their questions during interviews, informal conversations, and in meetings to clarify their responses. In general, the members of the school community responded positively to my study. The administrator, for example, told me that "some people actually have studied Al Azhar School, but they didn't inform us of the result of their studies. So I was actually disappointed. If you tell me the results, we, as administrator and teachers will learn and it will help us to solve problems and improve school programs." Another good response came from teachers. I interviewed them when they had no classes. I used different locations to do so, such as the hallway, the student's lounge, and the visitor room. We talked familiarly, freely, and enthusiastically about their experiences at school and even about family matters. Sometimes they described their happiness and sadness when dealing with school policies, relationships with students and parents, and the issues of science and social science programs. From their perspective, they expected that my study could serve to reduce the gap between teachers and the school organizers or school foundation. Interviewing students was not as easy as I thought, however. I was actually expecting to interview students of my own choice; however, the school counselor chose and brought them to the interview room, i.e., the school counselor's office. So these interviews were more formal and uncomfortable for both sides. Tight lesson hours and after school activities did not permit me to make other arrangements. But I felt satisfied that they respected me enough to tell me their experiences, opinions and expectations on school life and programs. Interviewing parents was not so easy either. Most parents are very busy with their occupations and other duties. Even when I asked some parents during a parents' organization meeting to participate in this study, most of

them said that "we give our voices to Mrs. Ella, as the head of our Parents' Organization, to participate in the study." Finally, I was able to interview Mrs. Mimi after I waited several weeks to get permission from her. Seemingly they were very careful about expressing their feelings and opinions, because they did not want to hurt anyone's feelings. I was encouraged by their wish to tell their feelings and experiences of Islamic school life, in order to meet the needs of the Muslim community and Indonesian society as a whole. Largely, I delved into the emotional ties that developed during my contact time with study participants, taking surer steps each time towards building mutual trust. I remembered the words of the head of the AAIS high school "I have never doubted your integrity, your honesty and sincerity, and good judgement at all times in developing the stories" (Budiman, personal interview, August 5, 2003). So, I put my faith in the participants to journey together to a place of mutual acceptance.

Indeed, being an Indonesian and Muslim woman who studied Islamic school in her own country had its perhaps advantages and also disadvantages. On the positive side the interaction and communication between participants and myself happened easily and in a friendly manner, but at the same time, because I know the culture and the field, sometimes I felt I was not critical and sensitive enough to enrich the conversations or the data. During my fieldwork, there was no barrier when I talked to boys or girls, male or female teachers, and to male and female principals. I talked freely and to all of them respectfully.

5.2. Description of the Participants

The participants of the study were divided into three groups, i.e., school community, educational practitioners, and government officials. The following is a list of the school community participants and pseudonyms.

Category of participants	Pseudonyms of participants	Lengths of interview
Administrator: • Head of Education Division	Ismail Budiman	90 minutes 120 minutes

• Principal		
Teachers: • English • Mathematic • Social studies • Religious education	Nina Rudy Mahmud Sofyan	90 minutes 90 minutes 90 minutes 30 minutes
Students: • Science program • Social Studies program	Anton, Tini, Dewi, Amir	60 minutes each student
Alumni	Sita Hartono	60 minutes 60 minutes
Parents	Ella Mimi	90 minutes 60 minutes
Organizer: • Board of Al Azhar Islamic Boarding School Foundation	Herman	90 minutes

The other two groups, educational practitioners and government officials, will be described in chapter 5.

5.2.1. Administrators

One of the two administrators participating in this study was the Head of the Education Division of AAIS. He was a proud former principal of the AAIS high school, and had written several books on Arabic literature. He provided information on curriculum instruction, policy, planning and strategies regarding AAIS. He was interested in the purpose of this research and in school improvement. As we got to know each other better he gave more of his limited time to the study. When I interviewed him, he was quite concerned about the development of Al Azhar schools and concerned that those in certain regions could offer the same educational system and quality. For him, the most important thing was developing teachers professionally and remaining educationally accountable. He had a caring way with the school community and seemed to be well liked by his staff and colleagues. I interviewed him twice; the first time for only 30 minutes and the second time for 60 minutes.

The Principal was the second administrator participating in the study. During the research I saw the Principal on almost a daily basis, as I worked from the visitor's room behind his office. This location, virtually at the centre of the AAIS high school, proved to be an invaluable resource. The Principal provided me with much information about the operation, planning and strategizing of the high school, although I had to maintain impartiality, especially in light of the principal's position as a gatekeeper, who could deliberately highlight or dim the glare on certain parts of the school's capability and performance. I spent two hours in a formal interview with him, and some times also received additional information from him related to my study.

The Principal was a male administrator who had graduated from the Institute of Teacher Training and Education in Yogyakarta, Central Java, Indonesia. In 1990, he moved to Jakarta and began teaching chemistry in the AAIS high school and in 2002 was promoted to be principal of this school. In our interview he stated his firm belief that he will only be able to realize his goals if he runs a tight ship. Discipline and authority have become key to gaining control of the change process. His commitment is powerful and genuine. He also believes that schools are transformational institutions that offer students the chance to participate meaningfully and productively in society. Schools must provide the Islamic teaching, discipline, the safety, and the resources that these students are not getting at home. And schools must demand something from them. "We are proud if they are outstanding in academic achievement as well as religious morals, are accepted into prestigious universities and build religious activities and organizations in their new schools" (Budiman, personal interview, August 5, 2003). He believes students must be strictly disciplined and mannerly. The Principal was, therefore, a key administrator who saw his role as integral to the process of making the AAIS high school an excellent school and more accessible to all students and staff. He took great care to point out to me his interest in his staff's welfare and proficiency.

5.2.2. Teacher participants

The teacher participants are referred to as Nina, Rudy, Mahmud, and Sofyan (pseudonyms), and were of either Sundanese or Javanese origins. Nina was a senior teacher at AAIS high school who had been teaching English since 1988. She had earned a doctoranda (in the Dutch system, equal to a master's degree) in English Linguistics from the University of Padjadjaran, Bandung in 1985 and moved to Jakarta because her husband worked there. She was typical of a Javanese woman, someone who respects and serves her husband and family. She is very involved in developing both teachers' and students' proficiency. For example she took part in an Indonesian-Australian Student Exchange in 2000. She visited a public secondary school in Melbourne, Australia to learn about the Australian education system, and even taught the Indonesian language there for a couple of weeks. In 2002, she accompanied students who performed Indonesian traditional dances in several European countries like Bulgaria, Italy, the Netherlands, and Turkey. She was appointed a full-time teacher by Al Azhar foundation in 1993 and continues to develop caring, discipline, and proficiency among the teachers and students. The interview with Nina lasted one hour and a half.

Rudy made me feel comfortable as a researcher and a student. He too enjoyed the experience of teaching in AAIS. He started his career as a math teacher in 1989, and in 2003 he was promoted to vice principal of the AAIS high school in Kebayoran Baru, Jakarta. He was dynamic and responsible as a teacher. He worked on the principle that "if you do well and don't expect anything from it then, usually the promotion will come along" (Rudy, personal interview, August 6, 2003). For him, teachers were not only meant to convey knowledge, but were also supposed to educate the student to be a good person. I spent an hour and a half to interview him.

Mahmud, meanwhile, encouraged me to discuss further why Catholic schools had always been more advanced in academic matters than Islamic schools. He had actually been a public school teacher who was assigned by the Ministry of Education. Because the salary was not sufficient for his needs, he had asked the government to allow him to teach in private schools, such as a Catholic school or the Islamic School

of Al Azhar. With this assignment, he could get two salaries; one from the government and one from the private school (see the Act of Education, chapter 4, p. 15). For more than a decade he taught in Catholic schools, then moved to AAIS in 1996 because he felt that he would find teaching in an Islamic educational institution, the same faith as his own, to be more comfortable and appropriate. His experiences in the Catholic schools, however, encouraged him to improve the quality of the school in terms of organization, academic performance, and discipline. For me, it was an opportunity to compare Catholic and Islamic schools, even though this was not my main concern. His relationship with his students did not seem to be shaped by threat and fear. In fact, he said that his warm and close relationship with the students is a way to better understand his students and makes it easier for him to deal with the students if they behave in ways that are not appropriate.

Sofyan is a religious education teacher at AAIS high school. He is very calm, well mannered, and respectful. I was happy when told me that he had graduated from the Faculty of Tarbiyah (education), State Institute for Islamic Studies where I have been teaching for several years. He graduated in 1999 and has been teaching at the AAIS high school since 2001. He finds many challenges at Al Azhar. First, most students come from middle class families, where many parents lack the time and proper religious training themselves to instruct their children. Moreover, the impact of globalization had led students to adopt materialistic and selfish behaviours. Therefore, he believed he had to teach them well with various approaches in order to make them true believers who could practice Islam with broader knowledge. I did not have time to speak for long with him, because of his tight schedule. However, I felt satisfied that he let me to observe his class for about forty-five minutes.

Maintaining a certain margin between "familiarity and strangeness" in the interest of intellectual inquiry (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p. 100), I learned from those teachers about the school program and the strengths and the weaknesses of Islamic School of Al Azhar. When speaking to them I was primarily concerned with aspects of organization and leadership, teacher's proficiency and welfare, and relationships with students and parents.

5.2.3. Student Participants

Four students between seventeen and eighteen years old, (two females and two males) participated in the research. The students' pseudonyms were Dewi, Tini, Anton, and Amir. They were enrolled in the following programs: two (grade 12) in the science program and two (grade 12) in the social studies program. They were ethnically Sundanese, Javanese, and Sumatranese, with fathers who worked as a civil servant, in a private company, as a businessman, and as an architect, respectively.

Dewi (17) was a social studies student in grade 12 at the AAIS high school. She was a dynamic and energetic person who was interested in the communication and arts programs. She was happy to meet and work with people. She had become an executive member of the students' association, in which she was responsible for religious activities, education, and training of young cadres. She was also a member of a dance group at her school and had performed Indonesian traditional dance in several European countries such as Bulgaria, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey. In celebration of Mother's Day and International Human Rights Day, the student's association planned to hold a Humanity event in January 2004. In this concert, the students of the AAIS high school were to perform music, dance, and theater, as well as invite top Indonesian singers like Titi D.J. and Sherina to perform. Dewi expressed the opinion that the AAIS high school had helped her to achieve what she is capable of in terms of both academic performance and life skills.

Anton (18) was a science student in grade 12 at Islamic High School of Al Azhar. Both his sisters and his one brother had also studied at AAIS. His older sister had graduated from this school in 2003 and was accepted at the University of Indonesia in the Japanese literature program. His opinion was that relations among students at the school were very friendly and caring. He did not feel that wealthy families should be treated differently and he had made friends with those who worked in the cleaning service at the school. In his opinion, the school was selected for him because "it was an excellence school and his friends were all diligent and smart, so they encouraged me to study well too at school" (Anton, personal interview, August 7, 2003). He also mentioned that if the Islamic school implemented good discipline

and academic achievement, it would attract many Muslim families to the school. In facing global competition, he said, students especially have to improve their proficiency in English as a language of international communication.

Tini (17) was a science student in grade 12 at the AAIS high school. She was a smart student in her class, and also very active in extra-curricular activities. She was happy and felt secure at the school. AAIS, in her view, provided good facilities like a library, a science and physics laboratory, and computers. Nevertheless, she expressed some disappointment, claiming that, as a science student, "I need to actually work in the laboratory, but it does not happen because my teacher gives more attention to theory rather than practice in the laboratory. This is the limitation of this school" (Tini, personal interview, August 9, 2003).

Amir (17) was a social studies student in grade 12 who was interested in the music and arts programs. AAIS gave him the chance to improve his capabilities both academically and in the arts. He performed music and drama supervised by both an Indonesian language teacher and an English teacher. He mentioned that the teachers here always motivated students to improve their writing skills, as illustrated by the fact that there was a wall magazine at school used as a medium for students to express their own feelings and opinions. Amir believed that AAIS provides a good environment to maximize students' proficiency in academic and religious education.

I also selected two AAIS alumni, Sita and Budi, to interview. Sita had graduated in 2003 and was accepted to two public universities, in a medical dentistry program at one and an accountancy program at the other. She seemed inclined to take the accountancy program since it would provide her with a scholarship and would guarantee her a job in a government institution right after she graduated from university. She had attended AAIS since pre-kindergarten, through to the end of secondary level. She told me that:

> The positive aspect of this school was its Islamic character. In the morning, before we learned any subject, we started with reciting the Quran, and we performed collective prayer in the afternoon. The relationships between students and teachers were so close and friendly. We could talk about school or personal problems with them. Teachers patiently taught the students until they understood the lesson, even if sometimes we needed additional time to do so. Teachers

control the classes but are not too strict. Students are expected to be mannerly and disciplined. (Sita, personal interview, August 10, 2003)

She seemed to have been happy and well motivated by the teachers at the AAIS high school.

The other alumna is Hartono, who had graduated in the 1980s. He is now a lawyer with his own law firm and is married to a medical doctor. He has two children, a boy and a girl. Both children were studying at the time in an Islamic school by the name of Nurul Fikri Islamic Integrated School. He was a former Chairman of KNPI (Komite National Pemuda Indonesia, National Committee of Indonesian Youth) in the 1990s, and in 2004, was appointed as State Minister for Youth and Sport in the current government. During the time he studied at AAIS, he said, "teachers paid much attention to the development of students in term of Islamic values and academic matters. I have maintained contact with senior teachers but some of them have passed away" (Hartono, personal interview, September 24, 2003).

5.2.4. Parent Participants

Two parents were selected to participate in the research, Rita and Mimi. Rita had been an accountant in a private company some years ago, and later worked only part time. Her daughter had attended AAIS from pre-kindergarten until high school. Consequently, she was quite familiar with the environment of the school and was chosen to sit on the executive board of the parents' association for the elementary through secondary levels. She is a responsible person and is committed to the vision and mission of the school. She knew how to approach other parents and involve them in the school program to meet successfully the needs of the school. She stated that the parents' association should be a filter between the school and the parent and a communication forum among parents. She also insisted that the relationship between the association and the school, especially concerning educational matters, should be considered a partnership. Her role as part of the parents' association was to support both the school program and the students themselves so that they could be successful and make appropriate decisions about their lives both during and after high school.

She has made equitable treatment of parents and teachers an integral part of her role in making students' lives a success.

The other parent interviewed for this study was Mimi. She worked at the time in the Department of Public Information as journalist. She was also mother to four children, all of whom were studying at Al Azhar School: one at the senior, two at the junior secondary, and the other one at the primary levels. She stated that "AAIS is safe and can prevent their children from brawling and drug use because the teachers here are always attentive and caring about the students' behavior and activity" (Mimi, personal interview, August 25, 2003). Moreover, "Al Azhar School offers good quality education especially religious education, instruction and qualified teachers who are always open to talking with students and parents" (Mimi, personal interview, August 25, 2003).

The objective of this respondent selection procedure was to create a useful sample whose data could be used to elicit the feelings of participants about and their experiences of the Islamic school environment, and also to identify the uniqueness of the school. Patton (1990) states that: "the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting *information-rich* cases for study in-depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research" (p. 169). Galtung (1967) defined a simple random sample as one that gives all sample elements an equal probability of being selected.

5.3. Locating the Participants

All together the study participants included two administrators, five teachers, four students, two alumni, two parents, the chairman of the Foundation of Al Azhar Islamic Boarding School, three senior figures in the Ministries of National Education and Religious Affairs, and three educational practitioners – as well as students. The administrators and teachers currently teach or had taught in the AAIS. The students were in grade 12 of the social studies and science programs at the AAIS high school. Six members of the study group were female and 15 were male, with the average age as follows:

Table 1. Number of interviewees per category

Age	Categories of interviewees	Female	Male	Total
16 - 18	Students	2	2	4
18 - 40	Alumni	1	1	2
25 - 50	Teachers	1	3	4
40 - 50	Administrators	-	2	2
40 - 50	Parents	2	-	2
40 - 60	Educational Practitioners	-	3	3
45 - 60	Government Officials	-	3	3
60 - 75	School Foundation	-	1	1
	Total of interviewees	6	15	21

Source: Book of Education Information AAIS High School, 2003/2004.

I selected the administrators, teachers, students, and parents who participated in this study based primarily on their availability. Their participation was based on a sample of convenience, because they were ready and able to come to interviews. Everyone else was located off campus, at their homes or offices. I used a "nonprobability sampling method that did not include random sampling at [any] stage" (Krathwohl, 1993, p. 163).

I also selected the participants through a variety of approaches. In some cases they were recommended by the head of the school or my friends in Jakarta after I had discussed my research with them. For example, I met with the school counsellor in the first week of my visit at Islamic High School of Al Azhar. With her help I was able to schedule further interviews with the students (Dewi, Tini, Anton, Amir) and one of the alumni (Sita). The principal was the first interviewee, followed by the Head of the Education Division and teachers in the high school. I also visited the staff and parents' association offices to ask if they were available and willing to take part in the research. In between scheduled interviews, I made time to visit the Human Resource Development Division to get a deeper perspective on how employment equity was operating across the AAIS. I also visited the school library, science and computer laboratories to get a deeper perspective on how these facilities were used by the students and teachers as part of the teaching-learning process. At other times I had conversations in the hallways, at meetings, in the school cafeteria or in the library.

Also, I gained access to the Centre for International Education of the University of Al Azhar Indonesia (CIE of UAI), directed by Murni Djamal – who had graduated from the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University in the 1970s. From its inception in 2003, this Centre has been located on the Al Azhar campus. The aim of this Centre is to provide students with international certification from the University of Cambridge.

In addition, the interviews permitted the researcher to establish connections with the people and resources offered by AAIS. The interviews also required shifting from an informal, unstructured process to a semi-structured one, to get to the core of the research issues. There was a great deal of liaising involved in creating the interview schedule, because of both the participants' availability and the researcher's limited time. As Krathwohl (1993) has noted, there is a need for flexibility or a "continuum" in research settings in order to get to the heart of the matter (p. 367).

5.4. Classroom Observation

During my research, I observed many types of classes - religious education class, English class, computer class and communal prayer. These observations helped me in understanding the way teachers teach their students, the relationship between students and teacher, the class activities and atmosphere. The following are my observation notes.

On August 18, 2003, I observed English class. There were 29 students (16 female and 13 male) of grade eleven students from the science program who attended the class. The teaching learning process happened in the library which was being put to uses as a center of learning resources. Thus, it was easier for students to get sources that they needed for the class assignments. As the English teacher mentioned "using library made students enjoy in learning and easier access to the sources." (Nina, personal interview, August 18, 2003). Students were divided into six groups; male and female were in separate groups. The teacher asked each group to make passive voice sentences. I saw the students discussing the assignment in their respective groups and each student tried to make contributions to improve their

responses. When they were comfortable with what they had done, they submitted it to their teacher. The teacher then made comments and discussed it within the group. In the end, the teacher explained clearly and precisely and enriched the students' skill in English. From my observation, I found that this approach invited students to learn actively and the interaction among students was very good: every one made contributions, and they looked happy and satisfied with this approach. Moreover, the relationship between teacher and students was also very close. The teacher knew her students' capacities and was committed to improving her students' achievement.

Using technology to teach, for example, using computers in the classroom, is an indication that a school is aware about globalization and its implications. As an excellence school, Al Azhar also offers computer class once a week for two hours. To get insight into what students learn in computer class, I decided to observe a computer class on August 13, 2003. Al Azhar had just expanded its computer lab to 40 computers and new desks in 2003. There were two instructors (male and female) who taught 40 students from the social sciences program. The subject taught was how to draw animation as an effort to improve spatial intelligence (Garner theory (1983) on multiple intelligences). Female and male students sat wherever they were comfortable, not exactly separated from each other. The class began with a general explanation from the male instructor, followed by practice for the students. Meanwhile, the female instructor gave directions to some students who were seated at the back of the class. It was seemingly an interesting and challenging class, not only for male students but also female students. They were very serious about following the instruction and finishing the assignment as quickly as possible. Al Azhar students, according to the instructors, were familiar with computer, internet, and downloading academic sources, music, even movies. "It helped me to teach them how to make animation, etc," said instructor. Even social sciences students used the computer lab for learning accounting instead of using conventional methods. "They learned faster with the computer," said the male instructor.

Religion is given strong emphasis at Al Azhar School. Thus on August 15, 2003, I joined Friday communal prayer at school together with students, teachers, and

staff. Before prayer, all attendance (students, teachers, and staff) should had to make ablutions (washing and cleaning some parts of the body). I saw line ups in both the male and female washrooms. One male and one female teacher monitored students and told students "hurry up please; the call for prayer has already started." Male and female were separated but still in one room; no physical barriers were put up. Male students, teachers and staff were in the front; while female students and teachers were in the back. In order to get them accustomed to leading prayers, the school asked male students in turn to be the *imam* (praying leader). On that day, the *imam* was Makmun (pseudonym) from the grade twelve science program. His voice was clear. In his speech, he talked about lifelong learning. Learning according to him, is not only at school but it can be everywhere, even going to China, for example. It was actually a conducive experience; however, I found some students talked on their cellular phones before praying. It was a challenge.

5.5. Survey

As I mentioned earlier, I had limited time to interview students because of their tight learning hours. I felt I should conduct a survey to better understand students' perspective on their school life and activities. I talked to the school counselor about my interest and we discussed how to distribute this survey. I also told her that this survey was designed to discover students' feelings and opinions about Al Azhar's standards on academics and spirituality.

I divided the survey questionnaires into three categories, i.e. school characteristics (3 items), Al Azhar standards (3 items), and the difference between female and male students in terms of their interests or priorities (1 item). The following are some examples of questionnaire items in the Indonesian language followed by their English translations:

1. Karakteristik sekolah
1.1. Menurut anda, SMU Al Azhar memberikan fokus dan perhatian pada:
    a. Menyiapkan pekerjaan setelah lulus
    b. Mengembangkan intelektualitas
    c. Menyiapkan keterampilan hidup
    d. Membangun Karakter

    e. Mengembangkan spiritualitas agama
[Translated version] 1. School Characteristic

1. According to you, Al Azhar School emphasizes:
    a. Preparation for post schooling job
    b. Intellectual development
    c. Preparation for everyday life
    d. Character development
    e. Spiritual development

2. Standar peraturan Sekolah Al Azhar
2.1. Jika saya tahu seorang teman menyontek, saya akan mendorong teman tersebut melaporkannya kepada guru.
    a. Sangat setuju
    b. Setuju
    c. Sangat tidak setuju
    d. Tidak menjawab.

2. [Translated version] Conformity of students' beliefs with Al Azhar's standards
    2.1. If I know a student cheated, I should urge him/her to report him/herself
        a. Strongly agree
        b. Agree
        c. Strongly disagree
        d. Disagree
        e. No answer

3. Bagaimana sikap dan kecenderungan siswa-siswi Al Azhar?
3.1. Spiritualitas/moral agama
3.2. Penampilan yang cantik, ganteng, dan rupawan
3.3. Bersenang-senang
3.4. Academic, kecerdasan, kepandaian
3.5. Keluarga harmonis
3.6. Olahraga
    a. Sangat setuju
    b. Setuju
    c. Sangat tidak setuju
    d. Tidak menjawab

3. [Translated version] Student ranking of attributes important for popularity of female and male students
        a. Spiritual
        b. Good looking
        c. Fun-loving
        d. Intelligent
        e. Harmonious family
        f. Athletic

a) Strongly agree
b) Agree
c) Strongly disagree
d) Disagree
e) No answer

Those are an example of items in my surveys. After the school counselor returned all survey forms to me, I started to tallying the response and converted these into percentages. Finally, I translated the whole questionnaire into English. The results of this survey can be seen in Chapter 4 page 149-151.

I decided to use survey purposive sample of 2 classes of grade eleven and 1 class of grade twelve students because they had already experienced the school programs and activities. Therefore they could express their opinions more easily when filling in the survey forms. On August 20, 2003 I made 100 copies and brought them to her office. She even helped me to hand this survey out to students. After three weeks, the school counselor returned me the survey forms completed by students. When I asked the school counselor, how students reacted to this survey, she mentioned that students were happy to fill it in; some did it at school and some did it at home. The survey respondents, thus, consisted of 51 female and 46 male students in grades 11 and 12 from the science and social studies programs. Indeed, I found this survey was strengthening my interviews with four students and made clear and positive opinions about Al Azhar School.

6. Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

The tapes of the recorded original dialogues of the two sets of interviews, fieldnotes, observation, school documents, and survey were my raw material. Before formally starting the analysis and interpretation, I had textually transcribed the interviews in the original language: Indonesian. Generally, the process of transcribing the oral interviews by listening to and transcribing the recorded cassettes and the analytical process were very fruitful in the generation of insights for further analysis. I chose to do the transcription analysis myself, because it was cost-effective on the one hand, and on the other, because it helped me to familiarize myself with the

contents of the data. As Butler (2000) succinctly puts it: "Transcribing the discussions helped me recall and relive in a sense the experience, view details in another way. I could picture the participants most of the time and their facial expressions, body language, or gestures as I listened to their voices ..." (p. 88). I have, then, transcribed and translated their spoken words in a manner which preserves the nature of their expressions. In effect, I have also learned more about my participants' perspectives and about my own representations about them during the different stages of the writing process. As Ely et al. suggest, the writing is part of the interpretive process (Ely et al., 1997, chapter 2). The final version of this thesis, as well as the intermediate drafts, helped me to compose, represent and refigure meaning from the data.

In analyzing the data, I realize that as a researcher, I am the primary instrument (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). To illustrate my personal insights and interpretations with respect to the participants, the data on Islamic School of Al Azhar, the institutional environment, the literature, and myself as a research instrument, all influenced the direction I took. Furthermore, as the main research instrument, I made analytical choices that ultimately informed my interpretation of the data. Denzin (1994) describes the process in the following way:

> The researcher creates a field text consisting of field notes and documents from the field. From this text he or she creates a research text, notes and interpretations based on the field text, what David Plath (1990) calls 'filed notes.' The researcher then creates the research text as a working interpretative document. This working document contains the writer's initial attempts to make sense out of what has been learned. (pp. 51-52)

In the following section I reorganize the different moments of my analytical process to greater transparency.

6.1. First Approach to the Subject/School

I began analyzing the subject/school in March/June 2003 with a preliminary classification, selection and review of my own knowledge on contemporary Islamic schools that have attracted Muslim middle class families. Considering the huge number of elite Islamic schools and their spread in several regions, the complexity of

their content, and the fact that this research was carried out individually, my first step consisted in making a selection of one school and its material which I would effectively observe later on. My criterion for making the selection was to take into account the potential contribution of the material to the focus of my thesis, i.e., school improvement and reform.

Before gaining access to the institution, I needed to know to what extent this Islamic school's environment and educational structure had the capacity to create a good Muslim school. I also needed to find out if there was a core education program present that helped educate and train students to master science and technology, as well as religious teachings, in order to face today's global society. That is, did the programs successfully introduce into its pedagogies values that were aimed at developing good Muslims with high academic achievement, possessing life skills and other proficiencies which are now given much consideration in the public sector? Did the school build a shared leadership by respecting teachers as professionals, emphasizing problem-solving through collaboration, and involving staff and parents in critical aspects of the school, including developing goals, values, and a mission?

My curiosity grew as I contemplated precisely what the potential study participants' responses to a unique Islamic school in contemporary Indonesia would be! Why are these schools so attractive for the Muslim community from the middle and upper classes? Other than what we outside of Indonesia have derived from word of mouth, the media, or other popular sources, there was really very little in the way of data about the educational structure and environment. I wished to see if it was possible to advance such understanding intellectually, and at the same time make a real contribution to describing, explaining, and predicting the impact of AAIS and other elite Islamic schools on the development of Islam and the Islamic education system in Indonesia.

6.2. Interview Schedules

After this preliminary analysis, I designed the interview schedules for three groups, i.e., school community, educational practitioners, and government leaders.

The questions that guided the interviews helped to make my own early concern transparent.

As can be seen from tables 2 and 3, the interview schedules with the school community (principal, administrator, school foundation, teachers, students, and parents), on the one hand, and with the educational practitioners and government officials, on the other, were structured around five main themes. The interview guides for the school community focused on school philosophy, organization, curriculum and pedagogy, and relationships among school community (see Appendix I); while for government officials and educational practitioners sought to evaluate how elite Islamic schools are managed, what are the strengths and weaknesses of these schools, and how to solve the problems (see Appendix 2). The following shows both interview schedules.

Table 2. Categories used to interview school community

Five main themes which organized the interviews
1. General Characteristics of Students and Teachers
2. School vision, mission, and goal
3. School Organisation and Leadership
4. Teaching-Learning Methods and Curriculum development
5. Parents' involvement

Table 3. categories used to interview educational practitioners and leaders

Five main themes which organized the interviews
1. Background of the emergence of elite Islamic schools
2. The strengths of elite Islamic schools
3. The limitations of elite Islamic schools
4. Suggestions for improving elite Islamic schools
5. New concept of Islamic schools

6.3. The Organization of the Data and Interviews.

I was reluctant to take notes during informal conversations (as opposed to formal interviews) since I quickly saw that my attempts at transcribing events and dialogue often made people self-conscious, and dramatically changed the character of a "naturally occurring" event (Geertz, 1973). Consequently I made time throughout the day to write up the brief notes, sitting outside in the playground, at a hallway table, or in the visiting room. These notes were reviewed and used as the basis for more extensive reports of the day's activities which I wrote each evening, often at home or in the car as I returned home.[1]

These fieldnotes recorded descriptions of clothing and space, paraphrased conversations, relationships, lesson plans, and observations about what begin to appear as norms and exceptions in the social organization of the school. Within a few days, themes began to emerge in the fieldnotes, and these eventually took the form of underlined headings in the fieldnotes: "Religious Motifs," "Modernity and Autonomy," "School Success," and so on. Cliffod Geertz (1973) describes the goal in writing fieldnotes and later analysis as generating "thick description," generating complex, multi-layered text which incorporate the explanations of concepts, power structures, histories necessary to approximate the anthropologist's interpretation of the social meaning of an event (pp. 5-10)

After collecting data through interviews, fieldnotes, survey, observation, and official documents, I structured these materials in three steps. First, in working with the data, I created files for each groups such as school community, practitioners, and government officials or policy makers. All responses were coded and then filed under one or more themes. Indeed, I concentrated on the themes and categories that specifically emerged in relation to five components of school culture and character – organization and leadership, teacher and student performance and relationship, teaching learning methods, curriculum instruction, and parent involvement. I also kept myself open to new evidence arising in the interpretation of the data, because I was open to contrary evidence throughout. I hoped to present an authentic story of how AAIS high school has been managed and improved to meet the needs of the

Muslim community, and of the many challenges imposed on it by the era of globalization.

Second, I agree with Hammersley & Atkinson's statement that "interview data, like any other, must be interpreted against the background of the context in which they were produced" (1983, p. 126). In this research the results will be interpreted within the context of Islamic schools in contemporary Indonesia. Third, some survey and descriptive statistics were used to analyze and frame deeper information provided by students on their experiences, expectations and social demands as to the character of the school. As Hammersley & Atkinson (1983) noted, when contrasting ethnographic and positivistic methods – "the strategy and even direction of the research can be changed relatively easily, in line with changing assessments of what is required by the process ..." (p. 24).

In the interview process, I took field notes while interviewing my participants with the double purpose of focusing my attention on the speakers' oral narrative and starting the report with my initial conceptual and organizational categories on the content of the interview. Second, I took marginal notes on the transcripts in Indonesian. I read the transcripts several times and compared their content across different interviewees. These processes of comparative reading also gave birth to a huge quantity of marginal notes both in Indonesian and English. This was, indeed, a very creative and productive analytical process. Third, after the elaboration of marginal notes, I focused on each individual transcript and created files in which I integrated and refined the initial coding reflected in the two systems described above (fieldnotes and marginal notes from transcripts).

The field notes included both 'organizational points' as a note below as well as observations. The following is an example of the organizational fieldnotes that I wrote on August 1, 2003. It was originally in Indonesian language (Bahasa Indonesia) and translated to English when I was in the process of writing the thesis.

Friday, August 1, 2003
9:00 – 9:30: - Visit the board of YPI Al Azhar
              - Received approval letter
9:30 – 10:15: - Meet principal
              - Submit approval letter from YPI Al Azhar

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                    - Explain further information on my study
                    - Principal introduce me to school counselors, teachers, and staff.
10:15 – 11:30: - Meeting with School counselors
                    - Ask and question what I am doing or my study
                    - Friendly, dynamic, and helpful.
                    - Set up the schedule to interview students and teachers.
                    - Graphic of students
                    - The organization structure of AAIS high school
11:30 – 13:30: - Break
                    - Lunch at cafeteria
                    - Marking the placement of girls and boys

13:30 : 14:30: - Meet the Head of Education Division and talk for an hour
                    - Introduce myself and my study
                    - Informal meeting
                    - Set up the schedule
```

These fieldnotes helped me very much in describing the school program and the general atmosphere of the school. I could also look for indications of what would distinguish this school from other Islamic schools (*madrasahs* and *pesantrens*) or public schools. I noted the typical students and the character of teacher-student and student-student interactions. I also looked for quantitative data, counting the number of girls and boys, sketching the arrangement of desks, marking the placement of girls and boys in the classroom. I also observed where male and female students normally formed groups throughout the school, such as in the cafeteria, library, computer lab and hallway. My fieldnotes served the function of "bookmarks" for me. I jotted down brief phrases concerning salient events that happened throughout the day. These phrases helped to jog my memory relative to the sequence of events, my feelings about people and places as well as opinions about experiences (the easy and the hard ones), and observations about daily school life.

This is an example of original transcription (in Bahasa Indonesia) from the interview with the Math teacher (Rudy, personal interview, August 6, 2003).

Disini tergantung peran kita, mau menjadi guru sungguhan atau guru abangan seperti tukang ngajar, selesai ngajar dia pulang, tidak punya tanggung jawab selesai mengajar atau tidak memahami perkembangan murid. Guru seperti ini, saya ngajar, selesai dan saya pulang. Saya tidak mengikuti prinsip seperti itu. Jadi kalau bekerja itu sampai tuntas kalau perlu sampai sore saya bekerja di sini sehingga pulang ke

rumah saya tidak punya beban lagi. Saya betah disini, mungkin karena tempatnya enak. Selama saya bekerja 14 tahun, mungkin hanya 2% saya pulang tepat jam 14.00 selebihnya diatas jam 15.00 bahkan seringkali setelah jam 16.00 sore. Jadi persiapan mengajar dan penguasaan materi itu paling utama. Agar kita selalu dapat menjawab bila ditanya. Kalau guru tidak bisa menjawab pertanyaan, itu bahaya.

This transcription explained his opinion about what a good teacher is. And then I put a marginal note, i.e., a good teacher.

I also followed the same procedure for another transcription, such as the interview with the Social Studies teacher (Mahmud, August 8, 2003) who talks the same point with the above teacher. Another example of original transcription in Bahasa Indonesia:

Kalau seorang guru sudah menyiapkan program harian, program semester dan program tahunan, guru tidak akan ngawur dalam mengajar walaupun tidak membawa buku.
Menghadapi siswa kalangan menengah memang tidak mudah, karena itu saya selalu menasehati mereka secara tegas, lugas dan dengan cara yang persuasif sehingga anak tersebut sadar dengan sendirinya. Sebagai guru senior, saya selalu menasehati murid-murid untuk selalu ingat bahwa kekayaan atau modal yang paling berharga yang akan diwariskan orangtua kepada anaknya adalah pendidikan yang baik yang akan membawa kalian sukses di masa depan.

When I wrote about what my participants thought a good teacher should be, I did it by comparing the relevant sections that I had marked out in interviews with different participants, transcribed in the original Bahasa Indonesia. I then translated these into English. I therefore undertook a selective translation of significant sections. For example, the translation of the interview with Rudy cited above, can be seen in Chapter 4, p. 146, 149, and 159 where I present opinions on the role of the teacher.

"I want to be a good teacher. A good teacher for me is not only about teaching subject matters; rather it is more about understanding the enrichment of students' ability." (p. 146).
"I personally always come in the early morning and return home in the late evening when the students and teachers have already left the school. My principle is to do my work on time and finish it in school. So, when I go home, there are no school-related assignments to do" (p. 149)
"We have to be masters in subject matters and make good preparations in order to answer any questions from the students. It is risky if we are not able to answer the students' questions" (p. 159)

The translation of the interview with Mahmud can be seen in Chapter 4, p. 160:

> For him a good teacher is "someone who masters the subject matter, always prepares his/her teaching well, has a daily program, semester program, and yearly program. Thus, teacher will never seem confused even if he/she does not bring the text book."
> "Managing children from middle-class family is not easy. Therefore, I always advice them explicitly/clearly, direct, and persuasive. So, they regained consciousness."
> As a senior teacher, he always gives advice to the students: "remember, the most valuable property that parents will give to their children is a good education that will bring you success in the future" (Mahmud, personal interview, August 8, 2003).

In order not to lose the richness and complexity of the participants' discourse in their own language and context, I had decided to translate the excerpts into English only at the end of my writing process. In other words, I interacted with the original transcriptions of the dialogues with my interviewees without translating them until the end of the writing process.

In this study the language of the participants and documents (Indonesian) is different from the language in which the thesis is written (English). This means that the original texts and interview transcriptions belong to a different educational community from the one in which the analyzed information will be judged. So the process of translation was not merely a literal translation but an interpretation-translation. It was performed in full awareness of the eyes (what is known and what is not) through which the presented material would be scrutinized. This added an extra element of complexity to the analytic-interpretive process. In this case, the analysis was not just the result of a *negotiated dialogue* (italic added) between the original sources of data, on the one hand, and my particular perspective in which my subjectivity is already included, on the other. For example, when I interpreted the concept of a good teacher, as Rudy stated in Chapter 4, is someone who knows everything and who could answer any questions from the students, in this case, I actually used the views of Indonesians in general. However, if we use constructivist or progressive approaches, a good teacher is someone who might encourage students

to be able to explore the knowledge by themselves and to find their ways to get deeper knowledge and teachers act as facilitator to enrich students' capability. Therefore, with my own subjectivity, I analyzed and interpreted the concept of a good teacher only within an Indonesian framework. This is what I mean by *negotiated dialogue* (italic added).

The qualitative researcher, therefore, can be compared to a musician, since

> Musicians interpret the music of another person – the composer – to an audience. Qualitative researchers are devoted to the task of communicating what they understand to be the meanings of the participants to an audience of readers. We have only to think about our experiences of concert halls or discos, jazz festivals or supper clubs, to realize how infinitely varied interpretations can be, how subtly different from one another. And while Bach is still Bach, Gershwin still Gershwin, in the hands of a gifted performer the essence of the original shines through together with the unique 'take' of the individual interpreter. That is why so many of us are avid fans of one particular interpreter of ... a particular symphony. (Ely et al. 1997, p. 224)

Indeed, the interpretation and the writing process are very intimately connected; even Ely et al. (1997) state that "part of writing is making our stances and theoretical positions, both informal and formal, clear to readers" (Ely et al., 1997, p. 225).

7. Summary

Within this section I have outlined and discussed the easy and difficult aspects of the research activities and processes undertaken for this study. I have told a story within a bigger story, that of the development of the study, and the fieldwork activities that I set up and carried out. This chapter has made tangible the theoretical and methodological foundations of my work, and described the complementary methods used for data collection, analysis, and presentation. It also described the application of an evaluative case study and ethnographic techniques to the study of the development and character of Muslim elite schools in Indonesia.

[1] (Anthropologists generally engage in some compromise between naturalistic investigation (unobtrusive observation of naturally-occurring events) and highly detailed and presumably accurate descriptions aided by video cameras or tape recorders. What is essential to grasp here, however, is that all data – regardless of how it is recorded – is substantially filtered in one way or another by the observer who decides what is relevant to the question, i.e. what constitutes "data" and what does not.

Chapter 4
Portrait of Al Azhar Islamic High School:
A Contemporary Muslim School

1. Introduction

.   Drawing on the conventions established by Yin (1994), Patton (1990) and others for using an evaluative case study approach and before offering an analysis of the interviews, I present here what may be described as a portrait of an Islamic high school. I use the term portrait here because I need to cover individual stories, school life and school activities. This chapter provides a portrait of the Islamic School of Al-Azhar from certain viewpoints. I start by providing an historical sketch. The information and data that I include in the historical sketch have been drawn from my interview with the board of YPI Al Azhar as well as from the book published by YPI Al Azhar, and other sources related to the study.

In the course of drawing up this portrait, I also attempt to 'colour in' some of the background. Thus although participants did not necessarily expand on all aspects of religion, I as an 'insider' in terms of understanding something of the cultural context, draw attention to this background so that the outsider reader will also have a deeper understanding of educational situation. I then go on to highlight narratives of school vision, mission and goal, curriculum, school leadership, students, teachers, teaching and learning, and parents. The narratives are told from individual perspectives and in the respondents' voice. They expose what is essential and unique to these respondents' academic and non-academic experiences in a school that is frequently labeled an elite Islamic school integrating the national curriculum and religious education. With the mosque as the center of the teaching and learning process, it seems that this school attempts to promote the Islamic tradition and culture in the school's everyday life.
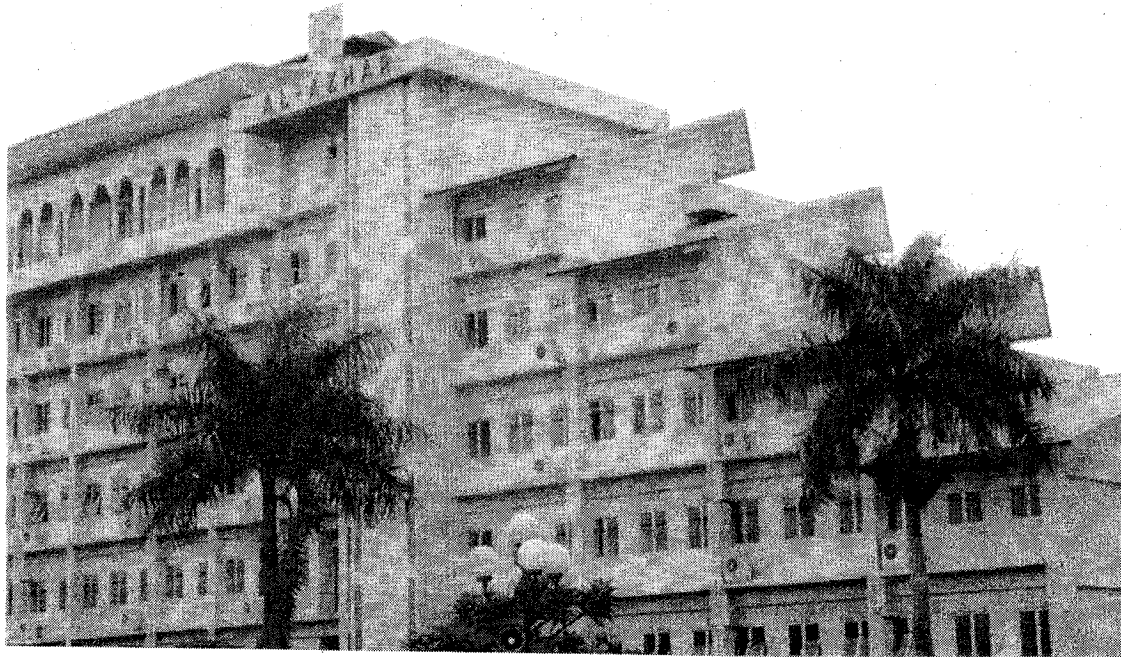
2. An Historical Sketch of Al Azhar Islamic School

The history of Islamic education has a strong correlation with that of the mosque. The mosque was essentially a vehicle for the spread of science, knowledge and Islamic civilization to the community. The situation in the great mosque of Al Azhar in Jakarta, during the early 1950s was thus no different from that mosques in other Muslim countries. Herman (Chair of the Foundation of Al Azhar Islamic Boarding School) states:

> After *shubuh* (morning praying) Hamka, the great *imam* (*ulema*) held *pengajian* (religious learning session) and discussed the main idea of the Quran and *hadits* (Islamic tradition) in front of people who sat around him. In the afternoon, the children learned how to read and write the Quran. There was no classroom and chairs but the children sat on the floor. They read and wrote the Quran and the instructions on the small table for each child. In the earlier period, the students came from its environment –around the mosque–and some of them were children of the mosque and office constructors who at that time were still building the mosque and other buildings/offices in Kebayoran Baru, Jakarta. (Herman, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

This situation inspired Muslim leaders at the time to incorporate Islamic education into the project. As Herman further mentions:

> The idea to build a complex for an Islamic educational institution arose among elites in the Muslim community such as Masyumi and Muhammadiyah leaders.

Syamsu Rizal (a Masyumi leader and mayor of Jakarta in the 1950s) granted the land in Kebayoran Baru Jakarta for public service, that is, for building the mosque as the center of Islamic education. Thus, the mosque has had a significant role in developing Islamic education program. (Herman, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

Moreover, based on the suggestion of Dr. Syamsuddin – Ministry of Social Affairs at that time – Yayasan Pesantren Islam Al Azhar (YPI Al Azhar, the Foundation of Al-Azhar Islamic Boarding School) was founded on April 7, 1952 "in order to maintain social funding from the government and to make sure that the foundation would use and take care of the money for the development of a building for religious service, i.e., mosque, and educational institution" (Herman, interview, October 6, 2003). The members of YPI Al Azhar, therefore, had an important role in the development of the mosque which would later be called al-Azhar Great Mosque[1] and its educational wing.

In March 1963, YPI Al Azhar formed a team, led by Abdullah Salim and assisted by graduates of Pesantren Moderen Gontor (Gontor Modern Islamic Boarding School) such as Nurcholish Madjid, Mahfudh Makmun, and A. Wachid Zaini. Its mission was to develop different levels of Islamic education. The *madrasah diniyah* (religious school that taught only Islamic subjects) was built in 1963. A year later, in August 1964, YPI Al Azhar built a pre-kindergarten and primary Islamic school. Then in order to fulfill the needs of parents and accommodating Al Azhar graduates, the school foundation built a junior secondary Islamic school in 1971 and a senior secondary Islamic school in 1976. Finally, in 2000, the Foundation built University of Al Azhar Indonesia (Busyairi, 2002, p. 91).

In the earlier period (the 1960s), according to Herman,

Al Azhar Foundation actually wanted to build *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) in the capital city with several buildings representing each region from all over Indonesia, to be a kind of Indonesian in miniature. This, however, has not been done yet because of the social, political and economic situation. It was probably based on practical considerations that *pesantren* was not attractive enough for many people in Jakarta at that time, even Muhammadiyah schools had none. On the other hand, eventually Al Azhar foundation created a good model of Islamic education. (Herman, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

Muslim parents were also expected to choose an Islamic school that is regarded as more suitable to their ideals. He further mentions:

> In the past, Muslim parents had no choice but to send their children to non-Muslim schools. Now by having Al Azhar School, parents are willing to send their children to this school by full of heart. That (yes) the fee is high. But in other private schools the fees are also expensive, even non-Muslim schools are more expensive than Al Azhar. (Herman, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

The success of AAIS was, of course, supported by the socio-economic and political situation at that time. As Herman points out:

> The rise of the Muslim middle class in the 1970s, most of them former Masyumi, HMI, and PII members, supported Al Azhar Islamic schools that had a good reputation and suited their identity, taste and life style. The AAIS, then, became an expectation for their children's schooling although they had to pay for it because they economically had the ability to do it. In conjunction with the rise of the Muslim middle class and the development of good quality Islamic schooling which was fulfilling their needs, the AAIS, therefore, was well received by the Muslim society. (Herman, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

Wahyu (an educational practitioner) also mentions that "Al Azhar is not managed by traditional religious leaders; it is not from an NU tradition but from the Masyumi tradition which has an appreciation of the Western world. It is an institution of modernist thought in the field of education (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003). What he meant, I think, is that AAIS was primarily a product of modernist tradition or thought. Masyumi was a modernist Islamic party dismantled in 1960 by President Soekarno. Meanwhile the Muhammadiyah was (and is) a modernist-reformist social organization (established in 1912). Unlike the traditionalists, who derive their thought from the orthodox faith and doctrines of Islam, modernist thought argues in favour of *ijtihad* or rational and individual (re)-interpretation of scriptures and traditions. Modernist thought in Islam tries to reconcile Islam and modern ideas. Conversely the traditionalist groups tend to follow Islamic teachings as these were formulated by the great scholars (`ulama) of classical and medieval Islam.

Nevertheless, AAIS is not exclusive to modernist Islamic organizations. It is open to all Islamic organizations, groups and individual Muslims. According to Ismail (Head of Education Division), "Al Azhar Foundation and School are the property of the *ummat* (Muslim community) for all religious groups, such as,

Muhammadiyah, NU; even political parties like PAN (Partai Amanat Nasional, Party of National Mandate), PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, Party of Prosperous Justice)" (Ismail, Head of Education Division: August 7, 2003). So, AAIS is open to all Muslim groups and individuals, although its management and direction are in the hands of individuals who come from modernist Islamic groups. This control is due to the fact that modernist organizations have their base mainly in urban areas, whereas traditionalists settle and are active mostly in rural areas. However, with the modernization process and the economic development that have occurred intensively since the period of the 'New Order,' many Muslims of traditionalist persuasion have become teachers in, or send their children to, AAIS. Consequently, the differences between the traditionalist and modernist Muslims have grown increasingly blurred.

The success of AAIS in Kebayoran Baru Jakarta motivated other Muslim communities to build these kinds of Islamic school. Wahyu (educational practitioner and Director of Madania School) even mentions that "in the last several years, Al Azhar school has had a good reputation and as a raw model with its strength and limitation. This school has encouraged and has motivated other Muslim communities to build similar schools" (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003). Many foundations have in fact proposed working relationships with AAIS:

> YPI Al Azhar, then, managed this relationship with a franchise system. Those foundations would follow and assure the same education system and quality like Al Azhar center; they provide the building and infrastructure while Al Azhar center would provide expertise such as curriculum, teachers, and teacher development training, management and leadership training. Teachers would be hired by the Al Azhar center, especially for Al Azhar branches in Jakarta and its environment. Other Al Azhar branches outside Jakarta, however, could hire teachers independently through tight selection based on the requirements established by the Al Azhar center. In order to have the same education system and maintain good quality, these requirements had to be met by other Al Azhar branches. (Herman, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

Recently, AAIS has opened several satellite locations in Jakarta, West Java(Bekasi, Tangerang, Cikarang, Cibinong, Bogor, Sukabumi, Cianjur, Serang, Purwakarta, Bandung, Cirebon), Central Java (Cilacap, Semarang, Salatiga), East Java (Surabaya), and West Kalimantan (Pontianak) (Busyairi, 2002, p. 93).

3. School Location

The AAIS high school (SMUI Al Azhar I) in Kebayoran Baru Jakarta is located in the complex of the great mosque of Al Azhar. It is a modern campus – equipped with air conditioning and elevators – that was renovated in 2000 and started being used in 2001. It is a collection of concrete structures housing kindergarten, primary and secondary schools, libraries, science and language laboratories, a gym, auditorium, clinic medical center, photocopy room, bookstore, playing field, cafeterias, a mini market, and the school cooperative. In all, the campus has five buildings on an area of 17,116 square acres. A short distance away, you can see an office area with government buildings and private companies, a shoppingmall/center, a bus station, and a residential area where most Al-Azhar students live. Seventy-five percent of students at Al Azhar come from the surrounding school area, especially South Jakarta, while the remaining 25% come from other boroughs throughout the city. The inhabitants of the school tend to describe themselves as upper middle-class, although many find that the recent economic crisis has deprived them of some of luxuries.

In fact, the mood on campus is one of order and modesty. There is not the edge of fear or the presence of drugs (or violence) that one often experiences in large North American urban high schools. Bathrooms are free of graffiti, hallways are swept and kept clean, and students express pride in the restored campus. Students gathered in groups do not appear ominous and threatening, but well behaved and friendly. Throughout my visit, students, in general, were mannerly and receptive. Some of them were curious about my reasons for being there, and when approached, were eager to tell their stories as long as it did not disturb their learning hours. Their clean and neat appearance in their school uniforms reinforced the positive impression made by the students' demeanor. The external images seemed to convey feelings of self-esteem and confidence.

4. School Program

There are two programs offered by the AAIS high school, i.e., intra-curricular and extracurricular. The intra-curricular program is divided into two programs:

science and social studies. The allocation of learning hours is fifty-two hours a week, six days a week, and 45 minutes for a lesson hour. In order to create a balance between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, Al Azhar School also provides extracurricular programs that are held from 14.30 until 16.30 p.m. and divided into several activities (see appendix E for more details on both intra- and extracurricular activities).

The learning hours for the regular programs run from 6:45 a.m. until 14:10 p.m., while the period from 14:30 p.m. until 16:00 p.m. is used for tutorial and enrichment. In the academic year 2001/2002, the high school also offered a special program – the 'O' level program – to obtain internationally accredited certificates of education from the University of Cambridge. For this, the students learned mathematics and science (physics, chemistry, and biology) in English, using the curriculum from the University of Cambridge. So, the students had to be fluent in English in order to pass the test. The learning hours for this special program were from 14:30 p.m. until 16:00 p.m. Students were instructed by part-time teachers who had graduated from Western universities, in countries like Germany, USA, and Australia.

5. Human Resources

5.1. Faculty profile

At the time of the study there were 27 full-time teachers, 4 part-time teachers, 4 administrative staff, 2 office boys, and 2 cleaning service employees. A large number of staff members acted as permanent teaching and administrative staff, who had been appointed by YPI Al Azhar, while a smaller number of them worked part-time. In 2003 the academic staff consisted of 31 persons, 10% of whom held a master's degree, 57% a doctoranda/doctorandus (following the Dutch system, equivalent to a master's degree), and 33% a bachelor's degree. The 2003 school report provides full details of teacher, staff, and student profile make-up at AAIS (see appendix E).

5.2. Student profile

The students at Islamic High School of Al Azhar are mainly from Jakarta, (South, North, Central, East and West Jakarta), although some have come from other towns like Tangerang, Depok, and Bogor. In 2002-2003, there were 204 applicants, 99 were accepted, and only 98 attended the school. In 2003, the enrolment of Islamic High School of Al Azhar was 372 persons, consisting of 193 female and 179 male students (Book of Education Information of Al-Azhar 2003/2004; Setiadarma, 2003, p. 246).

If we look at the table below it indicates that the number of female students who take the science program is higher than the number of male students (62 female, 57 male). However, male students are more present than female students in the social studies program (46 female, 51 male). It is evident that science is no longer dominated by males as was the case in the past. Female students have more choices in terms of academic orientations and therefore, they do not focus on traditional roles. "AAIS high school promotes and supports any students, female and male, to be the

best in their own field and to be a leader in their own society" (Budiman, personal interview, August 5, 2003). One of the four students I interviewed is the chair of socio-religious activities and chair of international traditional dance troupe/ensemble which performed in Europe and Turkey several years ago (Dewi, personal interview, August 7, 2003).

Table 1. Enrolments 2003/2004

Grade	Program	Male	Female	Total
10	General	71	85	156
11	Science	32	26	58
	Social Studies	22	19	41
12	Science	25	36	61
	Social Studies	29	27	61
	Total	179	193	372

Source: Book of Education Information 2003/2004

In 2001/2002, 55.67% overall of the Al Azhar graduates were accepted in outstanding public universities. This figure increased to 87.50% for the science program and remained static at 55.26% for the social studies and language programs in 2002/2003. The number of students enrolled the most popular universities and programs among Al Azhar students, and the students' academic achievement in 2002/2003 can be seen in Appendix E.

6. School Characteristics

One tradition at AAIS is the tendency of parents to continue sending all their children to this educational institution at every level. Hence, most of the students there have attended school with their peers since kindergarten. As Mimi (parent of four children at AAIS) mentions, "I feel safe and it is easier to adapt to the school tradition and environment. We have known each other for a long time and also because Al Azhar school implements good discipline, and provides sufficient facilities and a high quality of education" (Mimi, personal interview, August 25, 2003).

The implementation of discipline at the school is made possible by the good example provided by teachers to their students. The saying "A leader leads by example", is taken seriously at the AAIS high school, where teachers demonstrate Islamic values in their everyday behavior. The school regulations pertain moreover to all students. The methods of punishment, as part of the effort to implement school discipline, are based on the vision of Islamic education and persuasive approach that no one is perfect and therefore, punishment is a kind of learning process from bad experience to the better one (Setiadarma, 2003).

Not only behavioral discipline but also academic discipline is considered important by both the school and the teachers. Students are encouraged to strive for the highest possible academic achievement demonstrated by obtaining excellent marks at each level or semester. Students are happy and motivated by this atmosphere at AAIS, and parents are also happy and proud of their children's accomplishments (Setiadarma, 2003).

Good quality academics are supplemented by many extra-curricular activities. Starting the day by reciting the Quran provides a positive stimulus for the development of students' academic and spiritual abilities. The conducive atmosphere and good relations within the school community make students enthusiastic about pursuing all the instruction and activities in school. Although students at AAIS commit long hours to learning, this does not impede them from participating actively in extra-curricular activities (Setiadarma, 2003).

As the pioneer of excellence schooling at this level, the AAIS high school provides a wide range of facilities and services. Indeed, it is equipped with all the facilities needed to support teaching and learning activities, such as, science and language laboratories, a library, a gym and playing fields, a computer room, a cafeteria, etc. The school also provides guidance and counseling services for students who have difficulty with various problems, such as: low achievement caused by learning difficulties; health and physical problems; choosing programs and subjects; choosing school/university after graduation; problems related to attitude, personality, parents, or environment; and also misconduct/bad behavior in the classroom or in the

school environment. These services give guidance and motivation to students, especially on how to learn effectively and efficiently (see brochure of AAIS high school 2001/2002; Setiadarma, 2003).

A high quality school should be supported by qualified teachers. The teacher is part of the process of creating a quality educational output. Therefore, the AAIS high school provides very good facilities for teachers and staff, such as regular seminars and training sessions, financial support, and benefits such as health insurance. The development and improvement of qualified teachers focuses on aspects of *skills* and *content*. Teachers not only function to teach and transfer knowledge to students, but also to educate. The teacher is seen as a model, someone who applies Islamic values in everyday life but can also function as a colleague or friend to their students, depending on the circumstances (Setiadarma, 2003).

The AAIS high school pays much attention to fighting typical adolescent problems, such as the phenomena of brawling and drug use. Even though students of AAIS have a strong religious sentiment and are expected to avoid those problems, the school community has decided to take pre-emptive action especially for drug and cocaine use problems. A program is held regularly every year when accepting new students, which consists in part of a urine test administered by a doctor who is appointed by the school. Furthermore, every three months the school conducts surprise raids led by six teachers to ensure that no students' handbags, socks, shoes, or school materials contain any drugs. Any student who is found to possess or bring drugs to school is punished based on school regulations that are determined by parents (Setiadarma, 2003).

The student enrollment at the AAIS high school has fluctuated, but seems to have stabilized at 380. The students are all from middle and upper class families. The teaching staff is predominantly male, usually graduates from outstanding universities in Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya. None of the seventy-five teachers in Al Azhar's full-time staff live, however, in the surrounding school community. They travel several (kilometers) each morning from suburban residential areas. One

teacher, who lives in a suburb 30 kilometers away, was incredulous when I asked him whether he lived close by.

> I can't imagine living close by ... how much I would have to spend to buy a house around this school. It is so expensive and I cannot afford it with my own salary. So it is fortunate for me to have a house even though it is so far to reach the school. Therefore I have to leave early in the morning at 6:00 A.M. (after *shubuh* prayer) to avoid the traffic that always happens in Jakarta rush hour. I should be at school before 7:00 am and leave the school after 14:10 pm, and if I am late, the school will cut my attendance salary. (Mahmud, personal interview, August 8, 2003)

Not all of the teachers had cars; many of them used public transportation that is often crowded and uncomfortable.

The head guidance counselor of the school said that she felt connected to the students and community, even though she, too, lived kilometers away. This is because much of her work was done over the telephone. "That phone is one of the best things we have. I have not only this one on my desk but one at home, and a cellular too. I let kids know because a lot of parents work during the day. A lot of them cannot make it to parent meetings. They can not come up here during the day so I let them know that my cellular and phone at home is open to them at any time. Because they hold the key to these kids, and you have to let parents know that, too" (Linda, school counselor, August 1, 2003).

What primarily attracts Muslim parents to send their children to this school is the Islamic character of the Al Azhar school mission. As Herman (Head of the Al Azhar School Foundation) explained:

> We have here a general school actually, but we give additional religious subjects even though it is still not perfect. It means that religion is not a subject matter only, but it has to be a philosophy of life, which has to be reflected in the curriculum and school life. (Herman, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

Nevertheless, academic achievement as well has become a major concern of the school community. Mr. Ismail (Head of the Education Division) told me what he had learned when interviewing parents and when he asked them the reasons why they chose AAIS. Some parents said: "we don't want our children to be like their parents who cannot recite the Quran. We want them know how to recite the Quran and pray"

(Interview with parents, August 2003). Another expression comes from one teacher that spoke to me, as follows:

> The difference between Al Azhar School and other schools, primarily public schools, is its characteristic of giving more attention to the development of religiosity. We can be smart in many domains. However, it is hard to produce students who are religious and can master science and technology all at once. The students, perhaps, do not feel its benefit in six month, but after nine month or one year, the students and parents will consider the benefit of studying at Al Azhar School, which makes an effort to enrich both religiosity and academic achievement. And Al Azhar alumni usually believe their school is better when they are in other environments. (Rudy, personal interview, August 6, 2003)

Thus, religious or Islamic education has become attractive for many of today's urban-based Muslim parents.

There have been, nevertheless, significant changes in AAIS religious policies in recent years. Although known as a moderate school, it has become stricter since 1999, when YPI Al Azhar established the policy of new school uniforms for female students. In contrast to the earlier years, when female students wore short skirts reaching below the knee and short sleeved blouses without covering their hair, the new regulation requires female students to adopt the *jilbab* as their uniform. One female student expressed her opinion by saying:

> It might be okay to wear *jilbab* (Islamic dress uniform) at school. At first, I complained why do I have to wear *jilbab* everyday at school? It is not fair; because this rule only prevailed for new students like me as past of the first group, while other female students in grade eleven and twelve didn't [have to comply]; and above all, at that time there was no air conditioning in class, it was really uncomfortable for us. Now, there is an air conditioner and we are starting to be accustomed. (Dewi, personal interview, August 7, 2003)

Meanwhile, one member of the parents' association observed,

> In the beginning, this new policy generated a strong reaction among female students. Their reaction is about the unfairness (this rule is only valid for new students or grade 10) and inconvenience, saying how hot it is wearing the *jilbab* at school with no air conditioner. However, after several months of discussions with principals, teachers and students; and also after the school provided air conditioning, the female students accepted this regulation peacefully. The policy has even created a consciousness on their part that they are at an Islamic school and should adopt an Islamic dress at least in school. And there was also a small reaction from the parents regarding this policy. Some of them did not agree actually, but many parents now have realized that as an Islamic school it

is only proper to implement such a school uniform. (Ella, personal interview, August 5, 2003)

This policy was circulated among all members of the school community and implemented gradually. One administrator stated that: "It is a kind of our obligation and mission to preserve such Islamic values in school" (Ismail, personal interview, August 7, 2003). Increasingly, the parents and students have begun to admit the appropriateness of this rule. It has even become a habit for some students to wear Islamic dress not only at school but also after school.

Although many students refused to wear the *jilbab* after school hours, some students and parents believed that it was a valuable learning process, in that it made them conscious of the issue (Interview with students and parents, August 2003). One mother explained furthermore that "my daughter has never worn a mini skirt or short-sleeved shirt, but has always worn long pants and long-sleeved shirt. It is a positive impact of this Islamic school" (Ella, personal interview, August 5, 2003).

An English teacher who spoke to me:

> Many students take off their *jilbab* right after school hours when they are in the lift. As teachers, we just remind them that women should cover their `awrat` [part of the body which should not be visible while performing a ritual]. It is up to the students whether they wear Islamic dress at school and outside school or not. The most important thing is, we already teach them Islamic teaching and values. Our responsibility is from 7:00 a.m. until 14:30 p.m. and the rest becomes the parents' responsibility. (Nina, personal interview, August 5, 2003)

Meanwhile another teacher said that:

> It is actually understood that Al Azhar students are from middle class families in which many parents want their children to have an Islamic attitude and morals. The problem is that the students are nice, neat, and behave at school but when they go back to their family, the environment and the rules are different from the ones they have at school. It always creates problems. For example, at school they wear long skirts and sleeved blouses, but after school or outside school, some of them even wear tight clothing and jeans, and show their belly button. Unfortunately their parents do not prohibit them and do not even care (Rudy, personal interview, August 6, 2003).

The decision to implement the policy demonstrated the growing confidence of many Islamic educational institutions to apply stricter Islamic behaviour norms without worrying about losing students who might object to the policy. Wearing the

jilbab has even been described "as an expression of self-identity in reaction to globalization" (Haynes, 1999, p. 3). As I already stated above in the introduction, there has been a shift in the religious landscape in Indonesia since the 1970s. Increasing numbers of so called 'statistical' or nominal Muslims (*abangan* in Clifford Geertz's (1976) term as opposed of *santri* or pious Muslims) have sought to deepen their faith and adhere more closely to the prescriptions of Islam (Hefner, 2002). There has been a steady rise in Muslim consciousness and ritual formalism, especially among the urban middle classes and student population. Consequently, Islam has been growing increasingly important in Indonesian public life. With this development, the 'New Order' government (1967-1998) had to give up many restrictions on Muslim affairs that were in place for years. The government conceded by granting expanded powers to the Islamic courts and revoking restrictions on Islamic dress for students, among other measures (Fealy, 2004; Hefner: 2000; Mackie and MacIntyre, 1994). At the height of the authoritarian 'New Order' rule, the Ministry of Education and Culture had maintained a policy forbidding the wearing of *jilbab*, or Islamic head covering, by female students in state schools (Liddle, 1999). Therefore, it was quite appropriate for an Islamic school such as Al Azhar, one year after the fall of the 'New Order' regime, to make obligatory the wearing of the *jilbab*, since the new government now gives more autonomy to private schools to determine their own regulations, in accordance with the new democratic circumstances of national life.

Indeed as the conversations cited above show, the support of teachers, students and parents for the implementation of the *jilbab* demonstrates that there is a growing Muslim consciousness among the urban Muslim middle-class concerning the importance of actively applying religious values to their daily lives. This can sometimes appear in the shape of ritual formalism.

7. School Climate

According to one participant, "religion is number one." This is an informal slogan of AAIS. One day in the afternoon I heard the voices of students in the hallway. "Line up for the ablution[2] please ...! Who is the *imam* (praying leader) today

... His voice should be clear. Hurry up please; the call for praying has already started" (Setiadarma, 2003, p. 249). One frequently hears such talk prior to *shalat dzuhur* (noon communal prayer). Praying together is one of the basic school regulations at the AAIS high school. In this school, the students are trained based on Islamic values that are incorporated into school activities. This conforms to the vision and mission of YPI Al Azhar which is to educate the whole person in terms of religiosity and knowledge of science and technology. This enables people to retain their individuality and actively participate in several aspects of life in the era of global competition (The Book of Education Information 2003/2004). We can see how the school implements Islamic values into school life through school regulations. For example, not only do female students have to wear the *jilbab* at school in their last four years, but male students have to perform *Jum'at* prayer collectively led by the students themselves. All students are also required to engage in *tadarrus* (group recitation of the Quran in turn) every morning from 6.45 until 7.00 before beginning lessons. School authorities consider it valuable to train students to be good Muslims and to be responsible for themselves and society (Setiadarma, 2003).

People appeared to be comfortable at Al Azhar. There are pleasant conversations in the halls before and after class, in the teachers' lounge/office, in the cafeteria, in the department offices, and often in the central office. The general feeling is that the teachers and students at Al Azhar know and like each other. Students kid around with each other, and, at times, with teachers (and vice versa). For example, I saw some students meet a female teacher in the hallway and suddenly say "Ms., you are so pretty today, what happened?" I heard also one male teacher say to a group of female students "as women, you have to keep your tradition and privacy, don't sell out to anyone." We should not infer that this atmosphere of good humor and friendly interactions prevails everywhere, but generally, those at the school consider it an oasis of harmony and peacefulness. As an English teacher said with quiet conviction, "This is the way teaching should be: I wish all teachers at Islamic schools could teach at a school like this" (Nina, personal interview, August 5, 2003).

Students benefit from the Islamic culture and values established by Al Azhar school, as one student said: "I enjoy being in this school. As an Islamic school, every

morning we start with reciting the Quran before class and in the afternoon, we pray together with the principal, staff, teachers, and students" (Anton, personal interview, August 7, 2003). Even though she found it hard to follow all the rules and discipline, one female student said to me:

> If we do not pray together, a teacher on-duty will take note and fine us. It is a basic school regulation, except for those female students who are experiencing menstruation who cannot pray. Thus, we become disciplined to praying five times a day, at school and at home, as is the obligation for any Muslim. As one of the excellent schools, we are motivated by the teachers to implement religious obligation, achieve good marks and compete with other students. (Tini, personal interview, August 9, 2003)

However, one student reported a bad experience:

> I don't feel secure on public transportation, because people can identify one through school uniform. People think that I am rich and have a brand-name watch, cellular, and even shoes. Thieves have actually even stolen some of Al Azhar students' cellulars and watches in the public transportation. This is the reason why most of Al Azhar students use their own car to go to school. (Amir, personal interview, August 7, 2003)

Al-Azhar School has a main gate and an additional gate, which is controlled by security guards. However, according to Rudy (Math teacher),

> Drug transactions between outsiders and students have occurred in the past when the outsider has access to students through school backyard which was not controlled by school security guards at that time. Many parents complained about that and proposed to the school foundation and the principal to give more attention to the safety of the students and to close the school backyard. Since then, our school and students have been safe. (Rudy, personal interview, August 6, 2003)

AAIS has a small parking area. It is full of the cars of the teachers, staff, students, and even people who come to the mosque for prayer. On the east side of the mosque, there is a small road leading to the food court that is also used for parking. Especially on Friday, this complex becomes very crowded, full of people who want to perform the *Jum'at* prayer and full of open-air market stalls selling food, Muslim dress, shoes and even office tools. During school hours, there are many parents – mostly mothers- sitting together in a group, some is wearing the head cover (*jilbab*) and some not, talking about their children, shopping, movies, or rumors about celebrities. Some may be having breakfast or lunch, while a few parents (mothers)

may even be seen to smoke – actually, strange behavior for women in Indonesian society. In addition, there are also a group of baby-sitters and drivers who are waiting for their employers' children who are studying at Al Azhar School.

However, things are not always rosy in and around the school. An unfortunate experience was described Mr. Ismail (former principal of Al Azhar Islamic high school and recently the head of education division):

> One day there was a quarrel among parents who are accompanying their kids to school. A mother accused another of having an affair with her husband. The security guard tried to break up that fight. I saw the quarrel from the book-store, not far from there. The foundation board, then, called upon those parents to solve the problem. Learning from that experience, YPI Al Azhar has organized intensive courses and seminars on education and Islamic teachings, especially on how to be good Muslims, good parents and teachers at home. Al Azhar also pays attention to the baby-sitters and drivers who are waiting for the students by inviting them to learn the Quran and Islamic teachings too. (Ismail, personal interview, August 7, 2003)

8. Vision, Mission and Goal

As stated in the school document, the vision of the AAIS high school is to be "a centre of educational study and innovation that meets national and international standards in the fields of science and technology and socio-cultural affairs based on Islamic values and attitudes" (Book of Education Information 2003/2004, p. iii). And its mission is to "provide sincere, transparent, and professional services in education, teaching, social and cultural affairs in order to contribute well formed human resources for the Muslim community, nation and state" (Book of Education Information 2003/2004, p. iii).

In accordance with this vision and mission, the educational objectives of Islamic School of Al Azhar are:

> To create an Indonesian who has integrity, is qualified on the matters of faith (Islamic belief and piety), and who is a master of science and high technology. By the time they leave the school, students are capable of improving their personality and participating actively in several aspects of life in the era of global competition. (See, Brochure of Islamic High School of Al-Azhar; Setiadarma, 2003, p. 249)

The statement seems generally quite an ambitious endeavor. It is also somewhat abstract and not easy to translate and implement into school practice. It is not very

focused on the extent to which a student's abilities should be improved in order to achieve their full potential. In addition, it does not discuss how the organization, people, and moral teachings work together for the improvement of the students who attend AAIS, the school itself, and the society at large. However, the formulation of the vision, mission and goals of Al Azhar School is indeed compatible with the traditional aims and objectives of Islamic education as I described in introduction (chapter 1).

One goal that those in the AAIS administration felt to be fully applicable was the task of preparing students for the future, which would encompass receiving higher education, being good Muslims and becoming leaders in the society. Of course, this goal is so broad that no single policy can address it. "My task", according to the principal, is "to translate the vision and mission into reality, something more focused and specific" (Budiman, personal interview, August 5, 2003). Thus, in this Islamic high school,

> I concentrate on the concept of mastering basic knowledge; we are required to prepare students to be accepted into outstanding university through SPMB (*Sistem Penerimaan Mahasiswa Baru*, The Acceptance System of New University Students).[3] Creating Muslim intellectuals and Muslim leaders is also the mission of Al Azhar School. To achieve those missions, consequently, the students have to study in outstanding universities, not in ordinary universities. Therefore, we give students directions to attend to UI, ITB, IPB, and UGM. The second is to improve students' behavior and confidence, and also, to train them well in science and technology, moral and religious practice. (Budiman, personal interview, August 5, 2003)

When I talked to parents, teachers, and students, three primary goals were mentioned: (1) academic preparation, (2) producing good Muslims, and (3) developing a sense of community. The first and second goals were the only goals referred to by everyone: teachers, parents, and students. For the parents and students I talked to, academic preparation meant only one thing: to enable each student to compete for positions at universities that would provide more satisfying life opportunities. AAIS's mission, from the perspective of most parents and students is to prepare the student well for more education and to instill the self-confidence needed to achieve this and more (interview, August 2003).

The goal of preparing students for post-secondary schooling was, to my eyes, being accomplished quite well at AAIS. As the principal and one teacher put it, "we feel that middle-class students are motivated to go to university – their parents tell them that's the goal and support them with good facilities." The principal also expressed this concern when he mentioned that:

> In 2002-2003 nearly 100% of Al Azhar students went to university: 72% to outstanding public universities such as ITB, UI, UGM, IPB, Unpad, and STAN (State Higher School of Accountancy); 20% to private universities such as University of Pelita Harapan, University of Trisakti, and University of Paramadina; and 5% to Western/international universities in the US, Australia, and Singapore (Budiman, personal interview, August 5, 2003; see also The Book of Education Information 2003/2004).

Another goal of AAIS is to produce good Muslims. Many parents and students were content that Al Azhar encouraged its students to develop Islamic religiosity, spirituality, and character. The deepest commitment was expressed by teachers of Arabic and religious subjects. These teachers see their goal as training students to observe religious practices correctly, meaning that the students have to be fluent in Arabic and religious subjects at the same time. They prepare their students by introducing them to the several meanings of the Quran and Islamic teachings, and by providing students with socio-religious activities in order to ease their entry into the wider community. The following are some students' impressions of how AAIS goes about instilling Islamic character through extra-curricular activities. Two of the students said that:

> Once a year we perform *shalat tahajjud* (praying in the middle of the night) together at school organized by the religious education teacher. We pray and recite the Quran and the teacher invites us to remember what we have done and what we are going to do next. It is such "a spiritual experience" and "self-evaluating experience." We ask God to forgive us and guide us in the right direction in our life. (Dewi and Anton, students, August 7, 2003)

Regarding another curricular activity, the two other students mentioned:

> We have so many interesting experiences in the basic training of leadership. This activity is usually held in villages. We visit a village and live with one family for a week. We do everything the family does, like working in the farm, eating what they eat, sleeping in their living room, and taking shower in the ordinary bathroom or public bathroom. The house is very modest, without TV, phone, computer or other high technology. In the village, we engaged in community

service, for example, renovating public toilets and roads as well as giving donations of clothing, books, and school uniforms to poor families. These activities build our empathy and consciousness to care and give more attention to other people who are not as fortunate as us. (Tini and Amir, students, August 9, 2003)

I also heard expressions of deep concern that Al Azhar should adopt the goal of fostering critical thinking among its students. If the goal of preparation was expressed as outward-focused and future focused, this second goal was expressed as more intrinsic to the student as an individual. Some parents, for example, expect that "Al Azhar School speak about the development of rational, disciplined thinking – an ability to critically analyze situations – as a necessary major goal." And they were concerned that this goal was not being met. Included in the meaning of critical thinking was the students' ability to critically evaluate learning and personal experience. As parents said "what we do really aim for here at Al-Azhar is 'critical thinking and the appreciation of learning.' When I asked them if they thought the schooling at Al Azhar, with its forty-five minute classes, six days a week would support such a goal, they hesitated and said, "Actually, it does, does not it?" (Ella and Mimi, personal interview, August 2003)

I saw an interesting example of how the school foundation tried to reach its twin primary goals of college preparation and global education. The International Baccalaureate Program is based in Switzerland and administers a battery of tests to students from a variety of countries. Those who pass these tests will be accepted by European universities. A number of private high schools in Indonesia have participated in the program over the past five years. AAIS and Madania School (along with another Islamic school in the Jakarta region) are seriously considering the possibility of joining this program. Unfortunately, according to Ismail (the Head of Education Division of AAIS):

> It is hard to get a license from IBO (International Baccalaureate Organization), because it is very expensive and we lack financial means. Our teachers' ability in English as the main language of instruction in IB program also does not meet the standards required by IBO; and what attracted our school was the possibility of being treated differently by the District Office of National Education that strictly imposed the national curriculum on our school. (Ismail, personal interview, August 7, 2003)

Nevertheless, in 2001-2002, the AAIS high school began offering a special program, i.e., the O Level Program, as an enrichment program. This program leads to internationally accredited certificates of education from the University of Cambridge which acts as a 'passport' for students to enter the world of higher education. It also provides entry to employment and a range of lifetime opportunities. The subjects that are offered are as follows: language (English), mathematics, science (biology, physics and chemistry), geography, social and human sciences. All the instruction was to be in English and follows the O Level curriculum established by the University of Cambridge, which had delegated its implementation to the Cambridge International Examination (CIE) and its Regional Representatives in Jakarta. The learning hours for this special program were to be from 2:30 p.m. until 4:00 p.m., five days a week. This program, however, did not at first work smoothly for four reasons:

1. The O Level curriculum had not been introduced or integrated sufficiently into the education calendar of the AAIS high school.
2. The O Level program did not differ markedly from the regular program except for the fact that instruction and materials were in English.
3. This program was not publicized sufficiently to students and parents
4. The school foundation had no guidelines yet to manage the implementation of international programs, especially the O Level program (School Report, 2003).

A third goal, expressed by some parents, teachers and students at Al Azhar, was to prepare students to become good citizens. The mother of a grade 12 student, Ella (Chair of the Parents' Association), for example, urged eloquently and passionately that "Al Azhar seriously pursue a goal that is particularly relevant to developing adolescents: the goal of fostering a sense of community and social responsibility" (Ella, personal interview, August 23, 2003). It is a goal that, to some extent, conflicts with the idiosyncratic, independent, autonomous directions of adolescent growth, as well as the school focus on academic excellence. Thus, it is a goal that has to be made explicit. It cannot be achieved through the subtle ways that school administrators say it is pursued. Likewise, she argued, "the school is an appropriate place for such a goal to be pursued because the school is a social community far more than it is, say, a family" (Ella, personal interview, August 23, 2003). A counselor at Al Azhar expressed a similar concern. "Schools must help

these kids find direction in life," she said. "We have an obligation to make students politically and socially aware, to show them how politics and society relate to them and their community" (Ismail, personal interview, August 7, 2003). Some teachers mentioned that they helped students "to know their responsibility in society," "to have goals and values," "to function in society," "to acquire life skills, such as becoming informed consumers" (Rudy, Nina, Mahmud, personal interview, August 2003). Some teachers also spoke of the need for students to function in the society as well-formed or total persons. An assistant principal referred to a similar commitment to instilling a greater sense of the school as a community, a deeper feeling of responsibility in the students and the faculty for their community and an institutional setting of which they could be proud. He talked, for example, about social activities programs that had been introduced which he thought would be particularly appropriate and effective for building responsibility and empathy, and for decreasing the feeling of elitism among the students, who are mostly from middle-class families.

9. Curriculum and Instruction

The AAIS high school operated two curricula at the time of the present study. The first of these was the curriculum that is set by the Ministry of National Education, i.e., the curriculum of 1994 and its supplement – *Garis-garis Besar Pendidikan dan Pengajaran* (*GBPP,* The Guideline of Education and Teaching) – and curriculum-based competency, for general subjects. The learning hours for these subjects were set at forty-one hours a week. The second was the curriculum determined by YPI Al Azhar called the Al Azhar curriculum, for religious education only, such as *aqidah* (Islamic belief), *syari'ah* (Islamic law), *sejarah perkembangan ummat Islam* (History of Muslim community development), Quran, and Arabic language, which was allocated altogether seven hours a week. Thus the total hours devoted to learning activities is forty-eight hours per week.[4] The national curriculum focused on the development of knowledge and technology, while the Al Azhar religious education curriculum emphasized the improvement of faith and piety based on the Quran and *hadith* (Busyairi, 2002). The two curricula are integrated by striving for a correlation between general and religious subjects in which all subjects taught

are inspired by basic Islamic teaching, the Quran and Islamic tradition (the Book of Education Information, 2003/2004, p. 1). Consequently, AAIS needs longer learning hours to implement both curricula. As one teacher said,

> If we want to be honest, the curriculum-based competency which will be implemented nationally in the next two years sets the learning hours as only thirty-six hours per week, but the AAIS high school determines forty-one hours a week for secular subjects and seven hours a week for religious subject (Rudy, personal interview, August 6, 2003).

In public high schools, religious education is allotted only two hours a week. "Perhaps it is one of the reasons why so many parents send their children to Al Azhar School" (Rudy, personal interview, August 6, 2003).

Concerning the integrated curriculum, he said that "our commitment as teachers is always to connect secular knowledge such as mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, and sport with religious teaching, the Quran, and *hadith* (Islamic tradition)." This means that "we try to explain those subjects by using Islamic teaching and values by quoting the Quranic or *hadith* view points as the main sources" (Rudy, personal interview, August 6, 2003). For example, in teaching the science or physics of "impulse and momentum," the aim is to enable students to perform the experiment and discuss it until they understand what impulse and momentum is. In his/her explanation, the teacher should also refer to the Quran and *hadith* until students understand that the sky and earth are created by God for goodness and we will receive retribution for what has been done (Busyairi, 2002, p. 111). Therefore, as some teachers said: "teachers at Al-Azhar have to be masters in their subject matter and in religious teaching. It is a strong requirement for anyone to be a teacher at Al-Azhar. Today as we are facing globalization, so teachers are also encouraged to be fluent in English" (personal interview with teachers, August, 2003).

From my interviews with teachers and administrator mentioned above, there are two important points that should be highlighted. The first is that elite Islamic schools offer a religious curriculum in which Islamic beliefs and systems function as a source and guidance in pedagogical practice. It is understood that when religious groups create and manage their own schools, the presence of strong religious views and the virtual absence of more widely held secular views pose no significant, overt

problem (Eisner, p. 1994, 60). Certain religious groups have pursued their own interests displayed in their educational priorities and in their attention to this aspect of religious life in the curriculum. The second is that Islamic schools are committed to the development of students' potentials, high standards and quality. They seemingly adopt Dewey's conception of cognitive development and intelligence as "an active *process* (italic in original) rather than a static of fixed entity," which is congruent with recent theoretical conceptions of intellectual ability (Eisner, 1994, p. 69).

If we begin with the simplest definition of curriculum – the courses taken by students – this is not difficult to define. The graduation requirements in the AAIS high school are simple enough as well: three years of Indonesian language, English, social studies, math, science, religious education and the Quran, Arabic, and civic education; two years of arts, physical education; and a semester of computer science. Graduation requirements are, however, only the tip of the curriculum iceberg (see Appendix E for more on the subjects and learning hours).

I was initially told that there is tracking at the AAIS high school as a way to maintain its reputation as an excellent school. The division of students into one group/class is actually based on students' grades. It soon became apparent that there was a great deal of differentiation in the nature and difficulty of courses. There are three classifications of courses: below average level, average level, and above average level. The course classification scheme is most prevalent in mathematics, but is also present in science and English. It is minimally used in social studies and not at all in other subjects like civic education, gym, and art. Some teachers expressed concerns, but they had little opportunity to go beyond their focus on curriculum to investigate and analyze their teaching. There did not seem to be much chance that the parents' questions about teaching strategies could be effectively addressed by the teachers at Al Azhar. Given the lack of resources for curriculum analysis by the teachers, I was impressed by the ways in which they have tried to acknowledge and respond to their problems.

10. School Organization and Leadership
10.1. Al Azhar as a Total Institution

The characterization of Al-Azhar School as a total institution follows C.A. McEwen's of the "total institution" concept (McEwen, 1980; Peshkin, 1986). McEwen opens his essay with Goffman's own definition of a total institution as a place "of residence and work where a large number of like situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life" (p. 143). With the exception of a total institution as a place of residence, Al Azhar fits every other aspect of Goffman's definition. McEwen continues by cautioning that the total institution is less totalitarian and less deserving of its usual status as an epithet than many writers have been aware. He quotes Nick Perry (1974) to show the term's use as a pejorative: A total institutions is "a symbolic presentation of organizational tyranny, and a closed universe symbolizing the thwarting of human possibilities" (p. 147). This conceptualization might be too easily applied in the case of Islamic schools. McEwen, moreover, identifies several "dimensions of organizational variation" in order to demonstrate the variability of total institutions. The following sections will discuss these dimensions as they relate to Al Azhar.

10.2. Shared Organizational Goals

McEwen (1980) identifies shared organizational goals as "the degree of staff coordination or consensus about work goals and practices" (p. 157). In light of the data gathered, we know that Al Azhar teachers are in remarkable accord with each other about work goals and practices, accepting their school's preference to forgo dealing with conflict and ambiguity in the interest of ensuring the successful inculcation of their vision.

Al Azhar teachers achieve consensus about work goals relatively easily, since goals are a matter of belief and belief is enshrined in the Quran. They implement their goals in a complex society where contradictory, competing goals exist in abundance; indeed, it is Al Azhar's triumph that its people remain as doctrinally pure as they do.

If Al Azhar's teachers/educators know enough about the world to entertain wrong thoughts or beliefs, they nonetheless strain toward spiritual purity, so that the unsanctioned thought becomes virtually unthinkable. As one teacher said:

"Everything I do I do to honor God, but I'm not saying I'm perfect, because nobody's perfect. I strive to be what God wants me to be; everyday I try. But it doesn't mean that I do it" (Mahmud, personal interview, August 8, 2003).

Al Azhar's goals are inspired by Islamic teachings that apply equally to those who teach and to those who are taught. Each group is meant to be equally enclosed and equally responsive to and shaped by Al Azhar's total institution, with certain allowances made for relative maturity. If diversity is permitted with regard to personal tastes and interests, doctrine prevails on matters that count. Accordingly, "work goals and practices" at Al Azhar enjoy as much coordination and consensus as is humanly possible to achieve (McEwen, 1980, p. 157).

10.3. The Principal's Role

There is increasing recognition that school improvement requires effective management at the school level (Simkins, et.al., 2003). This is confirmed by De Grauwe (2000, p. 1), who argues:

> Much research has demonstrated that the quality of education depends primarily on the way schools are managed, more than on the abundance of available resources, and that the capacity of schools to improve teaching and learning is strongly influenced by the quality of leadership provided by the headteacher.

In short, the leadership role of the head teacher is critical and requires new non-traditional managerial skills (De Grauwe, 2000).

Virtually all the available literature on school effectiveness and school improvement emphasizes the role of leadership, particularly that of the principal, in achieving, maintaining, and improving school quality. The literature emphasizes various models of leadership, but particular models have come to dominate in recent years. These models, which draw on the general concept of "transformational leadership" (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Leithwood, Tomlinson, & Genge, 1996), as well as education-specific ideas about "instructional leadership" (Southworth, 2002), place a strong emphasis on the role of the leader in setting a vision for the school, typically focused around improved teaching and learning, and effectively inspiring and stimulating others in a commitment to the pursuit of this vision. Some international studies outside education have suggested that transformational qualities

are seen as key aspects of "good" leadership in most cultural contexts (Den Hartoug, et al., 1999).

To be successful in implementing school programs and activities, principals have to be firm and purposeful, adopt a participative approach and operate in a thoroughly professional manner. Truly effective leaders tend to find a balance between the autocratic and democratic styles of management. They have a vision but know when it is proper to involve others in the decision-making process. They are also concerned with and knowledgeable about teaching and learning and are themselves highly visible around the school (Kate, 1996).

Institutionalizing the processes of collaboration and collective responsibility has been linked with the notion of building leadership capacity in schools (Lambert, 1998 quoted by Silins and Mulford, 2004). Schools where leaders include all staff in leadership development and decision-making, where decisions are based on evidence from existing sources or gathered data, where the school has a clear purpose, where staff, parents, and students are informed and provided with the opportunity to discuss and refine ideas before decisions are made, are schools that have high leadership capacity and broad-based participation. This work of leadership and learning is assumed by the school community as a collective responsibility (Silins and Mulford, 2004, p. 448). These are schools that are operating as learning organizations. Building leadership capacity is akin to the concept of distributed leadership (Silins, et al., 2002), which develops into a characteristic of the organization itself (Ogawa, & Bossert, 1995). Silins, et al. (2002) have argued that schools characterized by high level of total leadership are most likely to have in place conditions that promote a high level of organizational learning that enables them to function as high-performing, restructuring schools.

I interviewed eight Islamic school principals. Four out of the eight are smart, dynamic women and visionary leaders. They often describe their top goal as "building community among faculty, students, and parents." The role of the principal in the governance of an Islamic school, therefore, is that of a communal leader. This idea of community building recurred in my interviews with principals, who spoke about their responsibility to shape school life and to live out school ideals in their

own work. They routinely drew on these images in conversations with students, faculty, and parents; in the objectives they set for the school; in the tasks they undertook for themselves and those they delegated; and in also how they used their time.

Islamic school principals viewing themselves as agents of change committed to communal aims rarely described their work in instrumental language: the principalship was not spoken of as a career opportunity. When asked about their motivation for seeking the principalship, public school principals were much more likely than their Islamic school counterparts to report a preference for administrative responsibilities and a desire to further their careers and to move up to a higher post. In contrast, Islamic school principals expressed more interest in being able to influence school policy. As Mr. Budiman (the principal) mentions:

> I had no plans to become a principal. It just happened. The important thing is, I work based on my job description, whatever and wherever the place is. I believe only God and the school foundation gives us this position. Therefore, it is a mandate. I have to do well and be responsible to the school foundation and particularly to God. I feel free to work anywhere, so it does not feel like a set back when I, for example, do not get a promotion from the school foundation. But, at least as principal, I have the chance to implement my own concepts and ideas. (Budiman, personal interview, August 5, 2003)

Research on effective schools has emphasized the importance of leadership in the principal's role.[5] The principal of AAIS bears responsibility for financial management, discipline and instructional leadership, faculty selection and supervision, student recruitment, and in many cases development and fund-arising, and public and alumni relations. The principal must also maintain amicable relationships with the YPI Al-Azhar, the district, the local community, the parents' association, and the neighboring schools, i.e., public, Islam, Catholic, or Protestant.

A brief portrayal of a typical workday for Mr. Budiman illuminates this diverse and challenging role. He begins his day performing the 5:00 *Shubuh* praying at home and sometimes at the mosque near his house. After a brief breakfast and a thirty-minute drive, he arrives at school by 7:00 a.m. Quickly greeting his staff, he pours a cup of tea and drops in to see the Vice-Principal. During the next thirty minutes, he reviews recent disciplinary problems. Budiman involves himself in these

activities because he views the school's response to discipline problems as a guidance function. Through his own actions, he encourages students to recognize their responsibilities both to themselves and the school community, although most of the problems are about classroom discipline such as lateness and truancy. For Mr. Budiman, these events threaten the basic order of the school and require careful deliberation. Expulsion is the usual penalty for selling drugs on campus, for instance, but Mr. Budiman first talks with the parents and students before committing himself to such a serious course of action.

Mr. Budiman takes a few minutes to return telephone calls and checks the correspondence piled up on his desk. The rest of the morning is spent getting out of the office and being visible around the school. He greets teachers and students in the corridor. He stops in some classes for a few minutes, and stays longer in one class which is very noisy to find out the problem. He calls a teacher into the office to replace the original teacher who could not come to class. As one student told me: "My principal is always checking in to see if the class is going well (Tini, personal interview, August, 7, 2003). If there is no teacher in the class, he will call other teachers to take care the class". Then he moves on. During lunch-time, he participates in afternoon prayers together with students and teachers. He talks with some of them latter, inquiring about their classes and plans for the future. Because almost all Al Azhar parents want their children to continue on to postsecondary education, Mr. Budiman makes a point of discussing the preparation of national examination and the strategies for success in public universities. Talking briefly with faculty members in before classes resume, he suggests to one teacher, who is teaching intensive and enrichment programs, that he see the assistant principal to remedy the existing situation delivered by parents concerning the preparation of national examination.

An important part of Budiman's work is using what he observes and hears in the class, cafeteria and the corridors to sense the tone and mood of the school. Brief conversations with faculty sometimes uncover sources of anxiety and problems that he might be able to ameliorate. My interviews with teachers at Al Azhar revealed their appreciation of such informal contact with their principal. These encounters provide the faculty with an easy way to advise Mr. Budiman on a wide variety of

matters – from the progress of students on academic and disciplinary probation to needed repairs for classrooms, toilets, hallways, and the gym. Back in his office at 13:00, he prepares for a meeting with the education division of YPI Al-Azhar.

Discipline, authority, and responsibility have been the focus of his plan for change. His commitment to the school is sincere and strong. He suggests that the school is proving effective in its effort to prepare students for productive roles in society. He believes that the school, for many students, provides the discipline, moral values, and other sources that are lacking at home. He said, "We try to improve the quality of life for our students. We also seem to be preparing them well for future careers" (Budiman, personal interview, August 5, 2003).

According to the principal's belief "A disciplined and orderly environment is essential for the growth of our kind of student." As a result of this belief, emphasis is placed on rules, regulations, and standards of conduct (for more details see Appendix E). The vice-principal monitors the halls and campus to manage learning activity and to maintain order. Adherence to rules and regulations is apparent in the behavior of most students. In fact, the temper and behavior on campus is disciplined and polite. Foyer areas and halls are full of drawings depicting several events such as sport championships, socio-religious activity, and academic activity, wall news and even a showcase which is full of charters and trophies. Bathroom walls are free of drawings and graffiti. Hallways are swept, and students have to remove garbage and paper from the school grounds.

Professional meetings inside and outside of the school building are also a regular part of Budiman's schedule. Today he has a meeting with the education division of YPI Al-Azhar; the previous week saw him at the district office of education. His agenda this time includes enrollment record-keeping for the region, new policies for the implementation of competency-based curriculum, and a discussion of teacher development programs on evaluation and standardization. Although he complains that such meetings take valuable time away from school, Mr. Budiman also enjoys the opportunity to meet with colleagues. As the meeting concludes and he heads back to school at 2:10 p.m., he wonders whether the time has been well spent in this particular instance.

On his return, Mr. Budiman finds the administrative team (faculty members), who also serve as assistant principals for curriculum and supervision, scheduling and students' activities, discipline and counseling, gathered for their weekly meeting. After Mr. Budiman briefly summarizes the meeting he just left, he and the administrators swing into action: reviewing students on academic and disciplinary probation; setting up meetings with parents about science and social studies programs, and discussing school uniform rules. While administrative team members frequently acknowledge the limitations under which they operate, the mood of this collaborative problem-solving session is still upbeat. As the session concludes at around 3:30 p.m., Mr. Budiman puts some paperwork and books in his briefcase and heads for his car.

11. Teachers Performance and Views

Some parents told me that AAIS is lucky to get good teachers only because it has a good reputation in the city. Good teachers want to come and stay. Relatively speaking, they are better off than many Islamic and public schools in the city. One mother, expressing her satisfaction with the quality of Al Azhar's teacher's, said that "I am satisfied with the quality of teaching at Al Azhar but I would like to see the community and school have more say about decisions made for their school" (Mimi, parent, August 25, 2003).

One of the first things I learned from the teachers at Al Azhar was that they are dissatisfied with what they know (despite the satisfaction expressed by others) and, more specifically, they are outraged at their lack of opportunities to learn more. Some emphasize salary and subject matters, but many referred to participating more in the educational process itself, in attending professional conferences, forming professional liaisons, and having dialogues about instructional practices.

My interviews with teachers at Al Azhar left an impression of real commitment, intelligence, and concern. The commitment is evidenced by such incidents as this one related by a math teacher:

> The first reason why I chose Al Azhar as my place of work was that, since I was in IKIP (Institut Ilmu Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Institute for Teacher Training and Education), I have been interested in teaching in good Islamic

schools even though I basically wanted to be a government official (civil service) as a teacher in public school. As you know, in the New Order era, the civil service was seen as the best place for a career. However, this opinion has changed recently, and now the good thing is how to create job opportunity. Therefore I chose a private school which does not belong to an individual or family holder but belongs to a community holder. "Thank God", Al Azhar was the one. In Al Azhar, I am able to provide some ideas, suggestions, and advice on innovative changes to the school community and foundation, and these are accepted. Another reason is my curiosity to improve the quality of Islamic schools – as in the past they had been left behind and marginalized – to become good school that attract parents to send their children there. And obviously, Al Azhar has the capacity to become an excellent school; it does. (Rudy, personal interview, August 6, 2003)

Meanwhile an English teacher, Nina, who graduated in 1985 from the University of Padjadjaran Bandung in English literature, expressed her experience as follows:

I was actually not expecting to be a teacher; rather I wanted to be a career person in a private or government office. After graduation, the faculty offered me a lecture position at the University of Padjadjaran Bandung to teach only 3 times a week, and the university will usually send us to study abroad for master or PhD program after one year teaching. However, I thought and thought again and decided to follow my husband who graduated from ITB in computer science and later went to work in Jakarta. As a Javanese woman, I have to respect my husband and the aim of my marriage is to harmonize the family. Therefore, I needed consent from my husband if I wanted to work. In 1988, there was an advertisement in Kompas Newspaper stating: "Al Azhar School wants an English teacher who has graduated from IKIP." Then my husband asked me to apply, expecting that our children would also be admitted to study there. At that time, people said that it was not easy to attend Al Azhar School. It is a good school and expensive too. But what came to my husband's mind was that our children should achieve good general and religious education. Finally my application was approved and my son, three years old, was also accepted in pre-kindergarten at Al Azhar School. So there were three important advantages I got: "first, I work here; second, I get money; and third, my husband's wish for me to be teacher here was also fulfilled. (Nina, personal interview, August 5, 2003)

Another story came from the chemistry teacher, Mr. Budiman (now Principal at AAIS high school) who had graduated from IKIP Yogyakarta. He talked about the reason why he chose Al Azhar School as the site for his career:

I realized that teaching is my main concern and ideal. I wanted my knowledge to become useful to other people as stated in *hadith* (Islamic tradition) that "the best person is he/she who is beneficial to others." Thus, I've been teaching since

I was in the undergraduate program and teaching in Islamic school was kind of my obsession. In 1990, I moved to Jakarta and applied to Al Azhar School through the advertisement in Kompas Newspaper. Al Azhar was my target, even though my friend told me that Jakarta is a big city and competitive place that it was hard to be accepted. But I felt confident with my knowledge and teaching experiences in some schools in Yogyakarta. Finally, I got it. When I started teaching, I was so shocked, because in my mind Al Azhar students were smart, nice and respectful to the teacher; and female students were wearing *jilbab* as in an Islamic school. Conversely, the students were naughty and did not respect the teachers; while female students wore short skirts. Those facts were challenging for me. (Budiman, personal interview, August 5, 2003)

Regarding those problems, he further mentioned that "teachers should be *asih, asah,* and *asuh* (a teacher's slogan: love, teach, and care for) to understand their students deeply." Moreover, "teachers should improve the capacity of students maximally; they should not expect any reward, but be honest and straightforward; discipline and give penalties to the students who break the rules based on the school regulations. I prefer to a use persuasive and humanist approach," he said (Budiman, personal interview, August 5, 2003).

Another interesting story is illustrated by an economics teacher, Mr. Mahmud. He is actually a public school teacher, meaning that he is a civil servant who is supposed to teach in public school. Because of economic reasons, however, he asked the government to let him also teach in private schools as a teacher's aid. Thus, he receives a salary from both government and the private school to fulfill his needs. He first chose a Catholic School. He enjoyed teaching there, but finally moved to Al Azhar School, insisting that: "the reason I moved to Al Azhar is because of religious concern. The school mission is comfortable with my own religion. So, I have been teaching at Al Azhar School since 1996" (Mahmud, personal interview, August 8, 2003).

The commitment of the math teacher was particularly impressive. "I want to be a good teacher. A good teacher for me is not only about teaching subject matters; rather it is more about understanding the enrichment of students' ability." He further mentioned that:

Even though salary is relatively an issue at Al Azhar; it actually depends on us. If we enjoy what we do, it will be satisfactory. In fact, there is a lot of luck coming to me; it might be a blessing from Al Azhar. So don't look for money at

Al Azhar, it becomes stressful. I am always grateful for what I have received and work hard to improve the quality of student and finally I will get anything that I need even a promotion from the school. (Rudy, personal interview, August 6, 2003)

When I asked Nina, an English teacher, about her salary, she said that "the AAIS teachers are better paid than public school teachers. And there is no difference between female and male teachers in salary" (Nina, personal interview, August 5, 2003). In Indonesia, whether they work in public, private schools or Islamic schools, the salary of female and male teachers is the same. What makes a difference is how long they have worked in that position, not their gender.

Although money is an issue, especially for improving the quality of students in academic and non-academic areas, I kept hearing that the major issue is actually professional development. Professional respect, recognition and opportunities for their own professional development would go along way toward sustaining them. These teachers are not talking as know-it-all experts or subject matter specialists who happen to be teaching in a high school. They are talking as professionals who are interested in their work and have a need for dialogue and discourse in order to develop more coherent professional views, richer professional backgrounds, and more satisfying professional practices. They raise their own questions and doubts about the educational process, about how their students learn, about the form and format of the curriculum, about the educational life of their students, and about their institutional status. Many of the teachers I talked to at Al Azhar expressed a need for their own professional development. This was not, they pointed out, in service as defined by the district office of education, where time is usually spent improving administrative details or meeting in citywide groups to review educational matters, such as curriculum guidelines.

Professionalism, then, is a major issue for the teachers. It is an abstract notion that captures many of their concerns about their work and their ideals about the practice of teaching. Teachers were sometimes cynical in describing how they were rewarded. One teacher, for example, said, "there is no appreciation (physically by giving them certificate, book or money) of what we did. This happened when Al Azhar students achieved the highest English score in Jakarta compared to other high

schools. We were all together when the rewards were given" (Nina, personal interview, August 5, 2003). In this situation people do not produce more than they have to. If one's good at classroom management or discipline, then one gets the student misfits. On the other hand, many teachers had developed their own systems of sustaining themselves professionally. Some were very proud of their work and accomplishments. They spoke of tutorial and remedial programs they had designed in response to student and school needs–not frivolous and trendy programs, but programs designed to improve students' performance or expand their knowledge base. These teachers often spoke of avoiding burnout by recognizing that when things became monotonous, they had to make a point of becoming more creative.

They also spoke of their affiliations with professional organizations and their continuing advanced study as ways of sustaining a feeling of professionalism. As for rewards, most teachers indicated they derived satisfaction from seeing youngsters thrive and mature. "My reward," said one, "is seeing young people go forward, seeing them become good Muslims and citizens." "To have students succeed at school, at universities, and in their jobs," said another. These remarks were often made by teachers at AAIS.

In contrast to these sustaining features of their work were the menial tasks and duties expected of them, tasks that took time they could better use for instruction or planning and that reduced their self-image as professionals. The majority of these tasks were what teachers viewed as clerical, baby-sitting, or security-related.

Al Azhar School seems to be rich with talented and committed teachers. A vice principal who is also math teacher described his experience: "I personally always come in the early morning and return home in the late evening when the students and teachers have already left the school. My principle is to do my work on time and finish it in school. So, when I go home, there are no school-related assignments to do" (Rudy, personal interview, August 6, 2003). Some teachers said that:

> Our satisfaction here is if the students understand what I have taught and get good results/marks. And also if at the end of the school year, our grade 12 students are accepted into outstanding public university and maintain Islamic moral values. If we achieve this, we feel very satisfied, which is priceless. Even if the school foundation wanted to give us a reward, they couldn't afford it. And obviously, they have never given us any rewards. However, the most important

one is that society expresses its appreciation of Al Azhar School. We are also proud if we heard that our graduates find good jobs and work in important positions, and are still committed to Islamic values that are accomplished at the AAIS high school, and they do. (Interview with teachers, August 2003)

11.1. Teachers' Workload

Teachers at the AAIS high school reported spending an average of eight hours at work each day. Typically a teacher arrives shortly after 6:30 a.m. and leaves at approximately 16:00 p.m. in the afternoon. He or she normally teaches five forty-five minute periods per day, which might include a single section in one course and two sections each in two others. In addition to the almost four hours of room teaching, teachers might spend about forty-five minutes on class preparation, approximately an hour on lunch, afternoon prayer and other personal business, and thirty minutes in moving between classes. The remainder of a teacher's time on campus is typically spent correcting papers and working with students individually.

After the instructional day, many also coach athletic teams or supervise other extracurricular activities. Half of the teachers at the AAIS high school were responsible as well for at least one after-school activity, which might consume another six hours per week of their time. For those with coaching responsibilities, the time demands were somewhat greater, averaging nearly eleven hours per week during the athletic season. Half of the teachers also averaged over eight hours per week on school-related responsibilities such as homeroom activities, teachers and parents meetings, fund-arising, and socio-religious activities. More generally, over 80 percent of my field-sampled teachers reported that they frequently worked with individual students beyond the school day, either before or after school. Similarly, over 80 percent were actively involved in attending extra curricular activities such as athletic, drama, dance and music presentations.

A brief look at a typical day for an Islamic secondary school teacher – in this case, Ms. Nina, a senior English teacher at Al Azhar School – helps to pull these numbers together into a more coherent picture. Arriving at 6:30 a.m., Nina begins her teaching day supervising *tadarus* (reciting Quran) until 7:00 a.m. Between 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m., she teaches English I for grade 10 students. Her next instructional period, a reading comprehension section for grade 11 students, begins immediately

thereafter. During the recess period (10:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.), she corrects papers or prepares materials for one of her later classes. The period from 10:15 to 11:45 finds her teaching an English II class. Lunch with faculty colleagues consumes only twenty minutes, with the remaining half hour of the lunch break usually spent praying and meeting with students from one of the activities for which she takes responsibility. Her second section of English I begin at 12:40 p.m., followed immediately by a regular English II section.

Despite this demanding time commitment, Ms. Nina was enthusiastic about her teaching, about being involved in building a communal spirit at Al Azhar School and other responsibilities as head of the teachers' financial cooperative. Knowing the students both academically and personally and influencing their personal growth has been rewarding. Although the hectic schedule sometimes overwhelmed her, she claimed to have gained both organizational skills and the ability to use time productively.

However, she felt uncomfortable when I ask about the possibility to be a principal at the AAIS high school. She spoke to me:

> Many teachers here actually supported me to run the school. They proposed me
> as a candidate principal two years ago because I have long teaching
> experiences, more than 15 years. However, I lose because, maybe, I am a
> woman. Sometimes I feel it. Any way, I am okay even though I am not a
> principal. My husband is happy about the result because for him, it could be
> nice if I am just teaching, so I could look after my family, husband and children.
> (Nina, personal interview, August 5, 2003)

But if we look at the school documents that in 1999/2001 the AAIS high school had female principal. It shows that it is perhaps gender issues or quality issues.

11.2. Teachers' Perspectives on their Role

Teachers in Islamic schools and in Islamic society, generally have more responsibilities than teachers in other schools and other societies. Although the concept and role of the teacher has been undermined by modernization, especially in urban areas, nevertheless, he/she is still expected to discharge more than a specific range of responsibilities. The teacher is supposed to be a model to be emulated. At AAIS, for example, the teacher is more than a mere functionary who draws a salary

either from the state or from the school; the teacher is a moral exemplar. He/she is expected to treat students as impressionable human beings whose characters are to be molded and who are to be initiated by him or her into the moral code that the society cherishes. For this reason, in Islam the teacher is required not only to be a person of learning but also a person of virtue, a pious person whose conduct by itself can have an impact upon the minds of the young. It is not only what he or she teaches that matters; what he or she does, the way he or she conducts himself or herself, his or her deportment in class and outside, are all expected to adjust to an ideal with which pupils can identify (Husain and Ashraf: 1979, 104).

The data I obtained from my teacher interviews concur with this view. In general, teachers see their role in broad terms, involving considerably more than just specialized instruction in a subject area. They are concerned about the kind of person that each student becomes as well as about how much a student knows. Many teachers describe their work as a kind of religious duty and their role as one of shaping young adults.

I interviewed teachers about their views of their role within the school, their reasons for teaching at the AAIS high school, and their feelings about their work. To tell this story, I rely heavily on their comments. Virtually every teacher saw her or his work as extending beyond the five-class, eight-hour day. Although committed to teaching, class preparation, and the importance of the instructional programs, they also emphasized the personal values and the sense of community in their schools. A male religion teacher at Al Azhar School described his work thus:

> I don't view it is a job. What I see here is a kind of religious task. Our religious community is here, so I am happy to educate rich families, many of which lack religious knowledge. ... I think the importance of this work is not only in academics; we also teach Islamic values and are concerned about meeting on students' other needs as part of what we do. (Sofyan, personal interview, August 12, 2003)

Meanwhile, the principal of the AAIS high school responded to my question in these terms:

> I see what we do as teachers on three levels. We are role models, in that we are living examples of the beliefs that are taught in religious classes. We have also an obligation to teach values. I used to think that I am a Javanese and chemistry teacher. Now I know that my values are at least as important as the content I

teach. Finally, I remind myself that we play a three-year part in these students' lifetimes... What we have to transmit is a vision for the future, to help them mold themselves into the kind of persons they want to become. (Budiman, personal interview, August 5, 2003)

Another teacher spoke about the importance of integrating life with learning in her classes: "As far as I'm concerned . . . besides the background on literature, grammar, and the like, we discuss life and the problems that the students are likely to encounter. It is just as important that they learn about life while they are here as that they learn about academics" (Nina, personal interview, August 5, 2003).

Teachers at Al Azhar School see themselves as role models for their students. One teacher stated quite succinctly a view that was expressed by many others:

> Even if teachers don't teach religion, we should know what our religion is. We teach through how we live our lives. Basically, this school is a good environment, and we teach by our example and by who we are. We strive to make students more conscious of the world around them and how they fit into it. (Mahmud, personal interview, August 8, 2003)

Some teachers spoke about their work as "helping people, being involved, and feeling fulfilled as a result," an important part of which involves supporting students with troubled families. The principal and counselors frequently commented on the growing number of students whose families were experiencing divorce, unemployment, or other problems. One teacher described the surrogate (substitute)-parent role that teachers and the school served for some students: "It's amazing when you hear them talk about their families. It's like they don't have any stability at home. Their life here at the school is about the only thing that is stable in their environment. I feel at times that we function almost like parents for some students."

11.3. Teaching and Learning

Teaching is, essentially, "a learned profession." A teacher is "a member of a scholarly community" (Shulman, 2004, p. 228). He or she must understand the structures of subject matter, the principles of conceptual organization, and the principles of inquiry (Shulman, 2004, p. 228). If teaching and learning are to be closely aligned, if a genuine pedagogical relationship is to exist between teacher and

student (s), then understanding of the needs and concerns of each is important. According to Bullough and Gitlin (2001):

> Teaching is relationship, a way of being with and relating to others, and not merely an expression of having mastered a set of content-related delivery skills. And advising is a matter not just of dispensing information in a timely fashion but of building trust, of talking and problem-solving together. (p. 3)

Clearly, developing relationships in a teaching and learning environment requires developing an understanding of not only the individual, but also the group, for each certainly influences the other. Knowing students as individuals is fundamental to understanding "what works" and "what does not work" in creating motivation, interest and a need to know in the learner (Loughran, 2006).

Relationships are developed through an awareness of the needs of others and are enhanced when there is a genuine concern to respond appropriately to such needs. In teaching, the concept of caring (Mayeroff, 1971; Noddings, 2001) may be viewed as an entry point for considering some of the features crucial to building meaningful relationships in pedagogical situations and in teaching. Building relationships begins with "a genuine concern to listen, to be aware of the changing nature of the teaching and learning context, and to be interested in, and responsive to, the needs of students" (Loughran, 2006, p. 87).

The importance of the kind of teaching and learning relationship described above is apparent from the comments made by students when they describe what makes a good teacher and an enjoyable class. They express their desire for intellectual stimulation, but that is not all:

> Teachers at Al Azhar are not only teaching; they are very helpful, caring of us, and give attention to the students individually. We can talk about our private or academic matters. They are so passionate to teach the students who do not understand the subject – they even provide an additional hour (Dewi, science program, August 7, 2003).

> Teachers at Al Azhar are masters of the subjects they teach. They can always answer the students' question. They are like a book; we can find the answer when we open it (Anton, science program, interview, August 7, 2003).

> One Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian language) teacher gave individual and group assignments. For individual assignments, students had to write sentences and stories. In the final exam, the students had to write a group paper. One group wrote on honey bees. For this purpose, the students visited a honey farm in Central Java and West Java. Another group did research on the superiority of free-range chickens compared to broiler chickens. Other students did research on traditional medicine and another group did research on how to make candied star fruits. The students chose the topics freely, while the teacher explains how to write a paper systematically. (Amir, social studies program, August 9, 2003)

> English is the best because the teacher covers the subject in depth. She makes quizzes, tests, dialogue, writing and lots of discussion. She told me that there are four skills to be accomplished in this subject: they are speaking, listening, writing and reading. The strength of Al Azhar students is in speaking because they generally take an English course after school as an individual interest. She is even preparing students for International English Olympiad. Since the most difficult skill is writing, the teacher gives them assignments to write about world discovery, such as Newton, James Watt, etc. The students can search the library, internet, or other sources. It is an interesting journey. (Dewi, science program, August 7, 2003)

The character of instruction in Indonesia's Islamic high schools is still relatively traditional in format, setting, use of materials, and pedagogy. I observed some examples of excellent teaching, but, on average, the technical aspects of teaching at the AAIS I high school can be described as *ordinary* (italic added). Although I saw more emphasis on testing and homework than appears to be the case in public high schools, in most other respects the teaching techniques employed in

this Islamic school appeared to be quite similar to what have been reported for public schools.

By contrast, the roles teachers assume in Islamic high schools are broader and the perspectives they offer on their work different from what we had expected. The typical teacher's workload was heavy, including multiple class preparations and extensive extracurricular involvement. Low salaries are a major source of dissatisfaction, especially given the commitments involved. Nonetheless, these teachers spoke very positively about their work and the considerable psychological rewards it afforded them.[6] To them, teaching values and shaping the lives of young people by their actions and their example was as important as the subject matter presented in classes. This broad concern and extended teacher role is not lost on students, who see their instructors as interested in them, as patient and understanding, yet also as firm and committed.

The instruction in Al-Azhar classrooms reminds one of a time long past. Desks are lined up in front of the blackboard. The teaching-learning periods are still forty-five minutes long. Students are tracked on academic subjects; how a subject is taught as well as what is taught often depends on the track. Course content is divided into discrete units to be covered in certain blocks of time, and students' successes are measured by their performance on tests, quizzes, mid-term exams, term papers, and final examinations. As I mentioned earlier, AAIS is a good school, with many concerned teachers, ambitious and attentive students, involved parents, high attendance rates, and a large percentage of college placements. When a visitor stands back and tries to analyze the teaching practices at Al Azhar and the nature of the learning approaches brought to the classrooms, however, there is little that is memorable. As one student said to me, "Unfortunately, most of the time is used by teachers to explain the subjects, and only a small portion for discussion" (Tini, social studies program, interview, August 9, 2003).

Classrooms at AAIS are not crowded places; they are only filled with twenty-eight to thirty-five teenagers. These students enliven any forty-five minute period – even when they are attentive to what is going on and hand in their homework. There are enough possibilities for interaction between teacher and students and among

students to make the period interesting and allow teachers and students to enjoy themselves. For example, during an English lesson at the learning centre or library, the teacher divided the students into several groups – boys and girls are separated – and gave each group the task of writing a composition. I saw that each student participated and contributed his/her ideas to the small group. One student said, "I like to do the assignment in a group. Everyone is responsible for the work and appreciate other people opinions. It doesn't make me sleepy," she said.

Regardless of the banter, teaching at Al Azhar is a practical means to learning, and learning at Al Azhar is a practical means for gaining entrance to more learning, which is intended to lead to a professional position. When I asked students what was expected of them, I found that some sensed a difference between preparing to compete successfully for university and an intellectually stimulating education. Some thought intellectual stimulation should happen in the classes they were taking at AAIS. Others hoped to find it in university.

I observed classes in English, religion, and computer science. The classes were not dull, even with twenty eight to thirty-five students per class. Instruction usually proceeded according to specific tasks assigned by the teacher. In academic subjects, students typically worked individually to complete work sheets, and then recited answers to the whole class while the teacher evaluated accuracy. Generally the whole class followed the same activity; there were, however, instances of students working in small groups (English, Indonesian language) or independent research projects (religion and science classes). Some students in the library appeared to be working on reports, and in English class, a teacher held conferences with groups of students about their essays. Individualized activity occurred in economic/entrepreneurship, sports, music, and art, but rarely in the basic academic subjects, except for special education students whose programs are highly individualized.

Classes at Al Azhar are each forty-five minutes in length with eight class periods scheduled during the day. The students take five to six subjects and leave school in the afternoon. In addition, the school provides remedial and enrichment programs for those who have problems in some subjects. The school also realizes that

five or six subjects represent too intensive a schedule for many students. Students need free time, some space during the school day. Prior to my arrival, an attempt was made to allow students to improve their talents in sports and self-defense, music, dance, drama and theater, as extracurricular activities. As the principal said, "we have to make balance between right brain and left brain. It means that we have to give the equal attention to academic and non-academics matters" (Budiman, personal interview, August 5, 2003).

Most students carry books to and from school because a majority of teachers give homework and expect students to do from fifteen to thirty minutes of homework per night per subject, which for five subjects could involve from one and a half to three hours of homework in total. Most students reported that in most classes they were challenged to do their best, and that they did at least one half hour of homework per night for all classes. Some teachers reported that they themselves spent more than an hour per night on school work.

Concerning the strategy of teaching-learning, one teacher pointed out that:

> As a teacher, we have to see the ability of students. For students of below average ability, we have to explain clearly and precisely and give students more exercises and practice. For students of above average abilities, our strategies are focused on the understanding and crystallization of concepts. To do so, we give them complicated and challenging questions or problems to be solved by thinking deeply. It is usually easy for smart student to concentrate and focus when they are learning. Thank God that students at the AAIS high school are smart students who are above average in general. (Rudy, personal interview, August 6, 2003)

For this reason he claims that as teachers, "we have to be masters in subject matters and make good preparations in order to answer any questions from the students. It is risky if we are not able to answer the students' questions."

Another teacher demonstrated a different method of teaching. Mr. Mahmud, an economics teacher, employed the methods of talk, discussion, and assignment. However, he refused to utilize an OHP (overhead projector) as a tool for instruction. The teacher who relies on an OHP, according to him, will depend on the summary that he/she has made for the OHP. If this is ever lost, they cannot teach well because everything is on the OHP. "It is a personal reason," he said. "Perhaps, because I am a senior teacher with a lot of experience, I know the subject well and teach the students

well too, even though I do not use the OHP." He added that "As you know, the students here are from wealthy families, so sometimes, a few of them are arrogant and look down on the teacher." To resolve this problem, he has developed a strategy to make students behave better and appreciate the teacher [and then explained]:

> In the first meeting class, I ask students to write down their names and addresses, what is their motivation and purpose for studying at Al Azhar? What is their mark now? What grade do they need to achieve? It is like a learning contract between teacher and student. When they finish writing their own purposes, we collect all the papers and discuss together how to resolve the problems and be successful at school. In this case, I use a management theory, i.e., 5W 1H (what, who, why, when, where, and how) as the easiest way to motivate the students and to understand the subject of economics all at once. So, students feel that this contract comes from them and they will reach it with high self-motivation and that the learning process will work smoothly. At the end of the class, I always give advice to the students to work hard at school, be disciplined and obedient to their parents. (Mahmud, personal interview, August 8, 2003)

For him a good teacher is "someone who masters the subject matter, always prepares his/her teaching well, has a daily program, semester program, and yearly program. Thus, teacher will never seem confused even if he/she does not bring the text book, for example," he said. "Managing children from middle-class family is not easy. Therefore, I always advice them explicitly/clearly, direct, and persuasive. So, they regained consciousness." As a senior teacher, he always gives advice to the students: "remember, the most valuable property that parents will give to their children is a good education that will bring success in the future" (Mahmud, personal interview, August 8, 2003).

To broaden the students' perspectives and his own perspective as a teacher, Mahmud encourages them to follow the development of national and international economic matters through mass publications and the electronic media. For example:

> I give an assignment to my students to follow the program of economic policy and financial market on Metro TV at 19:00 p.m. when I am sure that the students are already at home. Then, I ask them to make a summary and discuss it in school. (Mahmud, personal interview, August 8, 2003)

An interesting approach was used by Mr. Sofyan, a religious education teacher, when teaching about "the creation of the human being." His grade 11 students went to the audio-visual laboratory to watch a documentary film on Harun

Yahya's theory of evolution as opposed to Darwin's theory. "It is important to show this movie to make clear what evolution is from an Islamic point of view. Islam recognizes the creation of human beings as an evolution. However, it is different from Darwin's theory. As you know, science students at Al Azhar learn Darwin's theory of evolution as well. Thus, this presentation helps them develop a strong belief in understanding Islam" (Sofyan, personal interview, August, 16, 2003). After watching this film, unfortunately, there was no discussion; rather, the teacher asked each student to write a summary and give it to the teacher by the next week.

I heard very little student and faculty criticism of the guidance department. But many students believed that if they really needed help on an important problem, there was at least one adult somewhere in the school they could turn to and trust. Homeroom teachers usually remain intact for one year, and although they are not officially designated to fulfill the guidance function, several homeroom teachers use this time to develop close relationships with the students to help them with program decisions and to monitor their grades and progress in school. Selected teachers throughout the school – for example, those teaching English, math, chemistry, religion, or economics – take an active interest in some students' future.

12. Students' Performance and Views

Some people at AAIS high school – the teachers, the administrators, the school counselors, the parents, and even the students say that "most of the students at Al Azhar are such nice kids." And they are. Within my first few days at the school, I was struck by the students' politeness with teachers in the hallway – for example students who meet their teachers always said *"Assalamualaikum"*(this word is always pronounced by Muslims when they meet each other–meaning Peace be upon you) and kissed the teacher's hand (Indonesian Muslim tradition) as a sign of respect to the teacher" – and with their open enjoyment of school life, their friendliness to each other, their quiet application in the classroom, and their comfort and naturalness with me. Even some parents remarked that: "their children became independent." As parents, "we do not ask them to study; they know their obligation by themselves. Perhaps, it is because AAIS high school is an excellent school, so it is highly

demanding." Moreover, the implementation of competency-based curriculum requires students to learn independently. (Ella and Mimi, personal interview, August 2003)

The clothing of the students at Al Azhar is neat and coordinated. They must wear school uniforms. Male students wear a white shirt with a pocket on the left side and the Al Azhar logo (a picture of mosque in green color); on the left sleeve there is a sign written SMUIA (Sekolah Menengah Umum Islam Al Azhar I, Al Azhar Islamic High School I) – and grey and white long pants. Female students have to wear Islamic dress with long sleeves and skirt, and cover their hair or wear a head scarf.

Students' pride and attention to the school image and to their own image goes deeper than the clothes they wear. Many students talked about the role of the school and the values of work and its just reward. They are achievement oriented. Hard work and competition are prerequisites, they told me, to success. Even some students said that:

> This school is good for us and motivated us to work hard and get good mark. So, we could not be lazy. The positive aspect of this school is its Islamic character. In the morning, before learning hours, we start with reciting the Quran, and in the afternoon, we perform communal prayer with friends, teachers, the principal, and staff. (Interview with students, August 2003)

When I asked the students' about their experiences at Al Azhar School, one student notes that:

> I spent my schooling from kindergarten until senior secondary level at AAIS. I really like it because all my friends are there and for my mom, it was more practical. She did have to look for other school that had at least the same quality as Al Azhar. My mom and I love this school because of its Islamic character and because it is an excellent school. (Anton, personal interview, August 7, 2003)

They spoke of the importance of grade point averages and were well versed in university requirements for high national examination scores. One of the first things most students wanted me to know was that Al Azhar is different from other high schools in the city. "Al Azhar is better; it is a school where students are expected to be good Muslims, to be leaders, they can work everywhere, and they do" (Interview with students, August 2003). It has an atmosphere of Islamic character that public schools they had attended did not have. Many also feel that they are supported by

their teachers, whom they describe by using words and phrases like "caring," "fair," "expect you to compete and try to be the best you can," expect you to shine." Some students, however, argued against this special image, saying that you can get just as good teaching and just as good an education elsewhere. But, they added, getting a good education in a different school might be harder.

When students were asked what a good teacher is, the typically response was, "Someone who cares for you as a person." If asked what this means in term of classroom instruction, they defined it as making sure they understood each step before going on to the next. This is a view of education that many would label as mechanistic. For these students, learning is a slow, accumulative process, where progress is gradual but assured if you understand each step entirely. Students appeared to tolerate and respect worksheets, but not open-ended questions. Most importantly they felt that teachers should never leave a student behind, because if they do, then a student may never catch up and can become hopelessly lost in the course.

Students expressed mixed feelings about their teachers. Nearly all felt they had at least one teacher a year who was good, who cared for them, to whom they could go, and in whose class they felt comfortable and successful. Many students expressed their relationship with the teachers in the following terms:

> The relationships between students and teachers are so close and friendly. We can talk about school or personal problems with them. Teachers patiently teach the students until they understand the lesson, even if sometimes we need additional time to do so. Teachers control the classes but are not too strict. Students are expected to be mannerly and disciplined. This school gives much attention to academic matters. (Interview with students, August 2003)

The following are some of the results of a survey that was designed to discover students' feelings and opinions about Al Azhar's standards on academics and spirituality. The survey respondents consisted of 51 female and 46 male students in grades 11 and 12 from the science and social studies programs.

The priority at the AAIS high School was to be a good Muslim and to attain high academic achievement. It can be seen that no fewer than 88% of the 97 students said that AAIS 1 emphasizes spiritual development, 76% intellectual development,

64% character development, 70% preparation for post-schooling job, and 55% preparation for everyday life (see Appendix D; Survey, 2003).

I also asked why AAIS students liked their school. There were three main reasons cited: spiritual, academic, and safety. Specifically, 84% of the 97 students said that Al Azhar provides a good spiritual experience, 81% a good academic experience, 57% a chance to graduate and get a job, 72% an opportunity to be with friends, 62% a safe environment, and 73% good sport activities.

As can be seen from the chart, the boys and girls valued different things. Girls, for example focused on looks and a harmonious lifestyle, while boys focused on spirituality and sports. Moreover, girls were also more focused on intelligence or learning than boys.

By greatly extending the scope of time and place within which they control student behaviour, the AAIS administration has created many occasions for students to benefit from this environment through activities such as music, drama, dance and socio-religious activities. To what extent and in what ways did Al Azhar students admit to departing from school norms? Tables 5 and 6 provide partial answer. There we find responses on a scale from extremely positive and to extremely negative – from the AAIS perspective – on issues relating to students' personal behaviour and beliefs.

As can be seen from the chart, most students do not want to meddle in their friends' behaviour. For example, in responding to the statement "if I know a student cheated, I should urge him/her to report him/herself," 53% students had no answer and 39% strongly disagreed, while "I should report him/her" saw 49% strongly disagreeing and 41% having no answer. Meanwhile, students are happiest when they live according to God's will (51% agree and 35% strongly agree). Students thus seem to hold beliefs about solidarity that are in conflict with school rules.

We learn from table 6 that the extent of students' departing from school norms ranges from a low of 3 percent (I strongly disagree: that I will marry a Muslim) to a mid-range of 59 percent (I strongly disagree: when I am adult, my best friend will be Muslim) and to a high of 73 percent (I strongly disagree: I should be close friends only with Muslims). These responses indicate that AAIS students have,

to some extent absorbed a wider perspective on Islam and social life than they would normally encounter in school. It must be remembered to that the Indonesian government accommodates at least five religions (Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, and Buddhism) and encourages harmonious relations between and among Muslims and others.

It is not easy to draw definite conclusions from this table. The average number of students who chose an extremely negative response to AAIS standards was 7 percent of the 97 students (I strongly disagree: when I am adult, the Quran will be the center of my life) in my sample. But simply from the data in this table, we can not conclude that 7 percent of all students at Al Azhar should be classified as troublemakers.

13. Parents Profile

There is no question that family background and home situation make a difference. Students from privileged families - in terms of conditions that support learning - do better at school. As Epstein (1986, 1988, ch.1) states:

> There is consistent evidence that parents' encouragement, activities, interest at home and their participation at school affect their children's achievement, even after the students' ability and family socioeconomic status is taken into account. Students gain in personal and academic development if their families emphasize schooling, let their children know they do, and do so continually over the years.

In my interviews with administrator and teachers stated that "most parents provided good academic facilities to their children and believed that AAIS high school can bring their children to outstanding university and educate their children with Islamic values." (personal interview with administrator and teacher, August 2003).

Most students at the AAIS high school come from urban and middle class families. The backgrounds of parents range from government official, to executive, professional, lecturer, business person, journalist, movie star, and pop singer. Sometimes, AAIS is chosen as the site for a film shoot because the student's parent is a singer, movie star or film producer. They are nevertheless all quite busy with their own professions and have no time to teach their children at home.

Parents use Islamic schools to achieve various purposes of their own, including some that are not congruent with the school's standards/norms. Troubled by their children's academic failings and, possibly, their reckless behavior, they turn to an Islamic school. Desperation, rather than religion, motivates their decision. In their search for a solution, parents may not reckon the price to be paid. However, one mother said "I want my children to have a better knowledge and practice of Islamic teachings than me. At least, they can recite and even memorize short verses of the Quran, pray, and have good behavior. Thus, religion motivates me to send my children to this school" (Mimi, parent, August 25, 2003).

Parents, even those who most faithfully attend the mosque, are not directly subject to the academy's control structure. Though they pledge, as a condition of their children admission, not to undermine the academy's purposes, they nonetheless persist in behavior that communicates alternatives to Al Azhar's preferred way: "They want me here because they think we learn more – we have smaller classes, and we get more attention from the teachers. They don't go along with everything the school says" (Anton, science student, August 7, 2003).

It is considered that some parents do not share the school's values. Like one teacher said:

> We introduce the parents to the school regulation. Students, for example, have to wear uniform/*jilbab*, not smoke, and not make close contact between female and male student at school. In contrast, parents do not wear the *jilbab* and let their children wear tight and short dresses, smoke, and on Saturday nights, even allow their child's boy or girl friend to stay at home or go out and watch movies in theater (Nina, English teacher, August 5, 2005).

Finally, I try to paraphrase some comments (from teacher, principal, students, and parent) about their satisfaction to Islamic High School of Al Azhar as quoted from Setiadarma (2003, p. 254).

> As a teacher in Al Azhar Islamic High School, I am happy because of the strong religious life of students at school. For me, the process of teaching and learning is quite supported by this factor. This religious atmosphere has inspired me to study more religion, because the teacher is leader of her/his students similar to my motto: "A Leader leads by example." By studying religion, I became more thankful and can make decisions wisely. (Meta Handayani, English Teacher)

I am proud to teach at Islamic High School of Al Azhar, because its teaching system is particularly the same with the vision and mission of Islam. Moreover, as a teacher, I see many challenges in producing the leaders of *ummat* (Muslim community) and of the nation in the future, because students are less inspired to keep up the struggle because generally, students are from the middle and upper classes. (Budiyono, Principal)

In Al Azhar, teachers and students are very close, so the atmosphere is good. The academic achievement, however, is always the focus and main concern. We have many tests and exams and teachers always emphasize and motivate us to be the best. The school gives us freedom to participate in extra curricular activities with anyone else as long as we can maintain the reputation of Al Azhar School. (Chandi Salmon Conrad, Ketua OSIS – The Head of Students Association)

In this school, we have a lot of fun! Students are friendly and united. Senior students are very nice. There is no seniority; we help each other, between and among generations, so the situation is conducive for us. Besides, I have been studying at Al Azhar School since primary until secondary level; I have known my friends for a long time. My parents also believe very much in the strong religious education at Al Azhar School. (Nurul Baiti, grade 10)

Education in this school is very good. The best one is especially the religious education, like reciting Quran in the morning. The relationship between teachers and parents is very good. Teachers always communicate with parents about their students' progress and performance. This school is also safe. There might not be brawling (among Al Azhar students or between Al Azhar and other school's students) because the security guards always patrol the school. Discipline is implemented well. Students are motivated to work hard; there are sometimes two tests/exams in a day. The method of teaching instruction and the curriculum are good. And teachers, here, can give good examples to their students. (Najibah, mother of grade twelve student)

14. Summary

In this chapter I have tried to give an overall sense of the school as viewed by the learners, the teachers and the parents whose children attend this school. I have also described the school program and the general atmospheres of the school. The chapter also suggested some of the indications that distinguish this school from other Islamic schools (*madrasahs* and *pesantrens*) or public schools. A discussion of the typical students and the character of teacher-student and student interactions was also

a feature of this chapter. In the next chapter I go on to look more closely at those who are involved in policy making.

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[1] Mahmoud Syaltout, the principal of University of Al Azhar, Egypt, who visited Jakarta in 1960, gave the name of Al Azhar to the great mosque. He hoped that in this mosque would be built an Islamic educational institution that could be equal to University of Al Azhar, Cairo, Egypt.

[2] Ablution is the cleaning of some part of the body (face, hand, head, ear and feet) with water before praying.

[3] Through this system(SPMB), students are directly accepted in to outstanding universities without taking university entrance test.

[4] Compared to the guidelines of the Ministry of National Education which stipulates that the duration of learning activities is 36 hours a week including religious education/subjects.

[5] In two reviews of the effective schools literature, which together summarize hundreds of studies; leadership on the part of the principal was singled out as a key element characterizing schools that are academically effective for disadvantaged students. See Purkey and Smith (1983, pp. 427-454), and Rosenholtz (1985, pp. 352-388). Effective principals are the interpreters of the school's instructional goals. They "convey certainty that teachers can improve student performance and that students themselves are capable of learning . . . They set explicit operational goals regarding students' performance, which are clearly communicated to their staff members . . . Effective principals press for greater commitment on the part of the teachers, hold teachers accountable for their actions, and communicate high expectations about the progress teachers are capable of making" (Rosenholtz, 1985, p. 361).

[6] The importance of intrinsic or psychological rewards to teachers has been well documented in the seminal work of Lortie (1975). As in our research, Lortie found that the main rewards in teaching derived from the positive feelings associated with success in working with individual students. External rewards such as income were less influential. See Lortie, D.C. (1975). *Schoolteacher.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Chapter 5

Framing the Larger Context for Elite Islamic School:
Perspectives of Educational Practitioners and Policy Makers

> Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just sitting in class listening to teachers, memorizing prepackaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves. (Bonwell, 1992, p.1)

1. Introduction

Unlike the previous chapter where I presented the school 'through the eyes of the administrators, teachers, students and parents, this chapter describes the views of educational practitioners and government officials on the performance and development of elite Islamic schools in recent years and what these schools still need to do in order to improve the quality of education.

It begins by describing the phenomenon of the emergence of elite Islamic schools and by introducing the weaknesses and strengths of the elite schools currently operating as perceived by educational practitioners and government officials. It also evaluates how far school managers/directors have succeeded in providing a good education and in fulfilling the needs of students and parents. It looks at some suggestions for improving the quality of the schools and their services made by those responsible for developing educational programs and curriculum. The description will consist largely of narratives told from individual points of view and in the respondents' voices, clarifying what is essential and unique about the elite Islamic schools.

2. Situating the Interviewees: Whose Voices am I Approaching

The interviewed leaders consist of two different groups of Indonesian education leaders and policy makers. The first group consists of educational practitioners who are actively involved in educational matters, specifically, an executive director, a board of directors, and an educational trainer or consultant.

Since they are not civil servants, they are not integrated into the government educational bureaucracy. Rather, they are an experts and practitioners in educational matters.

The second group is made up of policy makers from two different government ministries, i.e., those of National Education and Religious Affairs. They are part of the government educational bureaucracy that has the power to manage and control the education system in Indonesia. However, each of these groups, as well as their internal professional categories, has different levels of responsibility in the education system, plays different professional roles, and achieves its goals through different means and procedures. They hold different levels of power in terms of controlling and regulating the lives of others. As such, they experience enormous pressure to conform to the established procedures that keep their respective institutions running effectively. In a sense, they are practicing bureaucrats, although at the same time, their thoughts and actions resist some bureaucratic practices.

2.1. Educational Practitioners

Three persons make up the first group of interviewed leaders, which I call practitioners: (1) Wahyu, Executive Director of Madania School, one of the country's leading Islamic schools, founded in 1996; (2) Ali, Executive Chairman of the Board of the Lazuardi School, which is behind the concept of the global Islamic school and actively involved in improving the school system as a whole; and (3) Bambang, trainer and consultant in education, who is active in criticizing and analyzing educational issues. Compared with the second group of interviewed leaders (government officials or policy makers), these individuals have a more direct responsibility in the design and development of their schools. None of them belong to the central office of the Indonesian educational bureaucracy.

The responsibilities of Wahyu as Executive Director of Madania School since 2002 have included dealing with teacher and staff recruitment, teacher training and development, curriculum development, and maintaining working relationships with stakeholders (foundation, investors, principal, and parents), other schools and the government. Meanwhile, the responsibilities of Ali as Executive Chairman of the

Board of Lazuardi School include: assuring the continuity of school activities; improving school facilities and performance; improving teachers' professionalism; building and maintaining relationships and networking within the school community, government, and other schools and the communities that surround it. Finally, the role of Bambang as trainer and expert in education is to offer new concepts and designs of education suited to the needs and interests of parents and teachers. He also provides training sessions for teachers and staff in an effort to develop human resources at the school, regional and national levels.

2.2. Policy Makers

The second group of interviewed leaders, which I call government officials or policy makers included: (1) Sigit, the Director General of Basic and Secondary Education of the Ministry of National Education (MONE), which supervises and administers general public schools and even some elite Islamic schools; (2) Rahman, the former Director General for the Development of Islamic Institutions, an office that manages and controls the Islamic education system at the primary, secondary and university levels; and (3) Hasan, the Director of *Madrasah* and Islamic education (in general schools) of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA), which is responsible for providing the curriculum of *madrasah* and Islamic education to general public schools and other schools that are under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education.

The responsibilities of Sigit, as Director General of Basic and Secondary Education in the MONE, were to improve the quality of education, teachers, textbooks, and infra-structure and to ensure that schools (at the primary and secondary levels) under his supervision followed the national standards for competency and evaluation. He was also responsible for managing, supervising, and monitoring school improvement projects funded by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank and other international institutions. The role of Rahman, as a Director General for the Development of Islamic Institutions in the MORA, was to improve the quality of Islamic institutions like *pesantrens, madrasahs,* and centres of higher education institutionally and

academically. He set and monitored the national standards for Islamic education: its curriculum, teachers' qualifications, text-books, and infra-structure. One of his responsibilities was to improve the quality of private religious educational institutions and state educational institutions supervised by the Ministry as part of the national system of education. Therefore, he worked collaboratively with the Director General of Basic and Secondary Education in the MONE in several school improvement projects supported by international funding organizations. Meanwhile, Hasan, Director of *Madrasah* and Islamic Education (in general schools) of the MORA created and maintained the curriculum in religious subjects for *madrasahs* and general public schools that are administratively under the MONE. His role was not only to develop curriculum, but also to improve the quality of teachers, students, and facilities in *madrasahs* at the basic education level. The following table summarizes are the categories and pseudonyms of the interviewees:

Interviewee categories	Interviewees' pseudonyms
Educational practitioners: - Executive Director of Madania School - Executive Chairman of the Board of Lazuardi School - Trainer or consultant	Wahyu Ali Bambang
Government officials/policy makers: - Director General of Basic and Secondary Education in the Ministry of National Education - Former Director General for the Development of Islamic Institutions in the Ministry of Religious Affairs - Director of *Madrasah* and Islamic Education (in general schools) in the Ministry of Religious Affairs	Sigit Rahman Hasan

3. What Led to the Emergence of Elite Islamic Schools?

The foundation of elite Islamic school is credited to the role played by the Muslim middle class in the late 1970s and especially during the 1980s and 1990s. The rise of the Muslim middle-class in Indonesia has been observed at least since 1984 when the Prisma, a local current affairs magazine (in February 1984) devoted an entire issue to the theme of Kelas Menengah Baru (the New Middle-Class).[1] This

phenomenon has been associated with the success of development efforts under the New Order regime. The New Order government under President Soeharto led the process of economic growth, of industrialization and of modernization which depended on massive foreign support and the oil boom of the 1970s. Indonesia's sustained rapid economic growth during this period led to a considerable improvement in the economic and social welfare of Indonesia's population. This was reflected in a sharp reduction in the incidence of absolute poverty as well as rising educational levels and higher life expectancies. Rapid economic growth was underpinned by expansion of all three main sectors, namely agriculture, manufacturing and services. It is suggested by many observers that Indonesia had crossed a key threshold in the path to industrialization (Glassburner, 1971; Bresnan, 1993; Wie, 2002; Hill, 2000; Hill and Mackie, 1994).

The process that transformed Indonesian society and brought political stability and prosperity has enabled the middle-class to flourish. A sizeable urban middle class, numbering perhaps fifteen million people in the early 1990s, has emerged for the first time in the nation's history. Urban Indonesia is becoming a mass consumption society. The categories of 'professionals and technical workers, managers and administrators' constituted 3.9 per cent of the population in 1990, having risen from 2.6 per cent in 1971 and 3.0 per cent in 1980. This means a professional and managerial middle class of around 7.5 million. In Jakarta, the percentages are much higher—from 6.03 per cent of the population in 1971 to 8.39 per cent in 1990. This excludes the category of 'sales' which would cover the large petty bourgeoisie (Robison, 1996, pp. 79 and 84; Hill and Mackie, 1994, p. xxv; Dick, 1985, p. 71). The success of the New Order government in economic development and its political system and the emergence of new generation of Islamic leaders were considered some of the factors which brought about the rise of the Muslim middle-class (Mackie and MacIntyre, 1994; Ricklefs, 1993, 2001; Porter, 2002).

Hence, I asked Wahyu (Executive Director of Madania School): Why elite Islamic schools emerged? He pointed out some important factors that have influenced these schools.

First, the elite Islamic school is a synthesis of developments in modern education introduced by the Western tradition (particularly Christian schools) on the one hand, and the intellectual capacity of traditional Muslim scholars (*santri*), who re-thought their own institutions with all their strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, Muslims had felt a need for general schools with an Islamic character and identity or Islamic schools with a great emphasis on national identity. Secondly, the Muslim community has played an important role in the development of socio-economic and political discourse since the 1970s. The motto of Nurcholish Madjid: "Islam yes, Islamic party no," had a profound psychological influence on Muslims. Islam is not identical with politics; instead, it should be understood as a culture. This renders it more accepting of diversity and more comfortable with experiments and innovations in intellectual traditions, like education. Thirdly, the New Order government had a significant role in modernizing Indonesian society in general and Islamic schools in particular. (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003)

In this sense, he said,

Al Azhar provides a good raw model, with all its strengths and limitations, and encourages others in the Muslim community to build such a school. This school is not managed by traditional religious leaders. It is not of the NU (Nahdlatul Ulama) tradition but rather the Masyumi tradition. That is, it is able to appreciate Western innovations. Thus, Al Azhar is an institutionalization of modernist thought in education. (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003)

For Ali (Executive Chairman of the Board of Lazuardi School), the emergence of elite Islamic schools can be attributed to the fact that:

The quality of Indonesian education is seriously weak. The country's human resources – the graduates of the nation's schools – cannot compete, and because of that, so many Indonesian people live under the poverty line. At the same time, certain groups are growing increasingly wealthy. As this class grows more prosperous, it can afford schools that are relatively expensive. Increased prosperity is usually followed by the increasing needs for education. Globalization and easier access to information from outside the country has also given the Muslim community a means of comparing national and international standards of education. (Ali, personal interview, September 16, 2003)

In addition, Ali also sees the emergence of elite Islamic schools as

[...] connected with the phenomenon of an emerging enthusiasm in the Muslim community for observing Islam, which seems to have started in the late 1970s. The same answer could be given to the question: Why did certain publishers (like Mizan[2] and others) emerge? It was all in response to the demands of – what some people (including Nurcholish Madjid) have called – the new Muslim

middle class, which emerged in the 1970s. (Ali, personal interview, September 16, 2003)

Bambang (educational practitioner from the Paramadina Foundation) also has the same opinion as Ali on this matter. He mentions that:

> Elite Islamic schools have generally been developed to provide a better alternative to the public schools. The latter suffered from the fact that the government operated a system characterised by low effort, lack of appropriate pedagogy and curriculum, lack of professional teachers, and lack of educational programs. Consequently, the quality of education was low and drop-out rates were high. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

He actually admitted that "elite schools cannot replace public schools, because there are very few of them and they are expensive, if not very expensive." However, he criticizes many people who still consider "the schools as elitist because of the expense involved, ignoring the superior educational programs and activities offered by these schools." (Bambang, personal interview, interview, October 6, 2003). For him, it is understood that:

> These schools have to pay good salaries to their teachers, who come from abroad or who have graduated from outstanding public universities, such as UI, ITB, UGM, IPB, etc. They are obviously not from teacher training schools; however, because of rational choice and the promise of a good salary, they apply to become teachers in these schools. (Bambang, personal interview, interview, October 6, 2003)

There are two kinds of elite schools in Indonesia today. The first is an expensive school that follows an international orientation, adopting the standards of the IBO (International Baccalaureate Organization) based in Switzerland. The second is an expensive school that still follows a national orientation and that in some cases also adopts some international standards. According to Bambang (practitioner), the idea of building exclusive schools has been getting a good response and legal recognition in the era of reformation (1998 – present).

> I see a serious effort being made by my colleagues to apply modern approaches and methods that in the past had received less consideration among the educators and government officials who managed education programs. Therefore, I welcome and respect the initiative to build elite schools with international or national orientations, even with their expensive tuition fees, because they represent an attempt to look for an alternative to the educational

system in Indonesia which has been stagnant for so long. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

Government officials too, welcome the phenomenon of elite schools. One such official, Hasan (Director of *Madrasah* and Islamic Education (at general school) in the MORA) pointed out to me that:

> The emergence of elite Islamic schools was basically motivated by relatively strong religious enthusiasm, which called for equal classroom time for religious subjects as compared to non-religious/secular ones. The Ministry of Religious Affairs has been very happy about it and has supported this idea by preparing and composing a curriculum of religious subjects as a guide for general public schools and even those elite Islamic schools administered by the Ministry of National Education. (Hasan, personal interview, September 23, 2003)

He further mentioned that the security and safety of their children is the biggest consideration of parents in the big cities.

> There is seemingly a demand on the part of urban Muslim families to send their children to such Islamic schools or Islamic boarding schools that feature a modern approach and facilities – even though their fees are actually not low. Money is not a problem for many such parents. The most important consideration for them is to save their children from juvenile delinquency (drug use, fighting, bullying, permissiveness, and sexual license), which is a crucial problem in the big cities especially; and they want their children to understand religious knowledge better and to practice Islam correctly. (Hasan, personal interview, September 23, 2003)

In the meantime, Rahman (a former Director General of the Development of Islamic Institution in the MORA) states:

> Parents who send their children to elite Islamic schools are not actually expecting their children to become experts in religious knowledge. What they want is for their children to have basic knowledge of their faith. They want them to be able to recite the Quran and memorize short verses from it; to be able to pray and say prayers; to maintain an Islamic spirit and ethics; and all of this while at the same time improving the students' interests, aptitude, and ability. (Rahman, personal interview, September 1, 2003)

In addition, Rahman also points out that:

> The economic development of Indonesia in general and especially that of Muslim society – spurred by the oil boom of the 1970s – has influenced the development of elite Islamic schools in Indonesia. They reflect the tendency on the part of Muslim parents to send their children to Islamic schools that offer good academic training, an understanding of Islamic doctrine and practice, and a climate in which

they can preserve their identity as Muslims (Rahman, personal interview, September 1, 2003).

In this case, I see enthusiasm in the Muslim community for protecting the Muslim identity and for acquiring quality education. For them, education offers a way to maintain their social status and also their religious tradition. From the perspective of reproduction theory (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), schools act as reproduction agents in these ways:

> First, schools provide different classes and social groups with the knowledge and skills they need to occupy their respective places in a labour force stratified by class, race, and gender. Second, schools are seen as reproductive in the cultural sense, functioning in part to distribute and legitimate forms of knowledge, values, language and modes, and modes of style that constitute the dominant culture and interest. Third, schools are viewed as part of a state apparatus that produced and legitimated the economic and ideological imperatives that underlie the state's political power. (Giroux, 1983. p. 258)

As it happened, the economic development of Muslim society coincided with the reality of Islamic schools offering good instruction and educational programs. These schools provided the technical skills and knowledge that would allow the emerging middle-class to reinforce or maintain their new found social and occupational status. This constitutes one of several reasons why the emergence of elite Islamic schools in the 1980s was welcomed by many Muslim parents, policy makers/government officials, and educators.

The New Order government perceived education as an integral part of preparing citizens to become the next generation of 'development-oriented' technocrats, intellectuals and administrators (Porter, 2002, p. 52). This policy, thus, influenced the emergence of elite Islamic schools. Rahman (government official) points out:

> The emergence of the Muslim middle class was influenced by the attitude of the New Order Government that education be provided for all, and be more open and accessible for all citizens. The government also provided opportunities to Muslims to study in their homeland or abroad. This policy produced well-educated Muslim scholars who have recently entered the bureaucracy and become official leaders in the government, economic, business and political sectors. (Rahman, personal interview, September 1, 2003)

Sigit (Director General of Basic and Secondary Education, Ministry of National Education) welcomes the phenomenon:

> It proves the awareness of the Muslim community that education is an important strategy for raising their social level and status and for preparing to compete with people from inside the country or foreign countries. The government has welcomed and congratulated these schools for introducing new levels of performance and style. (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003)

The Ministry of National Education no longer insists on the principle of uniformity, Sigit told me:

> Uniformity creates uniform stupidity for schools if they depend only on government funding, which is limited and must be shared among schools in all regions. They are only universalizing inadequacy. So, it is important to have elite schools, which offer good instruction and strategies, in order to produce leaders or maybe ministers to represent the nation in the field of politics, academics, and even sports, allowing Indonesia to compete with other nations at national and international levels. It even accords with the diversity encouraged in the state slogan: *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (A variety of cultures but one goal). (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003)

Therefore, elite Islamic schools are allowed to develop their own curricula based on their own missions but they still need to follow the general guidelines from the Ministry of National Education. He further mentioned that:

> The government has developed a system that gives more freedom to the schools so that they can perhaps implement their own curriculum, which is different from that of the public schools. The nature of the curriculum depends on the situation, condition, and environment of each school. The important point is, of course, that they be similar or equal in terms of the competency-based standards. Thus, the government encourages all schools to have the same competency-based standards so that no one feels insulted. Public schools, *madrasahs, pesantrens*, elite schools, and vocational schools are thus all equally important. No single school is superior to others. But with several types of education or schools, there will be greater opportunity for children to seek the school which is most congruent with their needs and hopes. Each school should offer a competitive education and produce leaders dedicated to creating a civil society. The children can choose freely to study in an Islamic school, a Catholic school, a school for the disabled, or an excellence school. The students even have the choice to study abroad or in an elite school in their own country. (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003)

As to what kind of competency standards will be implemented in Indonesia, Sigit (government official) states:

Recently, the Ministry of National Education has started designing a competency standard as a guide for all levels and types of education. In fact, this is a never-ending process, one that develops depending on the situation and time. Therefore, the government is constantly comparing its standards to those of Australia, Japan, Singapore, and Malaysia, in order to formulate a universal definition of competency in certain subjects, like math, science, and social studies. Expectations are that Indonesia will find itself somewhere in the middle in this group when it comes to standards, which will be reviewed. (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003)

It was apparent to this respondent that elite Islamic schools have been gradually improving and even could be considered as being of the same quality as the best public schools and even non-Muslim private schools. When asked about the position of elite Islamic schools compared to Catholic schools, for instance, Sigit stated that:

Elite Islamic schools have started to reach a comparable level, even though the Catholic schools still dominate national examination results. However, there are many indications that the performance of elite Islamic schools has improved. For example, Insan Cendekia School, which was originally managed by ITB alumni and funded by the Ministry of Research and Technology and is now managed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, is a good school in terms of academic achievement, demonstrated by the fact that almost 100 % of its students are accepted into outstanding public universities. (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003)

And according to the national ranking of high schools in 2000/2001, Insan Cendekia School was second in the country below the best Christian school (see the report of Centre for Educational Evaluation of the Department of National Education). "The trend is good and shows promise. Much remains to be done in terms of innovations, however, and the results still need to be measured" (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003).

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that the emergence of elite Islamic schools has been influenced by the socio-economic and political conditions of the country, by the desire on the part of Muslims to preserve their religious and national identity while at the same time, increasing their knowledge and capabilities and by the impact of globalization that has made it easier to get information from other sources and countries.

4. The Weaknesses of Elite Islamic Schools

Elite Islamic schools have generally received a positive response from Indonesians, particularly from Muslim parents who have long been eager for excellent education for their offspring. Certainly, this kind of education encompasses not only good academic results and a high rate of university placement, but also the building of a strong moral character in students. With such high expectations, however, it is not surprising that some detect weaknesses in the programs offered by elite Islamic schools.

Some of the educational practitioners and government officials that were interviewed pointed at a number of shortcomings in these schools, especially in such areas as: school vision and mission; educational concepts; human resources and facilities management; organization and management; teaching and learning methods; networking and community development programs; and the issue of elitism.

4.1. School Vision and Mission

The vision and mission of the elite Islamic schools are also said to be unclear and too general. They are hard to understand and formulate in explicit terms. As Bambang (educational practitioner) points out:

> Elite Islamic schools use bombastic words and are not clear in formulating their vision and mission, like producing students who dedicate themselves to the one God, being pious and religious, being creative and becoming masters in science and technology; but there is no clarification and elaboration. These words should be removed and replaced by simple words and clarified with detailed explanations. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

Using an inefficient and perhaps even too idealistic vocabulary is typical of Indonesian society in general: the government, the representative assembly, civil servants, and private companies, not to mention elite Islamic schools, regularly use platitudes that sound nice but that are imprecise. It may well be that these schools are not yet able to formulate the kinds of abilities sought by students and the schools as a whole. These kinds of abilities certainly have to be suited to the students' ages and levels of education and be based as well on the standards of the school itself and the Ministry of National Education. In this case, Bambang suggests that:

> Elite Islamic schools can learn from other schools, like the Bali International School, which sees its mission as fourfold: 1. educating students to be good citizens; 2. ensuring that students have good communication skills; 3. training students to think comprehensively and systematically; and 4. teaching students to be responsible. They use simple and clear words that are easily understood by teachers, students, and parents alike. For example, building and developing communication skills individually will improve the students' ability to speak in front of people and indirectly build students' self-confidence. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

Therefore, it is important to define and to articulate the school's philosophy and mission so that it can be understood easily by students, teachers, and parents and then put into practice. In the future, elite Islamic schools should not only focus on academic achievement but also on improving students' behaviour, character, and life skills. Bambang, therefore, proposes:

> A new strategy of instruction and a modern method should be implemented at schools, such as: 1. the teacher using keywords (discipline, honesty, fairness, responsibility, respect, etc.) while explaining the subject; 2. students writing the keywords on paper and hanging them on the classroom wall, so everyone can see and read these words; and finally 3. students gradually understanding and intentionally applying these concepts at school and in everyday life. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

Another weakness of elite Islamic schools can be traced to their focus on academic performance and lesser attention to building students' behaviour and character. According to Bambang (educational practitioner):

> Elite Islamic schools only focus on academic achievement. There is a lack of concern for the development of students' behaviour and character, like developing discipline, self-esteem, self-confidence, self-reliance, honesty, integrity, and responsibility. Students are encouraged to memorise the subject matter in order to get good marks in the final examination, but that is all. Unfortunately, parents (and the Indonesian people in general) still believe that the success of a school is indicated by the results in national examinations and how many students graduate from these schools and go on to outstanding public universities. The more students are accepted, the more schools are determined to be successful in this way. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

Ali (Executive Board of Lazuardi School) also makes those statements. He asks:

> Is it right that the success of education is indicated by high marks in the national examination?" I think the most important thing is how to define education and its goal. The question then is: What is the relationship between

mathematics, science, etc., and the success that people have in their lives? Therefore, I am committed to the ability of students to pass an exam with good marks but only insofar as their intellectual, emotional, and spiritual abilities are enhanced. I don't want to force the students to achieve the best rank on the basis of criteria that are still questionable. For me the goal of education is to create or produce human beings who are happy and possess the requisite of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual quotient to become good citizens with good morals, spiritual strength and character. All these are sources of happiness. (Ali, personal interview, September 16, 2003)

If we look at the brochures produced by the schools, the programs and activities offered therein are promoted as conducive to forming students who are able to maintain the Islamic tradition, act as leaders in their society, and show respect for other people. Most of the elite Islamic schools that I observed provide leadership training and try to gear all activities towards building community. There is an emphasis on competition in science, math, language, music, drama, and sports in an effort to teach students discipline and at the same time expose them to success and failure. The overall aim of such programs is to train students to be independent, responsible, disciplined and honest. Schools also want students to build integrity and commitment, self-confidence and self-esteem. It should also be noted that all the activities advertised in the brochures involve not only elite schools but also general public schools, *madrasahs, pesantrens*, and other private schools in order to exchange information and provide students with wider knowledge, experience and respect for what other people say and do.

Some Islamic schools, however, operate on the understanding that rigid discipline is more important than any other factor in the learning process. Bambang (educational practitioner) shows how the Islamic high school like Insan Cendekia, known as an excellent school with the highest academic ranking in the national examination, has introduced school regulations and corresponding punishments as a way to maintain discipline at school. He relates the story told to him by a friend:

My friend's son, Imam (grade 11) received punishment from the school. He wasn't allowed to come to school for one week because the teacher had caught him smoking twice at school. My friend complained, asking why the punishment was so severe. He was worried that his son would be left behind in his coursework and by other students. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

It should not come as a surprise, however, that so many students are punished in this school, especially for such violations as failing to pray together, unfinished homework, inappropriate uniform, or smoking at school. On such occasions, the school will send them home and not allow them to return to school for one day to one week, and even ask the student to look for another school. Bambang sees "this policy as too strict and evidence of a lack of concern as to why students choose not to obey school regulations. In searching for a solution to these problems, the school has, unfortunately, never investigated the persuasive approach" (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003).

One aspect that should be remembered is that parents and students must receive satisfactory information about school regulations and punishments for their violations. Or if needed, elite Islamic schools should involve students and parents in the formulation and implementation of school regulations and punishments. It is the best way to reduce misunderstanding, conflict, and unhealthy relationships between school, students and parents. Therefore, when the students do receive punishments there is less likelihood of complaints from students or parents.

Discipline and character building are nevertheless a big concern for some elite Islamic schools. Several teachers in these schools complained to me of this. One teacher told me that:

> Many students are less disciplined, less responsible, and less independent because of values brought from home. They are generally the children of wealthy parents who are always served by their parents or domestic help in all aspects, like preparing food, school uniform and equipment and selecting school activities. Some even have drivers who bring them to and from school. (Nina, personal interview, August 5, 2003)

Therefore, it is no wonder that many such students become dependent on other people, self-centered and less willing to pay attention to what people say and do. These attitudes are reflected in their schoolwork, such as when, for example, they do not work hard, or fail to hand in homework on time or neglect to come to class in a timely manner. Besides, according to Wahyu (Executive Director of Madania School):

> The teachers are sometimes not confident about imposing hard work, discipline, or respect for others because of their own different socio-economic status –

students being from the middle and upper classes, while teachers are from the lower classes... I always remind teachers that they know the subject much better than the students and even parents. So, you don't have to be nervous and less confident than them. If your students do not follow your orders, please take any actions necessary, so they will respect what you say and do. (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003)

Another problem is that many Islamic schools lack a good strategy for applying school discipline and regulations consistently. Their first consideration is to maintain good relations between school and parents and even to serve the students and parents in the best way possible. If the school is too strict and rigid, the parents may well choose not to send their children there in the future.

Discipline is similarly defined in official statements of school policy. The key elements of discipline are student behaviour conducive to learning, courtesy and respect towards staff and fellow students, and acceptable standards of appearance. The kind of discipline that each school wants to achieve is usually expressed in the school's brochures and reports. This leads to considerable differences between institutions, and yet, even in schools in Western countries, the problem of disciplinary policy and its implementation varies widely. The truth is there is no magic recipe for effective discipline. What works and is seen as effective in one school will not necessarily work in another. Each school has its own particular circumstances that must be taken into account (Munn, P. et al, 1992).[3]

4.2. Educational Concepts, Human Resources and Facilities

The discrepancy between educational concepts, human resources and facilities is a very real problem in the elite Islamic schools. In conceptual terms, according to Wahyu (educational practitioner):

These schools do not integrate their physical design, environment, and curriculum. They are still looking for the ideal combination. I wonder whether the elite schools should aspire to the achievements of such public excellent schools as SMUN 8 Jakarta (the best public high school in the country according to the results of national examinations), where the emphasis is on academic achievement, or SMU Madania (Madania High School), which encourages multiple intelligences in the hope of developing students' academic ability, character and life skills. To accomplish this, however, much money is needed in order to provide support for the necessary infrastructure and human resources. (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003)

Wahyu's critique of the discrepancy between concept, environment and curriculum deserves the attention of school managers and school foundations in this country. However, based on my observation of several elite Islamic schools, I was impressed by interesting innovations in the areas of physical design, facilities, and human resources. Generally, elite Islamic schools like Al Azhar, Al Izhar, Madania, Dwi Warna, Lazuardi, and Insan Cendekia consist of large campuses almost invariably composed of classrooms, laboratories, a library, a computer lab, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, a mosque, music and art workshops, an auditorium, a clinic, and a center for educational research and development. And also based on my interview with Sukmawati (the Executive Council of Al Izhar Islamic School), in which her information related to the study, she said that "Al Izhar even provides day care for the children of teachers and staff on the assumption that their employees will work better knowing that their children are close by and that they can see them in their break time" (Sukmawati, personal interview, October 3, 2003). Thus, in terms of facilities, elite Islamic schools have actually met the highest standards – among general public schools and *madrasahs* – for developing students' ability and aptitude. It is of course difficult to accommodate all students' desires, which vary in the case of each student. The important consideration is to choose the right teachers and develop their professionalism in order to encourage their commitment and expertise not only in their subject specialisations but also in modern approaches to teaching and learning. Moreover, these schools also have to provide good teachers who are accomplished in music, art, sports or computers in order to increase students' capacity. The wider the expertise of the teachers, the greater the opportunities and experiences they can offer students, thereby increasing self-confidence, discipline and responsibility.

Generally, elite Islamic schools employ the national curriculum and the competencies-based curriculum administered by the Ministry of National Education. For religious education, they use not only the curriculum of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, under whose direction they operate, but most also enhance this curriculum based on the school's philosophy and goals. In practice, however, these schools do not follow set curricula to the letter; rather, they make adjustments and offer

enrichment based on the needs of students, parents and the school itself without violating the government standards. Why do they do so? Because, according to Ali,

> I see that some curriculum content overlaps and therefore leads to a waste of time. What we can do as school leader, principal, and teacher is to discuss it and make rearrangements. By rearranging it, the teacher can teach students effectively and pay more attention to those who are slow in understanding the material (the learning process) or to the crucial content that needs more time to explain. (Ali, personal interview, September 16, 2003)

Even Rahman (government official) mentions that:

> Mutahhari School offers an interesting innovation in implementing the curriculum. For some subjects like history or civic education, teachers, for example, only teach the students in class three times and the rest of the time students learn and test out the subject individually. In this way, students are enabled to understand the subjects fully and to achieve the complete range of learning envisioned by the competency- based curriculum. (Rahman, personal interview, September 1, 2003)

Nevertheless, when I asked about the recent implementation of competency-based curriculum, he maintained:

> I'm not sure it increases quality education because it comes from top down, not from bottom up interest. The government should involve society in establishing new policies to win support and encourage society to be responsible for the decision they make. (Rahman, personal interview, September 1, 2003)

Tilaar (1999) also mentioned that if education in Indonesia wants to progress more towards quality education, "the top-down educational leadership has to be changed and more opportunities are to be given to local leaders or local scholars to take the initiative to implement changes in education" (p. 170). Therefore, education will yield more satisfying results the more that society participates in it, from the teachers who stand in front of the class every day to the supervisors and educational managers in the regions.

Recently, elite Islamic schools have been considering adopting an international curriculum in order to compete with the other international schools that have emerged in the big cities of Indonesia. The latter are attracting many parents eager to send their children to them. The Ministry of National Education allows them to do so as long as these schools follow the national standards determined by the Ministry. The biggest challenge, apart from finance/money, to implementing this

program is the lack of qualified teachers who are both expert in their subjects and fluent in English as a language of instruction at the same time. To solve this problem, elite Islamic schools have to select teachers with high standards of competency in these respects. Even more important, however, is how schools facilitate teacher training programs that meet international standards and competencies. Where schools are able to afford professionals who are competent in terms of academic knowledge, pedagogical practice and language skills, the implementation of the international curriculum can run easily and smoothly.

In fact, elite Islamic schools have begun taking the theory of multiple intelligences as their guide to improving students' ability. The importance of multiple intelligences – introduced by Gardner 1983 in his book, *Frames of Mind*,[4] – has long been recognized in the West. He believes that learners have many kinds of intelligences and that each student possesses each of these intelligences to varying extents. For example, Campbell (1999, p. 5) found the following:

> One student might play a musical instrument with ease but struggle with writing conventions. Another may enjoy the challenges of mathematical precision but avoid any opportunity to draw. Still another may perform a complex series of physical movements but appear awkward when interacting with peers.

Openness to multiple intelligences can make schools and teachers more accepting of all students, whatever their strengths and weaknesses. It can even create a positive school culture of respect and belief (Campbell, 1999). Wahyu even believes that "the school and teachers should consider every student to be unique and treat each one as an individual. Students may have at least one special skill that should be appreciated individually" (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003). For students, this increases self-confidence and even provides motivation to increase their own capacities. Consequently, the elite Islamic school no longer need to select new students on the basis of academic standards or to rank students according to grades, as often happens in other Indonesian schools. As Ali (educational practioner) states:

> Our school doesn't select new students based on the report card or the results of national examinations; rather, we observe them comprehensively in academic and non-academic spheres. Therefore, we don't rank students according to their

marks. We respect what they have and do individually. (Ali, personal interview, September 16, 2003)

Instead, students can receive awards for several subjects or achieve the honour roll for all subjects. In addition, sufficient financial aid, human resources, infrastructure and facilities are provided to support the implementation of multiple intelligences as a strategy for maximizing students' capacity, aptitude and proficiency.

In general, professional teachers are very rare in Indonesian public school. Even "elite Islamic schools are also facing this problem" (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003). Bambang agrees with this statement and criticizes the government's policy.

> I feel ashamed that the government is putting such little effort into the education program and that consequently the quality of education is so low and the dropout rate so high. I see that the government has no concept of education programs, pedagogy or teachers' training/professionalism. Even the reduction of teacher training schools, such as SPG (Sekolah Pendidikan Guru, school of teacher training) and IKIP is a big mistake. Therefore, we do not have qualified teachers at the elementary and secondary levels. These are the weakest. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2005)

He further mentions that:

> The government's policies concerning education, typified by its reduction of the role of IKIP and its transformation from a teacher preparation institution to a university with a broader approach (and therefore a reduced focus on training prospective teachers) are evidence that Indonesia is less concerned about educating its young generation. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

The contention of Wahyu and Bambang that the Indonesian government does not pay serious attention to the field of education is confirmed by other observers. In terms of the concept of education, according to Tilaar (1998), "education in Indonesia still follows the practice instituted in the colonial times i.e., a teaching learning process that does not develop the students' capacity for reasoning but instead produces a cache of knowledge – the banking education envisioned by Paolo Freire" (p. 151). Moreover, the budget assigned to education by the government has recently fallen to as low as only 12% of the overall, and this must suffice for the implementation of the nine-year compulsory program, higher education programs, programs for improving the quality of education and that of educational personnel, etc. (2004 government

annual report). Compared to other Asian countries, Indonesia has consistently trailed in both of the most significant categories as may be seen in the table below (see, Suryadi, 1997, p. 152):

Table 1. Education Budget (1992)

COUNTRY	% NATIONAL BUDGET	% GDP
Malaysia	16.0	5.3
Singapore	21.6	3.4
Taiwan	18.0	4.8
South Korea	20.5	3.3
Thailand	19.4	4.3
Indonesia	13.6	2.7

Further data shows that in 2000, 9.66 % of children had received no schooling while 24.29% had had some elementary schooling, 32.45% had completed elementary school, 15.28% had finished junior high school, and 18.32% had completed at least senior high school (Statistics Indonesia of the Republic of Indonesia, taken from website February 23, 2005). Thus, the weaknesses in infrastructure and human resources have caused Indonesian education to fall well below international standards (112[th] in world ranking), even compared to other Asian countries, like Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, and Vietnam.

Moreover, limited innovations in educational practice and curriculum as well as unimaginative teaching-learning methods in the universities that offer teacher education contribute to the insufficient preparation and supply of qualified, professional instructors. These institutions still employ conservative methods of teaching and learning, like teacher-centered classes and learning by rote. They do not seem interested in studying and applying innovations in the teacher training strategies being developed in Western countries. Bambang even claims,

> Teachers do not know or understand modern methods of teaching and learning. They still use conservative methods based on a teacher-centered philosophy. This methodology is, however, unsuited to the needs of students, who are now more creative, confident, and critical. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2005)

The mentality of teachers also needs adjustment. Wahyu finds that:

> Most of the teachers are from the middle and lower classes, and have led lives very different from those of their students. They seem less confident in front of

students and parents. How can teachers increase the students' performance with such a mentality? (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003)

Thus, students do not enjoy or feel challenged by approaches that are stuck in the past. In fact, the divergence between a teacher's competence and a student's ability often creates difficulties in the learning process. Consequently, teachers may not be able to improve the abilities of even the most promising students.

Teacher professionalism is an interesting point in relation to provide good quality teachers. The best way is to think of teaching as a profession. A profession is seen as a set of ideas, or a way of thinking about occupations, rather than as a description of any one occupation itself (Becker, 1970 in Robson, 2006, p. 10). Though there may be broad agreement about some of the underlying ideas, these concepts are not fixed or static either and as, Furlong et al. (2000) observes, changes in the nature of knowledge, autonomy and responsibility, for example, can alter the nature of teacher professionalism itself.

The three concepts of professional knowledge, autonomy and responsibility are often seen as closely related:

> It is because professionals face complex and unpredictable situations that they need a specialised body of knowledge; if they are to apply that knowledge, it is argued that they need the autonomy to make their own judgements. Given that they have autonomy, it is essential that they act with responsibility – collectively they need to develop appropriate professionals values. (Furlong et al., 2000, p. 5)

Intra-curricular and extra-curricular activities for their part contribute to creating a balance between the abilities to learn, to think and to work in the fields of science and technology, language, sports, music, and the arts. These abilities can improve as long as schools provide good facilities such as learning centers, science and language laboratories, sports, music, art, etc. According to Wahyu,

> If the school does not provide good and sufficient facilities to maximize students' potential and proficiency, it will eventually be passed over by prospective students and parents. Many parents respect schools that provide sufficient and good facilities in order to develop the students' intellectual, emotional and spiritual capacities. (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003)

To assess whether individual schools have fulfilled this requirement or not, it is important to establish the minimum standard that schools need to achieve in terms of facilities. The schools can attract parents and students in a number of ways, such as by offering indoor and outdoor sports activities, drama and theatre, modern and traditional art, dance and music, etc., by providing qualified and professional teachers who are experts in their fields, and by participating in competitions and festivals in math, science, sports, music, drama, or art, inside and outside the school.

4.3. Organization and Management

Open school management is highly valued by parents, teachers, students, and society at large. Conflict always arises when there is a lack of mutual understanding and honesty. Rahman (government official) explained that:

> When the management of elite Islamic schools is not transparent, this creates conflicts between the school foundation -- which has the money and power -- and the school community consisting of the principal, teacher, staff and parents. One example would be the absence of a clear mechanism or rule on promotion, incentives, and retirement. The promotion of the principal, teachers, and staff is often based on the likes and dislikes of the foundation that hire them. Parents especially have no access to information on finances and how funds are used. It is frequently the case that, when the schools earn a good reputation and enrolment grows in number, conflicts arise. The source of conflicts is usually power and money. (Rahman, personal interview, September 1, 2003)

This problem has occurred in Al-Azhar. In 1978, the school saw an increase in applications (approximately 200 students), but could not accept them all due to limited class sizes. YPI Al Azhar asked Maulwi Saelan (a businessman) to accommodate those students by establishing a new branch. Saelan agreed to build a branch of Al Azhar in Kemang Raya, South Jakarta. Yayasan Shifa Budi (The Foundation of Shifa Budi), led by Maulwi Saelan, provided the building and managed the school in terms of administration and organization, while AAIS Kebayoran Baru provided the education strategy and curriculum. In order to develop the new branch more rapidly, on December 22, 1978, through decision letter no. 001/SB/1978, Saelan, the chairman of Yayasan Shifa Budi, declared himself a board member of the education division of the AAIS branch in Kemang. This letter was then reinforced by another decision letter no. 002/SB/1979 of January 3, 1979 in which Saelan declared

himself chair person and his wife vice-chairperson and secretary of the board of the education division of this AAIS branch without any notification of confirmation from or agreement by YPI Al Azhar. It seemed as though Saelan and his wife felt confident enough to run the school according to their own policy and to ignore the initial agreement with AAIS in Kebayoran Baru. The foundation of AAIS in Kebayoran Baru held several meetings to evaluate the efforts and attitude of Saelan and his associates, and finally, Al Azhar Kebayoran Baru decided to discontinue its working relationship with Saelan and demanded that Yayasan Shifa Budi cease using the name and logo of AAIS in all its activities. This decision was based on the decision letter no. XXVI/YPI/KEP/1403-1982 of November 15, 1982. Saelan and associates, however, paid no attention to this decision: in 1988 he was even working with another foundation to build another Al Azhar Islamic School in Kelapa Gading, North Jakarta. In 1990, therefore, Al Azhar, as the founding school, brought this problem to the regional court, and won a decision forbidding the use of the name and logo of AAIS Kebayoran Baru Jakarta by Al Azhar Kemang Raya and Kelapa Gading as of 1991/1992 (Busyairi, 2002). Since then, "there has been no official working relationship between the institutions, but there are still informal contacts between personnel insofar as they are all Muslims" (Herman, personal interview, October 6, 2003). Learning from this experience, all Islamic schools should draw up clear and transparent information with respect to management and organization. Clear and in-depth specifications are needed concerning the rights of the founding school and any possible branches in order to avoid potential conflicts.

4.4. Teaching Learning Methods

Teaching/learning methods are a matter of the deepest concern among educational practitioners in Indonesia. Bambang (educational practitioner), for example, asserted:

> Good instruction and strategy will influence the development of students' ability in understanding, analyzing, and expressing their knowledge within the reality of everyday life. Nevertheless, the Islamic schools especially and secular schools in general are still employing teacher-centred rather than student-centred instruction and have not applied the active learning method[5] yet. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003).

He may be right; based on my own observations, some elite Islamic schools have actually applied the method of active learning, like the Madania, Mutahhari, Al Azhar, Al-Izhar, Lazuardi, Insan Cendekia, and Dwi Warna schools. However, the implementation of this method is not yet optimal because not all teachers understand how to apply such methods or use them to stimulate students' talents and curiosity. On the other hand, the content and demands of the curriculum are so great that teachers are often forced to concentrate on lecturing in order to achieve the targets required for success in the national examinations set by the Ministry of National Education, which in turn determine entrance into the next level of education. They are also constrained by the types of evaluation in the national examination that pay more attention to cognitive ability than to psychomotor and affective abilities; thus, memorizing facts is given greater weight than developing a capacity to learn and to think. This is in spite of the national implementation of a competencies-based curriculum that assigns the same value to cognitive, psychomotor, and affective capacities. In this aspect the elite Islamic schools are regarded as pioneers. Thus, the need to employ active learning takes on greater significance. The next question, however, is: How far has the Ministry of National Education gone in setting up a model of evaluation able to cover the three abilities mentioned above and in preparing teachers to be experts not only in their subjects but also in terms of modern methods of teaching and learning?

Why is there so much attention paid to active learning nowadays? Several reasons have been put forward for this greater emphasis on active as opposed to more passive forms of knowledge acquisition. "These reasons have to do with students, teachers, schools and society at large" (Stern, 1997, p. 21). Active learning can be more attractive for students than the more passive variety because they can become more motivated and interested when they have a say in their own learning and when their mental abilities are challenged. Once involved in the decisions about learning, they can connect to their prior knowledge and their own needs and interests. In finding out things independently, they can follow their own interests and motivation. In the process they learn to make decisions and take responsibility. Moreover, active learning is important because of the opportunities it gives for learning how to learn.

Students gain facility in learning by practicing how to do it. Giving them responsibility for certain decisions that can or should be made is one way to teach them how to learn (Stern, 1997).

In earlier times, one thought that learning to learn and active learning were for the elite. Only the best students were expected to learn actively. For the weaker students, highly structured forms of teaching were to be preferred – at least according to conventional wisdom (Stern, 1997, p. 21). However, in the "learning economy" this picture has changed. Several empirical studies have found that active learning and learning to learn and think are especially important for weaker students. One reason why they were considered weak students turned out to be that they are not allowed to learn actively. When the weakest students learned how to learn and think, their learning performance improved drastically (see for instance, Palincsar and Brown, 1984 quoted from Stern, 1997).

Active learning is also important for teachers. The motivational and burn-out problems of teachers tend to disappear when students are more motivated and more active learners. Besides, "teaching will become more intellectually challenging when students are learning actively and independently" (Stern, 1997, p. 22).

Employers increasingly value learning abilities and adequate learning attitudes. They need flexible people who are able and ready to learn on their own. Companies are striving to become learning organizations with employees who are able and ready to learn both on and off the job. Those companies will survive that are able to learn quicker than their competitors, and for this they need people who learn easily and rapidly (Stern, 1997).

Finally, active learning is also important for schools. The latter are confronted with new demands from the labour market to which they cannot remain deaf. Because knowledge and skills tend to change more and more quickly, the emphasis shifts away from schools to later life and job-related learning. Furthermore, "higher level schools demand from lower level schools that they deliver students who are able and willing to learn actively and independently. Secondary schools expect this from elementary schools and higher education expects it from secondary education" (Stern, 1997, p. 22).

4.5. Networking and Community Development Program

Networking is very important in this era of globalization. No one can develop alone without learning, talking, and sharing with other people, groups, communities, or countries. We can learn good and bad things from other people's experiences. Unfortunately, elite Islamic schools have not yet taken seriously networking among and between Islamic schools and other schools --public or private. Nor is there any working relationship or common learning process among them. Each school works alone and does not care about other schools. In this case, Wahyu suggests that:

> Al Azhar Schools, for example, should not expand alone. They have to talk about and share their innovations with other schools in order to create excellent schools in other places or regions. They must be prepared to receive criticism from the public as well. If we can build an excellent Islamic school in each region, it means that we can produce even more qualified student spread through out several regions. In this way Indonesia will develop better human resources capable of competing with other nations in the era of globalization. (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003)

Therefore, building networks among elite Islamic schools and others -- private and public -- is a must.

For specific reasons, Islamic schools also need to build good relations with the government at the regional and national levels. Meanwhile, Sigit (government official) says,

> Elite Islamic schools are not doing enough to coordinate with the government. It is important to know and learn from each other. The Islamic schools think they can manage themselves; so they do not want to establish relationships or work together with the government. Nevertheless, the government does not disturb them; it lets them do what they like – especially as they generally follow the government's educational policy. (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003)

A network can even be implemented by building government-university-school alliances. Wahyu, for example, states that:

> I hope the Faculty of Education of the IAIN can be a partner for improving Islamic education in the future. Madania School has indicated that it would be honoured to be host to such a laboratory of faculty and students for teaching practicum, research and development of Islamic education. (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003)

In addition, the government, as supervisor, and school systems and universities, as the two learning organizations, can benefit internally and externally by cooperating with each other. This is clearly what is required in the future.

Elite Islamic schools should build and improve programs that develop networks and a sense of community in the educational milieu. So far, they have seemingly neglected to do so. Sigit, for example, said that "they enjoy themselves alone, walk alone, succeed alone, and are elite alone. And finally, they are inflexible and isolated from the society and its environs" (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003). This leads to a negative form of elitism.

In fact, some elite Islamic schools that I observed have built a working relationship with the Ministry of National Education and the District Office of National Education, although perhaps not yet to a sufficient degree. These schools, for example, follow the general guide for curricula, send their reports about enrolment, school policy and progress to the government, have their principals and teachers attend meetings and seminars on education and competency standards and competency-based curriculum, allow their staff to help prepare the national examinations, and their students to participate in science, math and English competitions, etc. held by the Ministry or District Office of National Education. Problems do occur when government and schools differ in perspective over educational policy. For example, Ms. Naniek (principal of Madania School, a young, smart and energetic woman), said in my interview with her,

> The regulations of the Ministry of National Education are too rigid, centralized, and instruction-based. They give no opportunity to schools to create innovations in the learning process or in educational programs, such as through the implementation of curriculum, vernacular instruction or evaluation that reflects a school's vision and students' needs. For example, the national requirements based on the international curriculum dictate that Indonesian (local language), civic education, and history should be compulsory subjects, whereas an individual school might want them to be elective subjects. (Naniek, personal interview, September 11, 2003)

Another innovation introduced by the Madania School was to require essay-type answers in tests/exams, not multiple choice responses, this in an effort to teach students to become more critical, analytical, and creative. Unfortunately these

innovations were not welcomed by the local government. However, as Ms. Naniek said:

> Actually, at the top level, people like Mr. Sigit (Director General of Basic and Secondary Education) are more flexible. He encourages Madania School to reform the implementation of the teaching-learning process and educational programs. He also appreciates the types of assessment that can raise students' capacity and the development of systematic and analytical thought. Nevertheless, these problems create a disharmonious relationship between schools and local government especially. (Naniek, personal interview, September 11, 2003).

Meanwhile, informal (if not formal, in some instances) relations among elite Islamic schools have actually been established in order to share concepts, ideas and experiences for improving quality education, often involving parents as active participants in order to build community in the process. For example, the principal and teaching staff in one Islamic school may undertake a comparative study of other Islamic schools and even public and private schools (national, Protestant or Catholic schools) or vice versa to learn what works in these other schools in terms of curriculum development, teaching and learning methods, teacher professional development programs and school management and organisation -- all in order to help these Islamic schools achieve the rank of excellence in achievements on the national examinations. Because of the informal nature of this process, however, the results are often insufficient and temporary, so that some elite Islamic schools are forced to operate, survive, and improve in isolation. It is important, therefore, to build solid networking between and among elite Islamic schools and other schools.

Interestingly, Al Izhar School is one such school that has developed very good networking and community development programs. Al Izhar, for instance, has a solid working relationship with international schools, public schools, and Catholic and Protestant schools. Ms. Sukmawati (Executive Council of Al Izhar Islamic School) told me that:

> We have a good relationship with JIS (Jakarta International School) for improving our teachers and staffs. JIS, in this case, provides education consultants and instructors to train teachers' and staff in language, career and life skills. Al Izhar has also established a centre for educational research and development as a learning resource not only for Al Izhar but also for other

schools – public or private, Islamic, Christian, or national. Moreover, Al Izhar not only provides scholarships to students but it also trains teachers from neighbouring schools with more modest resources. On occasion the school welcomes principals of public schools from Jakarta, East Java, Kalimantan, Sumatra, etc. who want to learn from Al Izhar's education system and programs. Even Franzs Magnis Suseno (a Catholic priest and an expert in philosophy and education) sometimes comes to Al Izhar School to discuss educational matters with us. He learns from us and we learn from him too. (Sukmawati, personal interview, October 3, 2003)

Several interesting community development programs have also been introduced by Lazuardi School. As Ali mentions:

One of these is a separate junior high school of good quality that offers instruction to children from poor families. Lazuardi School provides key support to the junior school, like lending its own teachers and even training and paying its teaching staff. The free school's students can use Lazuardi School's computer and science laboratories and its bus for study tours. The aim of this program is to extend education (especially Islamic education) and to make it effective. We want our school to make a contribution to improving the quality of our neighbour schools that have fewer resources. (Ali, personal interview, September 16, 2003)

Therefore, all elite Islamic schools are encouraged to make this kind of contribution gradually and consistently so as to produce other high quality schools within their surrounding community that are also inexpensive. This contributes to improving the quality of education in general.

4.6. The Issue of Elitism

It is often the case that expensive education leads to exclusiveness and elitism. Some respondents that I interviewed recognized this tendency and said that something should be done to counteract it. Hasan (government official) highlighted the emergence of elitism. According to him:

There is a tendency, when schools provide good quality of instruction, education programs, and facilities, for them to become elitist. I am afraid that Islamic schools may produce students with elitist attitudes and characteristics. This is not, of course, healthy for the prospects of students in terms of their performance, behaviour, and understanding of religious teaching. Students can even become isolated in their social life too. (Hasan, personal interview, September 23, 2003)

Elitism is inevitably problematic. Ali of Lazuardi School also explained that:

Elite Islamic schools can only reach a small segment of society, i.e., those with the financial means to afford them. Even though these schools provide scholarships -- full or limited -- this aid cannot accommodate all students from various groups. The second problem is, perhaps, that the environment of the elite schools does not represent the reality of the country, given that the majority of Indonesians are far from wealthy. It creates problems. (Ali, personal interview, September 16, 2003)

Nonetheless, Sigit (government official) expressed his support for the building of elite Islamic schools. As he saw it:

It's indicative of awareness on the part of the Muslim community that education is vital to elevating and improving their ability to compete both inside and outside the country. ...Uniformity creates general stupidity. So it is important to have elite schools that can offer the instruction and preparation necessary for national leadership. This principle of diversity is even expressed in Indonesia's national slogan: *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity). (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003)

For that reason, he further elaborated,

The government developed a system that gives more freedom to schools to implement their own curriculum based on the school's vision and mission, situation, and environment. But the most important thing is, of course, that they all equally achieve the same standard of competency. Public schools, *madrasahs*, *pesantrens*, elite schools, vocational schools, etc., are equally important: though different, one is not superior to another. Their diversity simply provides an opportunity for children to seek the school most congruent with their needs and hopes, whether this is an Islamic school, a Catholic school, a school for the disabled, or an excellence school. Elite students furthermore have several choices: they can study abroad or at an elite school in their country. (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003)

It should be realized that the elite Islamic school is one of the cultural representations or expressions of the Muslim middle-class. As it was already indicated before, once members of the *santri* identified themselves as middle class, their musical tastes, language, dress, and life-style also changed. It happened also to their choice of education. They were trying to find a kind of school which caters to their needs, satisfies their tastes, and fits their life-style. They have found it in so-called elite Islamic school. They expect that elite Islamic school could become a solution to the dilemmas faced by many of them. The dilemma is how to be modern without dislocation and alienation from local traditions and religious beliefs, and how

to maintain their cultural roots and attain modernity. It seems that urbanized Muslims choose to be both fully modern and to keep their traditions.

The phenomena of elite Islamic schools show us once again the need of the emergent Muslim middle-class to provide identity reinforcement for their new class position. Referring to Bourdieu's concept of cultural reproduction, the Muslim middle class use education to perpetuate their religious and cultural forms, values, ideas, and ideals.[6] This process has been experienced by the Muslim middle-class in contemporary Indonesia. Instead of secularizing society, the process of modernization in Indonesia has in fact strengthened religious orientation within an increasingly influential segment of the population – the middle-class. They want their children to perpetuate their religious orientation and identity and in so doing, provide direction and build momentum toward modernization. Elite Islamic schools could be therefore perceived as serving the function of cultural reproduction for the new middle-class.[7]

5. The Strengths of Elite Islamic Schools

Despite the weaknesses outlined above, elite Islamic schools have many strengths that serve as assets, both in terms of developing individual potential and fulfilling the needs of students and parents. From interviews with educational practitioners and government officials, I have come to the conclusion that these strengths consist of the adaptability (especially with respect to international orientation), family support, and the availability of good human and financial resources. These positive features certainly need attention from school managers, who must manage and improve them to as high a degree as possible.

5.1. New Perspective and International Orientation

Although many Islamic schools still resemble the conventional paradigm – the school as an auditorium in which the students are treated like visitors at an exhibition who watch events, and make notes of what they have been told – fundamental changes have been introduced into some elite Islamic schools. Bambang (educational practitioner and trainer), for example, has observed that:

There is a serious effort on the part of from my colleagues to make school fun and enjoyable in order to reduce the perception of school as frightening and boring. This mindset is·implemented in the first place to attract parents and students to choose these schools. It is then up to school managers to apply modern methods of teaching and learning, especially student-centered, active learning, to make students more active and involved, like inquiry projects in which students can learn more easily and explore their curiosity and potential. Furthermore, principals and teachers are always articulating and elaborating their mission and leadership in school life and activities. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

This newer paradigm of education is in fact described by Zamroni (1998) as the laboratory paradigm, in which students are encouraged to indulge their curiosity, to concentrate and focus on the subject matter, and always to question their teachers and other resource persons concerning subjects that have not been fully understood. The students discuss and solve problems themselves, with the teachers functioning as inspirers, facilitators and motivators. The students, individually or collectively, are encouraged to be active in completing their tasks with full consciousness, freedom and responsibility. They understand what they have learned, gain the ability to solve problems, acquire self-confidence and develop a capacity for working together, communicating and making decisions (Zamroni, 1998).

This is reflected in the decision of some elite Islamic schools to adopt an international orientation and standard – a move that has received a positive response from government officials, educational practitioners, and society in general. Adopting an international curriculum is considered to be the best way to compete with international schools both inside and outside the country. According to Bambang, some schools use the slogan:

If studying abroad is the same thing as studying in our home country, why should we study abroad? These ideals are behind the elite schools' strong commitment to offer a better education to the Muslim community in particular and to Indonesian society in general. As a society, I insist, Indonesians should respect these efforts and at the same time monitor them by evaluating these programs and their implementation. (Bambang, personal interview, interview, October 6, 2003)

Moreover, Sigit points out that:

If many Indonesian students go to an elite school in their own country, they will enjoy several advantages: first, they are still close to their family, parents,

sisters or brothers; secondly, they still hear the call to prayer (*adzan*) or attend religious ceremonies; thirdly, their money stays in Indonesia; fourthly, it will create job opportunities; and finally, many Indonesians will become teachers in elite schools. (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003)

In addition, Wahyu believes that "Indonesian elite schools can make students more competitive in terms of academic performance and at the same time, maintain the national and religious spirit, Islamic identity and tradition, and promote local culture" (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003).

5.2. Human and Financial Resources

It is widely believed that good human and financial resources are essential if schools are to provide a high quality of education. So far, "elite Islamic schools have better human and financial resources. They are proactive and more curious to learn, to accept, and to apply new concepts of education and methodology. They take innovative action in education, and they expect progress" (Sigit, interview, September 30, 2003). Ali also mentioned that:

> Elite schools have the capability to collect the large financial resources required to maintain high standards. They can employ teachers at a good salary. They can develop the quality of human resources -- teachers and staff -- by sending them to several training sessions. They can provide good facilities – buildings and infrastructure. And they can even create and develop centres of research and development in schools. The availability of financial resources, especially, can make it possible to afford some high quality educational enhancements. (Ali, interview, September 16, 2003)

It is evident that in elite Islamic schools the relationship between teacher and student is very close. Teachers will listen to what students have to say about their feelings and problems. They can be a mother or father, a friend, and a teacher. They learn from each other and try to be democratic and egalitarian. This situation is perhaps favoured by the fact that the teachers are themselves mostly young people, graduates of outstanding universities in Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, etc. and have a strong commitment to providing a good quality education. By using the individual approach, schools and teachers can improve students' ability, self-confidence, independence, and responsibility.

There is also a changing perception among teachers about students' success. School and teachers are starting to realize that students have different abilities and potentials. Some students have strong abilities in math, science, social studies, and language, while others are better in sports, music, art and drama, poetry, etc. Schools and teachers are beginning to respect their students equally, whatever their abilities. Wahyu, for example, told me that "every student is unique. We have to approach them as individuals, but they are all equal" (Wahyu, personal interview, September 15, 2003). Teachers can even learn from their students, who often know more about certain subjects, such as the internet, than they do. Many students at elite Islamic schools have a computer and access at home to the internet – this is still a luxury item in Indonesia and not widespread. Few teachers can afford to work on the computer to the extent that their students do.

5.3. Family Support

It is true that students attending elite Islamic schools are from wealthy families that place much value on physical and psychological development, which includes providing good nutrition, emotional affection, and facilities for learning. These conditions are essential to producing students who excel in academic achievements, character and behaviour, and life skills. Wahyu believes that "students from urban middle class families usually have good nutrition and advantages. They also adopt an urban culture and a modern lifestyle which indicates that they are more expressive, spontaneous, critical, creative, and democratic" (Wahyu, interview, September 5, 2003). For these reasons, Hasan concluded that "elite Islamic schools have a quantitatively larger chance to produce qualified students who can compete at the national and international levels" (Hasan, interview, September 23, 2003).

6. The Challenges of Elite Islamic Schools

In recent years, people around the world (and not just in third-world countries like Indonesia) have faced tremendous social transformations. These social transformations have mainly been driven by rapid developments in knowledge and science, especially with the growth of free trade after the Cold War. In the political

arena, democracy has begun to flourish as authoritarian regimes have fallen. At the same time, a world culture or global culture has developed. These social transformations have resulted in a new world that is open and competitive, bringing with it certain negative and positive aspects. Taken at face value, this means that everyone has the same opportunity with respect to production and quality. Therefore, in the future, people will be expected to work hard and be productive, and have the ability to innovate and compete with other nations. These changes must be anticipated by the government and society at large in order to eliminate the negative aspects of social transformation. It even presents a challenge to school managers, especially those in Islamic schools, to run a school that can compete with other schools, nationally or internationally. Based on my observations, there are internal and external challenges faced by elite Islamic schools when it comes to offering good quality education in terms of academic and non-academic performance.

6.1. Internal challenge

Social transformations have changed the behaviour of some members of the younger generation in Indonesia. As Wahyu and Bambang mentioned "they are more creative, curious, egalitarian and democratic, critical, open, self-confident and independent. They are a product of their time, and nothing can be done to stop them" (Personal interview, September and October 2003). However, while it is actually a positive feature to develop individual potential, Bambang explained to me that

> Our system and culture do not yet support the students' initiative to express their feelings, emotions, and knowledge. It is not our culture. Even the implementation of critical thinking, independence, and freedom of speech, democratic sentiment, egalitarianism and openness can threaten many people's positions and power. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

"This is happening because of the system imposed under colonialism, which continued under the New Order governments, that implements a centralized system supported by a rigid and strong bureaucracy" (Tilaar, 1998, p. 161). It stands to reason that educational innovations would become difficult once decisions are imposed from above. Even the teachers and administrators are part of the central government and therefore it was impossible to take initiatives (Tilaar, 1998). This

was obvious in the planning, arranging and supervising of the national curriculum –
to speak only of the education sector. Everything was centralized in Jakarta. The
government, for example, has developed a national curriculum and evaluation
process, but the task of implementing this policy in every single school in Indonesia –
with its 32 provinces and more than 1300 islands and all of the resulting
environmental, cultural and linguistic traditions – is an almost impossible task. It is a
top down policy imposed by the political and professional elite that ignores the
aspirations of those below, especially teachers, parents and society in general.
Therefore, teachers just follow the instructions in order to conform to government
regulations (Tilaar, 1998). Consequently, as Bambang states,

> Many teachers lack confidence and depend too much on the government.
> Teachers always ask for guidelines and instructions: they cannot afford to be
> creative or critical. How can a teacher educate students to have an awareness of
> democracy, openness, critical thinking, discipline, fairness, respect,
> responsibility, and the like if teachers never show them such behaviour in the
> classroom or school life? The task facing the government, teachers and the
> schools themselves is one of improving the quality of teaching and teacher
> professionalism. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

However, some elite Islamic schools that I observed have actually promoted greater
autonomy for their teachers. As Ali mentions that:

> Before the school year begins, we usually have a teachers' meeting to modify
> the curriculum and prioritize the content – we call it *bedah kurikulum*
> (curriculum operation), to cut and enrich it– in keeping with the needs of
> students and even in deciding which teacher is the most suited to teach certain
> content, which can sometimes overlap with other subjects (Ali, personal
> interview, 16 September 2003).

Thus, instead of blindly following government instructions, they transform them in
keeping with the needs of students and the school itself. This is a good way to make a
school more effective and attractive in terms of strategy and mastery of the content
and subject.

The next challenge is for the government – both the Ministries of National
Education and Religious Affairs – to provide teacher training schools and
professional development programs that offer modern pedagogical approaches,
strategies and integrated curricula. Integration does not necessarily pertain only to
secular and religious subjects, but rather, to how the curriculum can be applied to real

life in order to develop students' abilities, character, and life skills in the face of global competition. "Students need to know more than just theory: they need to be able to implement their knowledge in the real world and adjust to the situation in which they live" (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003).

6.2. External Challenge

The world is now entering a new phase in its development, i.e., that of a global village. This globalization, which is supported by free trade and spurred by advances in science and technology (especially information technology), reaches all aspects of human life in Indonesia as elsewhere in the world. The process of globalization affects not only global trade, but also political, social, and cultural life. Free trade extends into all aspects of the economy and tends to erase national boundaries. As a consequence, a variety of new regional as well as international ties are being created and communications between nations is being intensified.

Given this global competition, Wahyu identified some significant challenges for Indonesian education in the future.

> First, the position of Indonesian education in comparison with levels in the rest of the world and Southeast Asia is still low – it occupies the rank of 112. It is still inward-looking and not competitive with Asian countries like Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and even Vietnam. Secondly, the emergence of foreign-built international schools in Indonesia's largest cities which offer high quality education programs is another challenge for the Muslim community and Indonesian society in general. Thirdly, the Ministries of National Education and Religious Affairs still do not provide good teacher training programs that suit the needs of a global society. The question is, "How can Indonesian schools compete with the international schools which provide good instruction, a wide range of school activities and learning experiences, and professional teachers? (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003)

This situation should be anticipated by school managers and the Muslim community in particular by promoting high quality education programs with enhanced knowledge skills and instruction of English and other languages. If not, Muslim parents from the middle and upper classes will send their children to international schools. Furthermore, Wahyu mentioned:

> Professional teachers are very rare and teacher training programs very weak in Indonesia. It is difficult to find teachers who are expert in individual subjects

and pedagogical skills, not to mention fluent in English, all at the same time. ...
We realize that we don't have the tradition of English. But, we have to realize
that English is a key element in gaining success in the global era (Wahyu,
personal interview, September 5, 2003).

Rahman (government official), on the other hand, saw the next challenge for
elite Islamic schools as being that of making significant innovations in education
programs. Adopting an international curriculum and standards should be followed by
openness.

These schools also have to open up to diversity – something that has actually
existed for centuries in Indonesia – in terms of society, economy, culture,
tradition, race and religion. Thus, school managers have to accept not only
students from the Muslim community but also other religious communities and
teach students the reality of Indonesian society which is poor and rich, plural
and diverse (Rahman, personal interview, September 1, 2003).

He gave the example of Madania School, where:

The changing paradigm . . . to adopt international standards and opened itself up
to other religious communities should be appreciated as a maturation process.
They have developed a good concept of religious education by teaching certain
religions at school. Muslim students receive Islamic education, while other
students can receive Catholic, Protestant, Hindu or Buddhist instruction based
on their own belief. This is certainly caused by the fact that Nurcholish Madjid
– the founder of Madania School who is an inclusive Islamic intellectual with
respect to pluralism and diversity – has been used by school managers to attract
parents from the Islamic community or other communities to send their children
to this school. As a result, this school can develop religious maturity and be
respectful to other religious communities so that it will contribute to bringing
religious harmony and tolerance (Rahman, government official, interview,
September 1, 2003).

Diversity also becomes a source of power and strength. Sigit points out that:

Islamic schools should be open to people from the non-Muslim community –
even Chinese, who are mostly Buddhist or even now tend to be Catholic or
Protestant. Just don't force them to be Muslim. ...If students come from many
regions, such as Sumatra (Minang, Batak, etc.), Kalimantan, Java, and Sulawesi,
it can lead to greater enthusiasm in studying and create healthy competition
among students (Sigit,personal interview, September 30, 2003).

Based on his experience in having graduated from a Catholic school in Padang, West
Sumatra, he stated that:

It did not bother me to learn the Bible and Catholic tradition at school. But after
school, I went to the mosque, read the Quran and prayed five times a day. I

learned so much from this experience. Therefore, I became more tolerant of other people and religions. As a matter of fact, Islamic schools have to provide a certain amount of religious education, whether Catholic, Protestant, Hindu, or Buddhist, to students belonging to these faiths (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003).

Finally, there are two challenges should be paid attention by school organizers, government, and the community for improving the quality of elite Islamic schools and Indonesian education in general. First, they have to support students to express their feelings, opinions, and knowledge freely and critically. Secondly, they have to develop teacher training, teacher professionalism, and pedagogical skills; and finally, they have to be diverse and plural by opening their access to other people who is economically disadvantages, other ethnics and religious beliefs to make more competitive in the national and regional level.

7. Suggestions for Improving Elite Islamic Schools

Based on interviews with educational practitioners and government officials, I identified several aspects that required attention, among them: human resources; teacher training; professional development; elitism and social discrepancy; and school organization and management. Each will be discussed in turn in the following pages.

7.1. Improving Human Resources

Improving the quality of human resources is an urgent need. Bambang, for example, was especially concerned about the need to improve teacher training and professional development programs. He suggested that "teacher training institutions should teach prospective teachers with a variety of modern methods of teaching/learning that maximize students' potential, such as active learning methods, student-centered approach, multiple intelligence approach, and critical thinking" (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003). The fact that both the State University (formerly IKIP) and the State Islamic University (formerly IAIN) have been transformed from institutes into universities is a step in the right direction, but other universities that offer teacher training programs have to anticipate global competition and adopt new methods of teaching and learning based on the

development of global society. The changing paradigm, from teacher-centered to student-centered classrooms and the need to recognize their student's abilities and strengths have to be addressed by teachers and schools. Furthermore, Bambang also pointed out that:

> It is important to select the right teachers and principal. For me, teachers at the elementary and secondary levels should be university graduates with either a bachelor's or master's degree in education or they can be from other fields as long as they have a teaching certificate and capacity. (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003)

Meanwhile, Wahyu proposed some important requirements for hiring teachers.

> First, we are looking for teachers who have good and strong motivation and who can teach with heart and enthusiasm. Secondly, the teacher must hold a teaching certificate, with at least a bachelor's or master's degree in education or some other discipline. Surprisingly, most teachers in elite Islamic schools are graduates of public universities, such as UI, ITB, UGM, IPB, etc., and not of teacher-training institutions; only some of them come from IKIP and IAIN. Thirdly, the teacher has to be expert in teaching methods, his/her subject matter, and English as a second language – the last of which is necessary to compete in the globalization era. (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003)

Moreover, he suggested several improvements to elite Islamic schools:

> First, schools should provide teacher-training programs or professional development programs supervised by educational consultants and experts in school improvement, teaching instruction, curriculum development, school leadership, organization and management; second, schools should send teachers to attend workshops, seminars, or conferences on educational matters at the local and international levels in order to gain a broader knowledge and international experience; third, schools should make regular visits to outstanding national and international schools in order to update knowledge and pedagogy; fourth and finally, schools have to build and develop working relationship with international institutions and invite foreigners to teach in Islamic schools. (Wahyu, practitioner, interview, September 5, 2003)

The success of a school also depends on the principal who leads and manages it. According to Bambang:

> Principals need to observe, control, and supervise teachers when they are teaching in the classroom in order to assess accurately his/her teachers' abilities in terms of subject matter and leadership. Consequently, a principal has to reward teachers who provide good quality teaching. (Bambang, practitioner, interview, October 6, 2003)

Elite Islamic schools will be a success, if, according to Wahyu:

In the future, the principals function as CEO (Chief Executive Officer) who have vision and leadership in the company. They have the ability to choose good teachers and staff; and have the ability to build network and develop neighbouring schools and communities. (Wahyu, practitioner, interview, September 5, 2003)

It is not instructional leadership that is important, but rather transformational and collaborative leadership. A modern perspective might envisage teachers becoming more productive by having access to a wider range of skills, and being able to change roles, dealing with different age groups, curriculum materials and pastoral and leadership functions (Gleeson and Husbands, 2001).

7.2. Improving School Organization and Management

The success of Islamic schools depends on how school managers and communities work together as organizations. In accordance with the goals of modernization and globalization, Bambang suggested "Islamic schools need to develop a modern style of organization with open and accountable management in the areas of finance, wages and salaries, recruitment, promotion and reward" (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003). Even Rahman ventured the opinion that:

In the beginning, the school foundation, managers and investors have to clarify precisely each position, task, duty and responsibility. They should make regulations clear; be transparent, open, and accountable in terms of finance, promotion, reward, and resignation. They also should define clearly the regeneration and promotion process, especially as it affects the status of the principal, permanent or temporary teachers and staff. They should be open to any criticisms and suggestions from the public, especially parents and teachers. The public has the right to know how its money is being used, and therefore, the school foundation and manager have to be accountable to and report back to the school community -- especially to parents, who are the main support in developing school activities. (Rahman, government official, interview, September 1, 2003)

School leaders are thus very important. They will have to give the direction and find the balance. Teo, Tan and Lee (2004) said:

School leadership requires a thoughtful balancing of priorities. There will be many new ideas and plants that you will want to implement, especially when each of these is beneficial to your pupils. And in an environment where new ideas are always encouraged, there will be no shortage of ideas and suggestions from within the school, from the community and even from the ministry. But it

will not be possible, and indeed not desirable either, to try and run with all these ideas and suggestions at the same time. (Cited from Ng Pak Tee, 2004, p. 190)

The challenge for school leaders is to chart the direction and craft the strategy to be an excellence school orientation, innovative, and transparent.

7.3. Reducing Elitism and Social Discrepancy

Elitism is a big concern among government officials, educational practitioners, and society at large. It is neither a healthy nor a conducive environment for developing students' behaviour and character. To reduce elitism and social discrepancies, Hasan (government official) suggests that:

> Elite Islamic schools have to educate students to understand the real lives of people around them, by which they will learn that many in Indonesian society still live below the poverty line. Students have to be taught to have empathy for the poor, especially as the smartest among them may be subsidized to study in the same classroom. ...30% or 40% of the enrolment should be allocated to smart students from poor families. (Hasan, personal interview, September 23, 2003)

He believes that doing so will reduce exclusivity in such Islamic schools. As hard as it is to implement such a strategy, more attention has to be given to people who are economically unfortunate. Rahman, for instance, suggested that "at least 10 % of the enrolment ought to be reserved for smart students from poor family backgrounds. They should be exempt from tuition fees and funded by wealthy families who send their children to those schools" (Rahman, personal interview, September 1, 2003).

In the national context, Rahman proposed a new strategy that should be recognized by the government.

> The Indonesian government should immediately develop excellent schools, either in the general public school system or the ordinary *madrasah* system, that offer the same quality of education as these Islamic schools in order to provide better teaching and to decrease the gap between the upper and lower classes. (Rahman, personal interview, September 1, 2003)

Moreover, he expressed the belief that:

> In the future public schools and elite schools would offer religious education as part of their excellence programs, while the *madrasahs* would offer general/secular subjects in the same way. In this way, the dichotomy between general and religious education would be erased and Indonesian society would

be persuaded to support those school systems as portions of a national system of Indonesian education. (Rahman, personal interview, September 1, 2003)

Consequently, education is not only a government responsibility. Rahman claimed that "middle class society supports and develops elite schools, while the government supports and develops public schools and *madrasahs* in order to provide a better education for all members of Indonesian society" (Rahman, personal interview, September 1, 2003).

Community development programs can also reduce the elitism among elite Islamic schools. Sigit presents good examples started by Madania School and Al Izhar School.

> I am really impressed by the students of Madania School who collect money to renovate neighbouring public schools that are poor and lacking many facilities, in appreciation of their community as a whole. Al Izhar also invites and trains teachers from nearby schools in order to improve the quality of schools, to prevent drug and alcohol abuse, and to help students to learn faster. (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003)

Consequently, elite schools are not isolated from the communities in which they operate. But to achieve such goals a certain amount of creativity is needed. Creativity needs collaboration among students, teachers, and schools. Sigit also recommended that:

> If Islamic schools are successful, they should actually share this success with other schools: they should not go it alone, but disseminate and share their experience with other schools by building and improving community development programs. If they do, it will have a multiplying effect within society. (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003)

Another suggestion came from Ali who has created several programs in Lazuardi School, such as competitions in sport, art, science and math programs by inviting other schools, especially neighbouring schools, to participate in this program. As he explained:

> Students at Lazuardi School have programs to visit the poor and (areas of) rice cultivation and animal husbandry. It is an effort to teach children to understand the real life of Indonesian society and what that life is. This will also raise their empathy for what people do and what people have. We even teach teachers from neighbouring schools and extend an opportunity to these same schools to use our school's laboratory, science and computer facilities (Ali, personal interview, September 16, 2003).

In other words "the elite Islamic school should build sister schools and peer teachers in its environment" (Hasan, personal interview, September 23, 2003).

8. Summary

This chapter has presented findings relating to the conceptual, practical and physical challenges of becoming and being a good school in Indonesia from the perspective of educational practitioners and policy. Both practitioners and policy makers welcomed the emergence of these schools; however, these latter need to improve the quality of education not only for the sake of fulfilling the needs of students and parents, but also for that of satisfying Muslim society and Indonesians as a whole. Both practitioners and policy makers were shown to be of the opinion that elite Islamic schools should pay more attention to the development of, among other areas: educational leadership, management and organization; teacher professionalism; educational programs and curriculum instruction; reducing elitism; promoting diversity; and open access to other communities and ethnicities. In the next chapter, I will discuss and analyze some important issues emerging from the school community, practitioners and policy makers. From these discussions, I try to propose a new paradigm of Islamic education as a solution for better quality education.

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[1] Prisma (Prism) is a respected Indonesian journal published by LP3ES (Institute for the Information, Education and Development of Economy and Society).

[2] Mizan has been publishing and translating many Islamic books from English or Arabic to Indonesian in order to fulfill the needs of Muslim middle class.

[3] More discussion on discipline and its implementation at school can be seen in Munn, et.al. (1992).

[4] He identifies seven forms of intelligence: the linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences that are at such a premium in schools today; musical intelligence; spatial intelligence; bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence; and two forms of personal intelligence, one directed toward other persons, one directed toward oneself. Gardner describes intelligence as the ability to solve problems, or to create products, that are valued within one or more cultural settings (Gardner, 1983, pp. x-xi). This definition focuses on dynamic processes – problem solving and contributing to others – common activities in most classrooms.

[5] Active learning comprises many ideas, but basically it requires that students *participate* in the learning process. Active learning asks that students *use* content knowledge, not just acquire it. As Cameron points out, active learning techniques give more control of the learning process to students, which may slow or accelerate the pace of the class. With active learning, the class becomes a flexible learning environment keyed to the learning speed of the students (see Cameron, B.J., 1999, pp. 9, 15).

[6] Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural reproduction sees "the function of the education system as being to reproduce the culture of dominant classes, thus helping to ensure their continued dominance" (Abercrombie, Hill, and Turner: 2000, 82; Bourdieu and Passeron: 1977, 8-9, 10, 26, 31-36, and 59).
[7] This concept is related to his concept of cultural capital. Bourdieu claims that children of middle-class parents acquire from them cultural capital, endowments such as cultural and linguistic competence. It is these competences which ensure their success in schools (Abercrombie et al: 2000, 81; Bourdieu and Passeron: 1977, 30, 32, 210, and passim).

Chapter 6

The New Paradigm of Islamic Education in Contemporary Indonesia:

A Reconsideration

True reform requires substantive change. Many reforms fail because the existing culture of a school, a community, or a classroom resists change or is willing to change only superficially. Evans (2001) argues that dependency and adherence to the old culture are ubiquitous but that schools must be willing to let go of the status quo and venture into new territory before the positive results of reform can be realized (p. 510).

1. Introduction

This chapter is generally a discussion and analyses of the findings in chapters 4 and 5. The analyses are based on the perspectives of respondents – either with the school community, educational practitioners and government officials and the researcher herself. It is clear from the previous chapters that there has been a change in the paradigm of education in Indonesia. This chapter analyses this shift of paradigm by applying some concepts such as school reform (the Jossey-Bass Reader, 2001), school improvement (Hopkins, 1996), and school effectiveness (Sammons, 1999) to the current situation. The analyses are based on the perspectives of respondents, including those connected with a school community, educational practitioners and government officials – many of whom more introduced in the previous chapter.

My research into elite Islamic schools has convinced me that Indonesian Muslim society has to rethink and redesign the most fundamental aspects of its Islamic school system. This system must undergo restructuring or systematic reform in order to produce students who are knowledgeable in secular as well as religious subjects and who, while preserving their national and religious identity can compete with others in the global arena and act as leaders in their own society. The challenge facing the Islamic educational system is, therefore, to search for and to create a model of an ideal Islamic school and an ideal Islamic educational system. This model would address the philosophical foundations of Islamic education, school leadership and management, teaching and learning strategies, curriculum development, parent and

community involvement, and networking designed to meet the particular realities of a national development agenda while embedded in the specific school context wherever it is adopted. The present study attempts to address all these issues.

2. Creating a New Concept of School

As Indonesia moves forward, national education will be facing four challenges. First, it will have to provide added value, i.e., help to improve national economic productivity, growth and distribution in order to maintain and improve continuous development. Second, it must help Indonesia make the transition from an agricultural society to a modern one by ensuring sufficient mastery of the technology and information among the nation's human resources. Third, because global competition is very fierce, education must make certain that Indonesians possess the ability to produce quality goods through the development of science and technology. Fourth, national education must ensure familiarity with information technology like computers and the internet, which have made Indonesians so dependent on Western countries (Sidi, 2001).

Perhaps realizing the need to respond to such challenges, the Ministry of National Education which administers public and confessional schools – Islamic, Catholic and Protestant has been trying to increase the number and quality of schools. Sidi (Director General of Primary and Secondary Education) suggests:

> These schools (private, excellent or elite schools) should be considering and reflecting on some ideas. First, schools should be able to accommodate the various aspirations of society. These schools should not imitate the public schools funded by the government. Society is dynamic and always develops; therefore, school systems should be improved based on the aspirations of school communities or stakeholders. In the era of globalization, these schools are also expected to provide added value in the form of superior academic skills, quality and excellence. These characteristics are usually connected to religion, tradition, culture, etc. Indeed, the organizers of private or elite schools should always think in dynamic and creative ways. They should also be capable finding smart innovations and capable of implement them. (Sidi, 2001, pp. 46-47)

Learning from their experience, Islamic school organizers have to develop a new concept of education that suits the changes in social behaviour and the demands of global competition. As Wahyu (educational practitioner) was quoted as saying

above in chapter 5, Islamic schools have to maintain and improve on the qualities of the traditional boarding school (*pesantren*) such as independence, humility, brotherhood, and sincerity. Islamic schools have to produce excellent students, good citizens and potential leaders. Schools have to teach the reality of Indonesian society, which is diverse in terms of religion, race, tradition, and culture. Students have to learn that they live side by side with Protestants, Catholics, Hindus, Buddhists, etc. Moreover, schools have to teach students to be respectful of other religions, races, traditions, and to feel empathy for the poor. School organizers have to build good relations between principal, teachers, staff, students, and parents, and even with the community in the school's environs since barriers that isolate a school from the community must be avoided. Elite Islamic schools have to create and develop good models for other schools that have the same quality of education and build working relations and share ideas with neighbouring schools in order to improve their own quality. Islamic schools must not come to depend on government aid; they have to develop and empower on their own capacities, autonomy and community participation. Muslims, as the majority population, need elite schools as these provide high quality teaching and instruction in morality, behaviour, and life skills. Indeed, such schools can even reduce hostility and create harmony, dialogue, and pride in being Muslims. Elite Islamic schools should also offer subsidies to poor students and train teachers from neighbouring schools, or provide other help as needed (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003).

Several studies that have been done show that the *pesantren* has managed to survive and deal with the dynamic of social changes because of two characteristics or strengths. First, the *pesantren* offers a culturally grounded education that enables its students to learn totally/completely. And second, the *pesantren* draws strength from its emphasis on community participation which can usually be seen in the physical facilities and financial aid program. In terms of the first characteristics, the method of *bandongan*[1] and *sorogan*[2] are a reflection of the *pesantren's* commitment to total learning or mastery (Rahim, 2001, p. 150). In modern terms, total learning is the same as the concept of mastery learning. According to this concept, education is not only limited to the transfer of knowledge from teacher to students, but also includes

building the whole personality. In the *pesantren*, the *santri* (student) is not only educated in the cognitive domain, but also in affective and psychomotor aspects. Spiritual training and respect for one's teacher are emphasized. Students are motivated to imitate the good behaviour of the *kyai* or teacher. Students are trained to learn and to meet the demands independently. The *kyai* and teacher monitor and give directions or instruction on all students' activities twenty-four hours a day, in order to fit with the religious values developed in the *pesantren*. Therefore, the process of building students' personality is achieved systematically (Rahim, 2001).

Indeed, as mentioned in chapter 5, this government official offered some ideas for making schools more competitive and attracting more applicants generally. First, make the schools enjoyable and fun. Next, create an Islamic atmosphere, teaching values and traditions that will make each student happy, secure and peaceful, even as they welcome non-Muslim students (Catholic, Protestant, Hindu, Buddhist) into their midst. This of course also means that Islamic schools need to provide religious education teachers in accordance with students' beliefs. Islamic schools also have to produce leaders who are highly disciplined and problem solvers with a sound work ethic. Students need leadership not only in pursuing excellence in math, science, language, but also in social activity. Moreover, Islamic schools should develop networking and benchmarking among Islamic schools and with public and private schools, both Muslim and non-Muslim. "Don't operate in isolation, but instead communicate widely," is his advice (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003).

3. The Philosophical Foundation of Islamic Education

It is obvious that, if Islamic education and schooling are to adapt appropriately to the twenty-first century, the suggestion by Mr. Bambang (educational practitioner) in chapter 5 suggested -- "there will have to be a shift in paradigm in the philosophy of Islamic education from the traditional notion of learning as teacher-centred to the student-centred and active learning approach based on the tenet of modern cognitive science" (personal interview, October 6, 2003; see also Sidi, 2001). Methods like these place students at the centre of the teaching-learning process, while teachers act more as facilitators, observing and diagnosing the

factors that cause difficulties for students, as well as discussing problems and finding solutions for individual students or for the program as a whole. The learning process that has been implemented is based on a constructive approach that encourages pupils towards self-discovery, curiosity, understanding and an appreciation of reality or experience (Zamroni, 1998; Fachruddin, 1998).

In the future, Islamic schools should be allowed to pursue their own goals and improve performance in different domains with a variety of approaches. As Wahyu (educational practitioner) mentioned in the previous chapter:

> Each student is unique and has potential and ability. Therefore, schools have to educate students to grow up in a suitable environment with their own aptitudes and interests. Schools also have to show respect to and appreciation for every student. An individual approach is important to maximizing students' ability. (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003).

Schools should nevertheless avoid concentrating on only two intelligences, i.e., linguistic intelligence and logical-mathematical intelligence, which together may be categorized as academic intelligence. The multiple intelligences approach (Gardner 1993) and the individual approach should be considered and implemented in Islamic schools. As Sidi (2001) stated "we should begin to include the lesson or course that covered emotional intelligence. In order to develop the whole personality; emotional intelligence is much more important than academic intelligence" (p. 5). Goleman, in his book *Emotional Intelligence*, mentions that "IQ contributes about 20 percent to the factors that determine life success, which leaves 80 percent to other forces" (1995, p. 34). The other factors include the area of emotional intelligence. Besides intellectual and emotional intelligence, Ali (educational practitioner) pointed out in chapter 5 that "elite Islamic schools nowadays have been developing spiritual intelligence in their learning programs" (Ali, personal interview, September 16). Certainly, spiritual intelligence is one level above emotional intelligence.

Therefore, the Islamic school of the future school will actually be based on its capacity to improve the necessary talents of students, like the ability to act, learn and manage their future actively and independently. Future schools have to be responsive to changes in society and technology, especially information technology (Sidi, 2001, p. 6-7).

School authorities have to realize that each student is unique and has abilities that differentiate him/her from others. Therefore, teachers and parents have to offer more opportunities to students to improve their abilities and aptitudes. The involvement of teachers, parents and students in school management is especially conducive to the development of quality school education. This will not only help in the balanced development of students and gain the support of parents, but will also enable the school to effectively canvas the views of teachers.

Indonesia is one of the world's most diverse countries. Therefore, Islamic education in modern Indonesian society has to be pluralistic and diverse. In the previous chapter, both educational practitioners and policy makers/government officials encouraged elite Islamic schools to invite and accept non-Muslim students to study in their schools (Rahman and Sigit, personal interview, September 2003). The pioneers of this new policy approach are Madania and Lazuardi schools which have accepted non-Muslim students into their schools since 2002" (Wahyu, interview, September 5, 2003; Ali, September 16, 2003). It is hoped that, in the long run, this will increase the maturity, standards, tolerance and harmony among students, both Muslim and non-Muslim.

There are several important points that will have to be considered by Islamic school organizers in improving their institutions, and these all deal with quality. Quality in educational terms is not merely the quantum of knowledge imparted to students but also the degree to which they are able to utilize this knowledge effectively in meeting the challenges of tomorrow. The concept of quality should be reviewed and expanded in order to make it more relevant and innovative wherever it is applied. More recently, the parameters of quality education have come to be defined more clearly than ever before. Singh (1995) points to dynamic methods of teaching, developing a common school system, improving the quality of teachers and teacher training, developing democratic values, conceiving of education as human resource development, relating education to life, and science-based restructuring of society, are areas in which quality education can make a difference.

It must be realized that elite Islamic schools, in today's Indonesia, feel the pressure to develop a new concept of education that offers something different from

the old concept. As teachers and schools begin to focus upon that role, some social reconstruction and a more adequate framework will be necessary. "Their activities," according to Beare and Slaughter (1993), "will need to be based on a non-reductionist world-view, to adopt a cultural analysis which includes but goes beyond critique, and to draw up a set of educational goals and responsibilities that match *human* needs" (p.72). As the government official mentioned in chapter 5, "elite Islamic schools must open themselves up to new realizations about learning: that learning is enhanced by discovery, exploration, and joy, that learning comes from many sources, and that there are many diverse and individual ways to learn." (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003; see also Sidi, 2001).

We must consider the fact that any improvement to the quality of the Islamic education system is directly related to the education-development continuum, which requires that the education system be able to respond efficiently to the needs of the market. It has been observed however that wherever schools have been subjected to too rigid a control, this has resulted in too much bureaucratization, spoon-feeding, a lack of motivation and innovation on the part of teachers and heads of schools, and a work ethic geared to only the minimum level of efficiency.

Therefore, centralized education is no longer relevant. The approach to school-based management not only needs technical and financial innovations, but also (and even more) a change in the paradigm of responsibility in education, i.e., from the paradigm of education as the responsibility of the school to the paradigm of education and society having the joint responsibility of schools and society. In other words, for the future, education has to make a return to society as long as society maintains its commitment to education. Therefore, "education is necessarily connected to politics and is even a political issue" (Sindhunata, 2000, p. 13). Buchori, an Indonesian educationist and political party leader, suggests on the other hand that the educational orientation should be changed. "Educational authorities should give freedom of action to educators to develop new patterns of thoughts or ideas, especially the notion that curriculum development is only from cognitive domain" (Buchori, 2000, p. 29).

On the contrary, the freedom to plan, administer and innovate boosts the morale of teachers and other functionaries and contributes to higher levels of efficiency. As indicated by Terry and David (1986), people individually and collectively are the pivotal players in effective organizations. Good schools and school systems are populated by confident people who expect to succeed and expect others to perform to their highest personal level of competence. This shared sense of personal efficacy translates itself into pride in and commitment to one another on the part of both individuals and the organization. People feel that they belong to a meaningful entity and can realize cherished values by their contributions. We can conclude that the future performance of the elite Islamic schools will depend largely on how they re-position their philosophy and mission, strategies and practices, school restructuring and policies, types of school leadership and organization.

4. Curriculum Development

A curriculum is a plan for achieving intended learning outcomes: it is a plan with a purpose, focusing on what is to be learned and the results of instruction. In other words, it provides guidance to the teacher in planning and preparing for instructional alternatives to achieve desired outcomes. The experts' (Buchori, 2000; Tilaar, 1999) concern with the curriculum being used in Indonesia has traditionally been content-oriented. The knowledge required for development has always been the focus of the material dealt with by teachers and students. Ideally, however, the curriculum taught to the student should be based on academic considerations and the psychological development of the students. Students should not only learn what is required of them but also be stimulated to learn by themselves.

If the emergence of elite Islamic schools represents an attempt to provide high quality education through a progressive education movement, it is important that they recognize some of the ideas of curriculum theorists such as Taylor, Bagley, and Hutchins cited from Anfara and Stacki (2002). Taylor, for example, emphasized a more practical education in order to serve a business society better and operate schools efficiently. To Bagley, the schools must prepare students for a harshly competitive world while curriculum should become much more standardized with

local design and should above all be rigorous. Hutchins, on the other hand, states that education's aim is to lead people to know the good, and that the education that best fits a free people is a liberal one, i.e., an education that exposes the classics of culture and science to everyone (Anfara and Stacki, 2002, pp. xxiii-xxiv).

One alternative curriculum that may offer teachers a means of addressing the developmental needs and interests of adolescents is the established and comprehensive curriculum-integration approach that John Dewey defined. For him, a subject-centered curriculum that does not provide students with any opportunity to affect their surroundings should be replaced with a more dynamic and lifelike circular interaction – a student-centered curriculum. For him, the content of education and the structure of the school should be integrated into society (Cited from Anfara and Stacki, 2002, p. 5). As one educational practitioner was quoted as saying in chapter 5, "barriers that isolate schools from the community are to be avoided" (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003).

Therefore, the teacher's role is not to be a dispenser of knowledge but to be a guide who assists the student in using his or her own experiences and interests toward co-creating an engaging curriculum. The role of education is, therefore, to teach individuals how to become more interactive with their social environment in order to co-create that environment.

The implementation of a competency-based curriculum by elite Islamic schools is one way in which Dewey's ideals are informing this sector. As Ali was heard to point out in the previous chapter, "the many elite Islamic schools that are going ahead with a competency-based curriculum and preparing their teachers to understand its concepts are on the right track" (Ali, personal interview, September 16, 2003). Moreover, according to Sidi (2001), "this concept is based on the minimum levels of competence that should be achieved by students. Students cannot move to the next level unless they really understand the unit lesson that is required" (p. 15). Competency-based curriculum is, therefore, expected to ensure quality standards after graduation. In other words, it focuses on students' acquisition of specific competencies,[3] including a set of learning objectives that are stated so that their accomplishment can be observed in the form of specified learner behaviors or

knowledge. Minimum levels of achievement of these objectives are established as a criterion of success. Learning activities are geared to assist each student in acquiring at least the minimum levels of competence (Fuller, 1970 quoted by Hall & Jones, 1976, pp. 10-11).

Moreover, the students should be concerned not just with absorbing and regurgitating what has been taught them. The new concern is: "Are they learning what they need? The needs of pupils as persons are of concern. The concern is not only with cognitive gain, but with affective influences and affective gain as well. Students are concerned with trying to achieve this kind of gain, while teachers are concerned with trying to figure out how the world looks to a pupil, with what the pupil is trying to do or where he is trying to go. Such teachers are trying to discover the pupil's concerns. Hence their question: "Are pupils learning what they need?" (Fuller, 1970 quoted by Hall & Jones, 1976, p. 185).

To bring about Islamic educational reform, there is a primary need to disseminate knowledge of Islam and Islamic principles in all aspects of life to Muslim society. At the same time, the elites – principals and teachers – must be trained to understand Islam more deeply in order to advise on the formulation and implementation of Islamic educational policies. As one teacher was quoted as stating in Chapter 4, "a teacher in an Islamic school should not only master subject and methods, but also religion – even though we are not teaching religious education" (Rudy, personal interview, August 6, 2003). Successful implementation of the Islamic curriculum across all levels of schooling will be commensurate with the Islamic content of all messages through the learning-teaching process. The curriculum of the Islamic schools thus inculcates Islamic principles while conforming to national educational goals and standards.

In Islam, there is no segregation between religious and secular education, just as there is no segregation between civil and religious laws. They are inseparable and indivisible, nor should either aspect be overemphasized at the expense of the other. Islamic thinkers and leaders have by and large accepted the agenda of abolishing the duality that separates the religious from the secular. This is what underlies the integrated curriculum formulated by the elite Islamic schools, which attempt thereby

to bridge the gap between secular and religious and between school and community. Afzalur Rahman, for example, proposed that the curricula and syllabuses of Islamic education be designed along the lines of the beliefs and ideals of Islam, such as: *tawhid* (unity of God), *risalat* (prophethood), *akhirah* (the harvest of life), and *khilafat* (the human being as God's vicegerent on earth). They also should place special emphasis on, among other traits, the development of a balanced and integrated personality—growth of the individual personality along with a sense of social personality (Rahman, 1980). Moreover, Khan contends that the objectives of any Islamic curricula and syllabuses should aim at developing the Islamic moral values such as tolerance, brotherhood, love, mercy, goodness, and righteousness. In addition, the features of the curriculum in Islamic education should prepare the individual for every aspect of life by meeting the spiritual as well as material needs of the individual, develop necessary skills for exercising reasoning power and insight into life, and encourage understanding rather than memorization (Khan, 1986). Moreover, Islamic curricula should aim at building a society based on mutual consultation and the maximum exploitation of the individual's intellectual capacities, where individuals enjoy freedom of thought and are competent to take responsibility, and where they can live an ideal, pure and happy life (Al-Afendi and Baloch, 1980).

Indeed, Muslim scholars argue that the curriculum should not, therefore, be crowded with useless secular knowledge that is absent of values. It is in the simplicity and clarity of its values that Islam provides the enabling motivation for the individual to live his life while keeping to the straight path (Bajunid, 1997).

5. School Leadership and Management

Both leadership and management are essential to good school administration. Leadership relates to mission, direction, and inspiration, while management involves designing and carrying out plans, getting things done and working effectively with people (Louis and Miles, 1990). It is essential that these points be understood and implemented effectively in Islamic schools if the latter want to adapt to and compete with schools in other nations. Therefore, as Rahim (2001) mentions, "the leader of an Islamic school is expected to provide leadership, vision, notion, responsibility, and

strong managerial skills" (Rahim, p. 21). He/she should be an agent of change who works to create a school that demonstrates his/her faith and commitment in self-evaluation. The school leader ensures that the evaluation plan and future activities proposed as a result of any evaluation are duly taken up. Consequently, as Rahim (2001) proposes, the paradigm of Islamic school management should move from the old to the new, becoming more autonomous, decentralized, professional, initiative, participative, collaborative, diverse, and efficient. As the government official suggested in the previous chapter, the "elite Islamic school should implement more open management and give more access to the community in terms of planning, decision-making, promotion, budgeting, professional development programs, the teaching-learning process, and curriculum development" (Rahman, personal interview, September 1, 2003).

On the other hand, Sidi (2001) points out that the improvement of education management must focus on empowering the school as the primary unit of the teaching-learning process in order to make schools more independent, creative, and competitive. This would include sharing responsibility with the stakeholders, especially parents and the local community, by inviting them to participate as members of the school council. In its implementation, school management should be more open and accountable, maximizing the participation of parents and community, and also more capable of managing resources in the school and its environment to improve students' achievement and quality education in general. Indeed, the implementation of school-based management and community-based education is an approach to maximizing the role of schooling and to providing for the actual needs of any schools as a consequence of greater school autonomy (Sidi, 2001)

One of the latest techniques to make institutions more accountable is to introduce a system of school self-evaluation. In order to improve their efficiency, it is necessary for Islamic schools to undertake regular, periodical evaluation. According to Singhal (1995), school-based evaluation is, in effect, "a strategy of school improvement through a systematic diagnosis of the functioning of the school by its own personnel" (p. 184). It is designed to review periodically the different activities of the school with a view to taking appropriate corrective measures and giving it an

orientation that will raise its quality and efficiency. Therefore, school self-evaluation is essentially a participative exercise.

The role of the school organizer is thus not one of implementing innovations or even of providing instructional leadership for specific disciplines: there is a limit to how much time principals can spend in individual classrooms. The larger goal is to transform "the culture of the school," which according to Schein (1992), "consists of climate, norms, formal philosophy, customs and symbols" (p. 8). If successful, it is likely that some advanced model school of the future will show collaborative work among the school community. In addition, as Wahyu (educational practitioner) was quoted as saying in chapter 5, "School organizers have to build good relations between principal, teachers, staffs, students, and parents; and even with the community in its environs. Barriers that isolate a school from the community are to be avoided" (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003). The collaborative leader is the key to the success of future Islamic schools.

5.1. The Role of the Principal

To be successful in developing excellent Islamic schools, as pointed out by an educational practitioner in previous chapter, the principal must play a key role:

> A principal too must be aware of trends in global education. The principal will have to function as the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) in a company. He/she must be a leadership professional, demanding achievement and behavior that encourage him/her and his or her teachers and staff to conform to a vision of excellence. (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003)

The involvement of all elements at the school level –teachers, staff, parents and students – is prerequisite to the realization of an excellence school. The principal also has to have the ability to work together with teachers as a team and build networks with others. Moreover, the principal plays a role as an academic supervisor, in that he has to develop and improve the quality of teachers and other staff. Finally, the principals of Islamic schools are capable of building working relations with the government – whether local or national, educational experts and practitioners, and businessmen (Rahim, 2001; Sidi, 2001).

Indeed, in order to be able to translate this vision of excellence into reality, the principals of Islamic schools have to possess several abilities. The first of these is to be able to work with the teachers and staff to improve the quality of learning and to design and implement the school program based on a school improvement approach. In addition, they are also required to be able to support activities that lead to an improvement in the professionalism of teachers and staff -- a manifestation of their role as supervisor. The second of these abilities is to be capable of assessing a teacher entirely in accordance with school policy. Any such assessment has to be based on rational and objective guidelines that have been agreed upon by all of the school's elements. This assessment also serves as a means of learning of aspirations and suggestions, any individual problems that can influence individual activity, and other factors that have been a constraint on or that can serve as an encouragement to the implementation of excellence in schools. The third is to be able to formulate and implement a policy to support the learning process and maintain the climate of an excellent school. This is an endorsement of the array of educational activities that have to be established by the principal of an Islamic school. The fourth ability, guiding the day-to-day management of school resources, consists in using these resources to fulfill needs, to implement policy, and to plan new activities. The fifth ability is to be able to evaluate the management of an educational program on a continuous basis, and to gain information on how far the aims, needs, priorities and quality standards can be implemented and reached. The sixth is an ability to coordinate with others at the horizontal and vertical levels to determine the most effective use of using resources (personnel, time, finances, curriculum and activities). The seventh and last ability is to be capable of anticipating the risks or barriers that may negatively affect the quality of learning (Fachruddin, 1998).

5.2. The Role of the Teacher

The success of a school is mostly determined by the quality of its teachers. As Purwadi, et al. (1994) stated, "It was found that a positive correlation exists between teachers' training and student achievement. Students taught by trained teachers do better in the classroom than students taught by untrained teachers" (1994, p. 46).

Better teacher training must thus be given priority in any effort to improve the teaching-learning process or to make teachers more responsive to innovation and technology.

Several important suggestions need to be considered by Islamic school organizers in order to meet their goals of building an excellent school. In terms of the qualifications of instructors, Bambang and Wahyu (educational practitioners) propose several areas of teacher expertise: (1) teachers must have a bachelor's or master's degree in education or other fields but must also receive an education certificate or certificate of eligibility; (2) they must have mastery of the subject matter, teaching methods, curriculum, and language especially English; (3) they must possess a strong personality and commitment to teach and improve students' talents and potentials; and (4) they must have a sense of leadership, goals and values in education (Interview with Wahyu, September 5; and Bambang, October 6, 2003). Indeed, according to the World Bank:

> Reform efforts in both developed and developing countries assume that the most direct and effective way of raising instructional quality is to introduce changes in teacher education and recruitment, to improve the knowledge and pedagogical skills of in-service teachers, and to ensure that the organizational conditions under which teachers work promote effective instruction and focus on student outcomes. (The World Bank, 2005, p. 103)

A teacher teaches students, not a course; it is the task of the teacher always to take account of where students are and how to adapt the subject matter to those students, each of whom is different. As Wahyu points out in chapter 5:

> Each student is unique and has potential and ability. Therefore, teachers have to educate students to grow up in a suitable environment with their own aptitudes and interests. Teachers also have to show respect to and appreciation for every student. An individual approach is important to maximizing students' ability. (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003)

Knowing subject matter is one thing: how to adapt it to very different kinds of students is another thing. "Teaching is satisfying because it is challenging and demanding: it requires that you never forget your obligations to children and yourself, your values and your goals" (Sarason, 1993, p. 44).

The globalization era is usually associated with various key words, such as competition, transparency, efficiency, high quality, and professionalism. Global

society is also quite concerned about democracy, human rights, and the issue of the environment. Therefore, according to Sidi (2001), "teachers' role should focus on improving three basic intelligence of student, i.e. intellectual, emotional and moral/spiritual. Consequently, teachers should work professionally, so that their prosperity is guaranteed economically and their rights also guaranteed politically" (p. 38). In his view:

> Teachers have not only the role of a teacher -- their prominent function so far -- but also that of a coach, a counselor, and a learning manager. As a sports' coach, teachers motivate students to master learning tools, work hard and attain high achievement, as well as help them to respect the value of learning and knowledge. As a counselor, teachers have the roles of friend and model for their students, encouraging them to respect each other and to maintain solidarity. As a learning manager, teachers lead students to study, to take initiative, and to communicate their thoughts or ideas. With these roles, teachers are expected to improve students' creativity and support the innovation of science and technology, so that students are able to compete in the global society. (Sidi, 2001, p. 39)

An understanding and vision of excellent teaching are the first prerequisites to the development of elite Islamic school. In creating this atmosphere of excellence, teachers must demand openness and be ready to expend considerable effort in improving their own competence in the subjects that they are to teach, based on the needs and quality standards of all levels of the Islamic school and in accordance with the diverse requirements of individual students. The teacher has also to be ready to improve the teaching material, approaches and resources needed to support the educational development of his or her students (Fachruddin, 1998).

In this context, teachers have to exercise skills in several areas. They must first of all be able to diagnose student needs and teach in a way that is appropriate to the needs of individual students. This ability is a manifestation of the teacher's function as a counselor. Secondly, they must be capable of developing a teaching plan that is consistent in learning experience and procedure of assessment. Thirdly, they must be capable of communicating the knowledge and apply the pedagogical skills required for success in the teaching-learning process. Fourthly, the teacher must be able to maintain a positive learning environment, mainly by encouraging students to be active and dynamic in their relationship with the teacher. Fifthly, a teacher must

be able to report accurately and fairly on the progress of every individual student. This involves a process of assessment that has to be done continuously. Much of this depends on his or her ability in the planning and the implementation of the teaching-learning process. Sixthly, he or she must be able to devote attention to the student through mutual appreciation, support and understanding. This may involve praising the student who has achieved good results in a given subject or inspiring a student to improve his or her abilities in another (see Fachruddin, 1998). As Wahyu stated in chapter 5, "all of these types of expertise can be supported by participating in workshops, conferences, benchmarking, visiting exemplary programs, and reading and discussing professional writings" (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003).

6. Teaching and Learning Strategies

Teaching and learning are the core activities of a school. The shift from teacher- to students-centered education in recent years has had a dramatic impact on this process and on students' potential and abilities. In the student-centered approach, "the focus is on the students, not the teacher. Teachers create classrooms environments in which children explore and engage with materials and with one another to construct their own meaning" (Aaronsohn, 1996, p. 1). This was pointed out by Bambang, who was quoted in the previous chapter, "the student-centered approach and active learning makes more sense in that kids choose their own project, and talk to each other about the projects that they have studied, thereby sharing things on their own level" (Bambang,personal interview, October 6, 2003). An English teacher was also quoted in chapter 4, as stating "A good class is where everyone is working together in a positive way. We're helping each other out" (Nina, personal interview, August 5, 2003).

In the past, the student was only required to listen, accept all information, and obey the teacher's directives. More seriously, there was no correlation and integration of what the student might have studied in school with everyday life. Sidi (2001) recognized this and tried to propose a new paradigm and vision more relevant to the challenges of today's world. First, we have to change the paradigm of teaching to

learning. The process of teaching becomes the process of learning together between teacher and student. The teacher, in this context, is also included in the learning process. Thus, school, borrowing of an Ivan Illich (1971) term, becomes a learning society. In this paradigm, the student is not called a pupil, rather a learner (Sidi, 2001). The new paradigm of learning can also be seen in the vision of education for the twenty-first century introduced by UNESCO: (1) learning to think, (2) learning to do, (3) learning to be, and (4) learning to live together. The second element, still in the context of learning, is related to the method of teaching: in traditional classrooms, students are forced to memorize knowledge and accept all the information from teacher without having to think critically. Education becomes similar to what Paolo Freire called "the banking system, an activity where the teacher acts as a depositor and the student as a cash box. This kind of teaching method makes students less confident about expressing opinions, less creative and less independent" (Sidi, 2001, pp. 25-27).

In the future, Islamic schools will have to implement an effective learning approach that encourages students to meet the challenge of achieving a broader understanding and sparks individual students' curiosity to learn more about a given subject. Students can develop their own knowledge and skills, and understand the purpose of what they have learned. Therefore, learning is the process of interaction between the various kinds of knowledge that students have learned through their own experience, received by the creative exertion of individual students and from the environment.

The different rhythms and styles of learning all depend on an individual's potential, and these have to be recognized by teachers in implementing the learning process. Therefore, the interaction between the student and his or her learning environment is the responsibility of the teacher, who must create a conducive situation and support student interest and curiosity to learn things. Accordingly, any attempt to understand the learning process must deal with questions about the relationship between the learner, the teacher, the context, and the purposes for learning certain knowledge or skills. These queries inevitably lead to questions

regarding the role of social relationships within the wide range of individuals in the learning environment.

It can be concluded that Islamic schools need to implement student-centered and active learning. Teachers certainly have more knowledge and experience, but they are not the only ones who hold the truth. Truth can come from students as well. Therefore, the implementation of these methods should focus on dialogue that can motivate students to express their opinions about subjects and the information they receive. As one government official was quoted as saying in chapter 5, "The school environment should be fun and enjoyable and provide many extracurricular activities that should be widely available in order to maximizing students' potential and abilities" (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003). In this method, "a teacher must function more as a facilitator who invites, inspires, and stimulates his/her students to exercise their ability freely and responsibly. In addition, teacher and students should listen to other people's opinion, even though these may not be correct. In this way, we develop the listening culture" (Sidi, 2001, p. 28).

7. Competency and Evaluation System

We hear much these days on the perennial topic: Does education prepare children adequately for adult life? From one side comes the complaint that it is not vocational or practical enough to prepare good workers for industry; from the other side the demand is that it should do a better job of preparing them for leisure. Educationists, educators, politicians, parents and even ordinary people have posed another crucial question: Does education develop in children the competencies that parents want and that teachers believe schools should foster? The answer is usually that it does not. What is needed, therefore, is people who are able to initiate ideas or influence government leaders, policy makers and administrators.

In facing global competition, Indonesia's Islamic schools have to be clear on what kind of competencies students should have in order to meet the demands of modern society. Perhaps one of the most neglected competencies is "the ability to learn without instruction" (Raven, 1984, pp. 189). Our educational system, according to Sidi (2001), has made people so dependent on formal knowledge, from teachers or

books, that many people find it extremely difficult to observe and learn for themselves. The student's mind is bombarded with facts and his/her attention is directed to particular problems, thus destroying precisely the kind of sensitivities needed. Furthermore, the student is not encouraged to read selectively what is relevant to his/her own problem. Rather he/she must read diffusely, absorbing things which *might* one day be useful. To foster competence, "students should be helped to develop a strategy suited to observing and learning on their own. This would be dependent on making use of insights and minor feelings, on making playful use of unconscious processes and fantasies, and on delaying the evaluation of ideas produced by one's unconscious" (Raven, 1984, pp. 189)

Acquiring competence can be facilitated by creating "developmental environments" (Raven, 1984, p. 132). As an educational practitioner was quoted as saying in Chapter 5, "Islamic schools should focus on improving the ability to communicate, enquire, and discover. From the beginning children are accustomed to creating projects and presenting it in school. I believe project-based education makes students enthusiastic and improves students' curiosity and ability" (Bambang, personal interview, October 6, 2003). Raven (1977), in his book "Education, Values and Society" summarizes some of the results of one teacher's attempt to promote the general development of her pupils. This teacher organized her entire programme of work around project-based education, inquiry-oriented activities, and in- and out-of school visits.

> This approach permitted her to discover each of her students' distinctive interests and patterns of competence. These interests could lie either in the types of behaviours which made them enthusiastic (including, for example, such things as finding better ways of doing things, better ways of thinking about things, or getting a group of people to work together). The teacher was not only then able to promote the growth of many of the components of competence in relation to those interests, but was also able to tap different interests and motivations on the part of different pupils to fuel enthusiasm for developmental activity in her classroom. In this way she created an overall climate of enthusiasm and dedication which infected other pupils. She was also able to tap multiple motivations to fuel the activities of any one pupil. In this way, she was able to tap a wide variety of potential motivations, both within and between pupils, which are generally neglected in schools. (Cited from Raven, 1984, p. 138)

There can be no doubt that through these processes (project-based and inquiry-orientation activities) the pupils learned to value beauty and efficiency. They learned to value other people who had different values, pre-occupations and abilities. They learned to value research, and to link research with improvement in the quality of everyday life. They learned to treat bureaucratic rules as guidelines rather than requirements. They learned that in order to be effective it is necessary to take calculated risks. They learned to exercise discretion, to lead, to investigate, to build up their own picture of the world from scraps of information. They learned how to ask questions rather than only answer them. They learned to discuss, to speak effectively, to learn from others, and to communicate to others (Raven, 1984).

Evaluating educational progress is not only useful for measuring how much information has been absorbed: it is also a means to discover what factors cause the student the most difficulty in learning and to improve the ability of each student to achieve learning goals in accordance with his/her potential. The student must also understand what is to be measured, why this is being done and how the evaluation is to proceed.

In accordance with the nationwide implementation of competency-based curriculum in 2005 referred to above in Chapter 5, what is needed is a judicious and scientific method for assessing a pupil's achievements in all three domains of learning, i.e., cognitive, affective and psychomotor, at regular intervals and spread throughout the instructional year. It must be scientific in the sense that it has to be planned at the time of curriculum development, when interpretation of syllabus, clarification of objectives and determination of the tools of evaluation all take place. This does not mean that one should be satisfied with the average achievement of a pupil in a few mid-term in-house tests; rather, it demands an assessment of previously fixed specific objectives of teaching in terms of abilities, skills and attitudes by choosing suitable, valid and reliable evaluation tools.

An alternative evaluation approach – and one which could easily be implemented in the Islamic school -- is internal evaluation. Internal evaluation rests on two basic principles: first, that there are certain objectives of teaching that cannot be evaluated by an external written examination; and, second, that the classroom

teacher who remains in close contact with his or her students for a longer time and watches their daily performance in homework, assignments, cooperation with fellow students and other areas, is in a better position to comment on their academic performance and personality traits.

In discussing why internal evaluation is so very important to the overall assessment, Sidhu (1995) states that there are several factors to be considered. The first of these is the unanimity among educationists that teaching, learning and evaluation are interwoven, that they cannot be separated from one another. So the introduction of internal assessment means the integration of these three functions. Moreover, whoever has the right to teach, has also the right to evaluate.

Secondly, teaching has specific aims and objectives. The written external examination can evaluate only the mental ability, that is, the cognitive domain. But the objectives relating to abilities, skills, modification of behaviour and attitudes (non-cognitive domain) cannot be evaluated by way of external examinations: these can only be assessed by the teacher who remains in touch with the students for a fairly long period by employing suitable evaluation tools that are pre-suggested by the curriculum designers. The scope of internal evaluation can be further extended by making the marks/grades open to the students so that every student knows who is achieving his potential and who is not. In this way evaluation by fellow students and by the student himself can be taken into account, though only in an indirect way.

Thirdly, assessment of the students can thus be made under more natural conditions, since the fear or phobia of an external examination is not there. Students may also be assessed when they are working in collaboration, which is more akin to the situation in which they will ultimately have to work as adults.

Fourthly, internal assessment, like external examination, seeks to classify the students, but unlike it, aims essentially at their all-round development. Assessment is done from time to time with the aim of discovering the extent of their progress, their strengths and weaknesses and then of taking on that basis the necessary steps to bring about the desired growth.

It is assumed that the teacher has to be judicious, treat all the students alike and be competent enough to choose and use the appropriate evaluation tools. Yet in

addition to achieving effective implementation, there are various other steps to follow (Sidhu, 1995). The first is to identify objectives. The specific objectives of teaching each subject along with weightages are to be set forth and decisions regarding the objectives that are to be separately attested to by external and internal evaluation. The evaluation tools that are to be used for these assessments must also be determined beforehand.

The second step is to design formats, based on the objectives to be assessed and the evaluation tools to be used. These will provide guidelines to the teacher in testing and assessing the students. The third step is the training of teachers and administrators. At least one teacher of each subject from the school who opts for the introduction of internal assessment should be given training in the use of evaluation tools and formats. They should also be trained in conveying the internal assessment results to the students and their parents, and resolve conflicts, if any, by mutual discussion. The administrators of the scheme should also be involved in this training so that they can guide the teachers where need be.

The fourth step is to set up an internal assessment research cell. The main function of this cell would be to conduct surveys and exploit the results of internal assessment, building constantly on the experience gained each year. The teachers can thereby be given feedback to help them improve their evaluation procedures. Literature regarding internal assessment should be produced, published and supplied to the teachers.

By evaluating students in these ways, the elite Islamic school can facilitate what students already know themselves through their own potential, whether intellectual, aesthetic, ethical, analytical, critical, or derived from real life. In this way, the Islamic school can deliver graduates with the intellectual ability to compete and respond to developments, demonstrate foresight and critical thinking, and have self-confidence and exercise empathy all at the same time.

8. Parent and Community Involvement

Education is obviously a long term strategic effort. Changes and innovations in educational matters cannot be carried out spontaneously; rather, they must be

implemented in an intensive and strategic proactive way. To gain maximum results, it is time to consider that "education is not only the individual matter of formal educational institutions like school. Rather it is also a matter of society as a whole" (Sidi, 2001, p.4). In other words, school is to be understood as more than a formal institution; indeed, it can be everywhere especially the home and its environs. So, all aspects of life can be instruments and media of learning. This situation can provide a constructive and conducive climate for producing a learning society (Sidi, 2001).

Centralized education is no longer relevant. The approach of school-based management not only needs technical and financial advances, but also and even more a change in the sharing responsibilities among government, educators, politician, and society. Thus, education is not only controlled by the government. In other words, for the future, education has to make a return to society as long as society maintains its commitment to education. Therefore, "education is necessarily connected to politics and is even a political issue" (Sindhunata, 2000, p. 13).

Parents and the community play an important role in improving the academic achievement of children. Parents can become involved at the school itself, in learning activities at home, and in community-school relations. In determining under what conditions parent and community involvement is most beneficial, we have to understand the different forms of parental participation and their consequences for the student and other school personnel.

There is no question that family background and home situation make a difference. Students from privileged families - in terms of conditions that support learning - do better at school. As an executive director of Madania School and director of *madrasah* in the Ministry of Religious Affairs was quoted as saying in Chapter 5, "students from middle class family have good potential, physically and intellectually, because their parents provide good nutrition and facilities to support learning" (Wahyu and Hasan, personal interview, September, 2003). Thus, there is consistent evidence that parents' encouragement, activities, interest at home and in students' participation at school affect their children's achievement, even after the students' ability and family socioeconomic status is taken into account. "Students gain in personal and academic development if their families emphasize schooling, let

their children know they do, and do so continually over the years" (see Epstein, 1986, 1988).

There are at present various degrees of participation by the Muslim community and other potentially supportive agencies in schools. The simplest (and least proactive) is enrolment of the community's children in school, i.e., passive participation in the education service. Somewhat greater support includes parental encouragement and assistance to children at home (e.g., providing motivation, an adequate place to study, and help with homework) and passive support to the school through attendance at regular school meetings – where communication (often on issues of money) occurs between the school staff and parents. As one parent was heard to mention in Chapter 4, "Parents at Al Azhar School contribute their time and money to improve school programs and activities" (Ella, personal interview, August 5, 2003).

Somewhat more active involvement occurs when parents and perhaps other stakeholders are consulted by the school on particular issues, such as how to spend the school's budget, when to start and end the school day, and how to increase enrolment, retention, and completion. Even greater involvement, rarely achieved, results from stakeholder participation in the actual planning and delivery of schooling – sometimes through providing community experts to teach subjects, Islamic tradition or local culture, and occasionally through some input into the inclusion of local content in curricula. The highest degree of participation and partnership comes from actual community control of the school: participation in decision-making at every stage, from needs assessment to target setting, programmed implementation, budget allocations, and evaluation (Fachruddin, 1998).

Furthermore, it can be concluded that the establishment of more collaborative links with the community brings concrete benefits to schools and their staff. First, collaborative links with the community strengthen the technical attributes of the school. Community resource persons represent an enormous pool of expertise that creative people can tap. Second, strong community involvement makes schools accessible and attractive places and makes it possible to build political support across constituencies. As people come to know the schools and feel that they can contribute

to their success, ignorant criticism diminishes. Third, participation in school activities by adults other than school staff communicates an important message to students. If adults are willing to take time from their schedules to help schools, it must be an activity of some significance. Finally, collaborative activities shape the school-community culture encouraging a sense of concern about the quality of life that is so often missing in today's harried, noisy world. Fostering all kinds of involvement of school staff members in the community and of community members in the school sends a message to the school's neighbors (Wilson and Corcoran, 1988). It says, "We care about you, we want to know you, and we want you to know us. Thus, barriers that isolate a school from the community are to be avoided" (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003).

There are, however, many constraints to stronger community partnerships in education. First, in any bottom-up process, there is often a lack of clarity in terms of who is actually the bottom. Also, the so-called community is often not unified but, rather, riven by social, political, cultural, and economic heterogeneity and by the self-interest of local elites. Being a partner is also not cheap, and therefore a lack of community and family resources is often a constraint, made more difficult by the poverty and frequent passivity of those meant to be participating. Potential partners can also lack skills in collaboration. Often, too, there are organizational and administrative obstacles to the required changes or even the inability and actual resistance of individuals and institutions to change. The openness and transparency of schools and bureaucracies, so essential for greater participation, can also be problematic. Finally, conflict with traditional political and cultural norms and suspicions between government and civil society can also make the development of school-community partnerships problematic. In the overcoming of these constraints, various kinds of mechanisms can be established with a variety of mandates and powers; these include parent-teacher associations, boards of management or governance, and other types of school-parent community organizations.

9. Networking and Alliances

It is true that the rise of the global economy has been paralleled by the rise of a global communication network. Redesigning, restructuring, and reforming education programs can be facilitated by the development of networks among Islamic educational institutions, other educational institutions, governments and even countries. Islamic schools should be learning organizations whose goal it is to effect a major restructuring of education programs. Learning organizations should neither ignore nor attempt to dominate their environments. Rather, they must learn to live with them interactively. As part of a greater complexity, learning organizations require a holistic view to survive and develop. Land and Jarman (1992) capture this new mindset precisely:

> The reality of evolutionary success demonstrates that 'fitness' is not simply about adapting to an environment, but rather the continuing improvement in the capacity to grow and build ever more connections in more varied environments (we define growth and evolution as continuously making more extensive and increasingly complex connections inside the growing organism and with the varied outside environment. (p. 30)

Society, in Indonesia's new era, expects educational success to possess two characteristics. First, education must serve to develop networks of people. Such connections are vital because people cannot live separately; rather, they are interconnected one to the other. Therefore, people in the 21st century must be expert in developing sets of connections living as they do in a borderless world. Secondly, education has to produce good quality human beings who always improve their knowledge and skills (Sidi, 2001). Thus, as the government official was quoted as saying in Chapter 5, "Islamic school should build working relationship with other schools, community, and even with government. They shouldn't be isolated but share good ideas with other schools in order to improve education system in this country" (Sigit, personal interview, September 30, 2003).

No single institution, least of all schools, is in a position to "solve all of society's problems" (Fiske, 1992, 204). Schools may not be able to cure all social ills, but to succeed at all in their task of educating the next generation they must find ways of minimizing the negative impact of such problems on the teaching and learning

process. To do this, they must find new allies and build new kinds of connections to the communities of which they are a part. Therefore, as Wahyu mentioned in Chapter 5, "Islamic schools have to create and develop good models for other schools that have the same quality of education and build working relations and share ideas with their neighbouring schools in order to improve the quality of Islamic schools" (Wahyu, personal interview, 2003).

These alliances, therefore, are essential to learning organizations in dynamically complex societies. There are two reasons for this inevitable conclusion. First, the problems are too difficult for any one group to solve; moreover, whatever one organization does has consequences for all other relevant institutions, so agencies affect each other in any case (usually negatively or arbitrarily). Second, in education a variety of stakeholders usually insist on having a voice in what is happening. The choice is whether such involvement will occur as mutually isolated influences working randomly or at cross purposes or whether they will be developed through joint initiatives. Put directly, the complex difficulties of education for a learning society have no chance whatsoever of being addressed in the absence of alliances (Fullan, 1993, p. 93).

Incidentally, alliances, partnerships, consortia and collaboration all connote joint agreements and action over a period of time in which all parties learn to work differently and achieve qualitatively different results. Cooperation, communication, coordination all have their place, but do not go deeply enough. Schrage's (1990) definition of collaboration captures the idea nicely. "Collaboration is the process of *shared creation:* two or more individuals with complementary skills interacting to create a shared understanding that none had previously possessed or could have come to on their own" (*italic in original,* p. 40). Collaboration can be developed within the school, working with parents and community, inter-ministerial and inter-school district, or even countries.

A network can also be implemented by building university-school system alliances. As an educational practitioner was quoted as saying in Chapter 5,

> In the future, I hope the faculty of education of the State Islamic University (UIN Jakarta) develops a set of connections with Madania School or with other

> Islamic schools. Madania School can be, for example, an educational laboratory and research centre for developing an Islamic education system. (Wahyu, personal interview, September 5, 2003)

School systems and universities, as two learning organizations, can benefit internally and externally by cooperating each other. This is what will be required for the future. In post-modern societies, "all citizens must learn to cope with the forces of change on a continuous basis" (Fullan, 1993, p. 120). There are three aspects to these proposed university-school alliances: i.e., the concept of partnership (Learning Consortium as an example); professional development schools; and teacher leadership and mentoring. In any collaborative effort, however, each partner will have to be willing to change its own culture, especially in terms of how it relates to other institutions (Fullan, 1993).

The stakeholders in education, especially those in authority, often want other parts of the organization to become learning entities pursuing continuous improvements. District staffs expect schools to act that way, while governments want local districts and communities to do the same. Simultaneous top-down/bottom-up strategies must co-exist and reinforce each other. For organizations to be successful they must continually manage the constructive tension of 'fit' and 'split' operations – sometimes integrating, at other times decentralizing, and often doing both at the same time with respect to different functions (Pascale, 1990).

It is, therefore, possible to list the characteristics of network organization in the post-industrial world where conventional bureaucracy is slowly being replaced. These are relatively small units that mutually depend and operate in a collegial way and are not dominated by hierarchy or top-down mentality (Beare and Slaughter, 1993, p. 81). In order to manage the network, schools need "managers who will not be classical, hierarchically-oriented bureaucrats, but proactive, entrepreneurial, communicating in various languages, able to inspire, motivate and persuade subordinates, superiors, colleagues and outside constituents" (Beare and Slaughter, 1993: 82). These basic premises are now being developed in educational organisations. The first major proposition coming from the new paradigm is that schools must begin to operate in a mode consistent with the future rather than the past.

10. Summary

This chapter has presented discussions and analyses of the findings in chapters 4 and 5. The analyses were based on the perspectives of respondents – those of the school community, educational practitioners and government officials and the researcher herself. It tried to propose a new model of Islamic schools that is better adapted to the changes in social behaviour and the demands of global competition. These schools would focus on the development of academic, emotional and spiritual abilities, but at the same time have the potential to be fun and enjoyable. The challenges I described, such as how these schools can connect with and be open to Indonesian society, which is diverse in terms of economic background and religion, race, tradition, and culture, could be met as long as government, the community, universities, practitioners, businessmen, educators, and parents all work together and share responsibility for improving the quality Indonesian education. In the next chapter, I will present the conclusions and the implications for further research.

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[1] Bandongan A method of teaching that motivates students to learn independently. The *kyai* or teacher reads a book (usually in Arabic), translates, and explains it generally in front of students. The students take notes and are allowed to ask questions and more detailed explanation from the *kyai* or teacher.

[2] *Sorogan* is a method of teaching that urges/invites student to learn and understand thoughts and concepts in details. *Sorogan* helps students to understand the lesson more deeply than is achieved through *bandongan*.

[3] Competencies are composite skills, behaviors, or knowledge that can be demonstrated by the learner and are derived from explicit conceptualizations of the desired outcomes of learning. Competencies are stated so as to make possible the assessment of student learning through direct observation of student behavior. Learning objectives are known to the student as he begins a learning experience. The student also knows in advance the levels of mastery to be used as criteria of successful achievement (see Hall & Jones, 1976, p. 11).

Chapter 7

Elite Islamic Schools in Contemporary Indonesia:
Summary, Conclusions and Implications for Further Research

1. Modernity and the Development of Indonesian Islamic Education

Defeat in wars with Western powers in the 18th and 19th centuries led to the introduction into Indonesia of new types of educational institutions separate from religious schools. This induced a secularizing trend in Muslim educational institutions, which was later accelerated by Christian missionaries, who set up Western-style schools, and colonial rulers, who established schools propagating their imperial interests. Muslim leaders concluded that Muslims needed to establish their own concepts of freedom, education, progress, and modernity itself. They advocated the introduction of rational and empirical sciences into the curriculum, as well as popularization of scientific knowledge, and the teaching of foreign languages. They also enthusiastically preached the cultivation of science and the appropriation of the scientific spirit of the West.

The impact of modernity on Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia and the establishment of new types of Islamic schools in the various regions of the country were influenced by internal (national) and external (international) factors. The national factors were regarded as a challenge by the Muslims, while the international factors gave them confidence to take up the challenge by making it easier for them to include modern elements in their educational system.

After Indonesia achieved its independence, the government established the Ministry of Religious Affairs to run all religious matters including Islamic education. Since then the government has played a significant role in the regulation and modernization of Islamic education. The process, however, was more intensive and systematic in the period of New Order government, in line with its program of modernization.

A general feature of Indonesian education is the absence of a fully secularized educational system comparable to that of Western countries. This may be attributed to certain profound differences of belief and experience in the two religious cultures,[1]

and reflects Muslim hesitance to accept the full range of modern secular education in their educational system. In various ways, they have tried to combine or integrate the normative values of Islam with the general educational requirements of modern society. In Indonesia, their efforts have come to fruition in the recent emergence of Integrated Islamic Schools and the gradual metamorphosis of some IAINs into UINs (State Islamic University). Nevertheless, the Muslim middle class in particular should be credited with playing a major role in the founding of elite Islamic schools in the late 1970s and especially in the 1980s and 1990s.

2. Al Azhar Islamic High School: A Contemporary Muslim School

The interviews and observations I conducted reveal that SMU Islam Al Azhar (Sekolah Menengah Umum Islam Al Azhar or the AAIS high school) and other schools under the tutelage of Yayasan Pesantren Islam Al Azhar (The Foundation of Al Azhar Islamic Boarding School) function to provide educational services especially to urban Muslims in Jakarta. Both the educational content (including curriculum) and the forms of educational activity and services have been adjusted to the needs and interests of the urban population. The parents of students studying at AAIS are urban middle class Muslims who wish their children to perform well in science and yet, at the same time, to observe Islamic ritual practices and moral teachings, to be modern in outlook and to become good citizens. The presence of the modern and beautiful Al Azhar Mosque at the center of the Al Azhar education complex (compound) shows that this school seeks to promote the Islamic tradition and culture in everyday school life.

Al Azhar is an elite Islamic school that integrates the national curriculum and religious education equally. It tries to implement the ideal of Islamic education, which views knowledge as unified and God-centered, and ultimately trains the heart and character (Ahsan 1988; Halstead 1995 quoted by Kelly, 1997). Indeed, the school expects teachers to apply *tawhid*, a theological concept of the unity of God, to the integration of Islamic and secular knowledge in schools (Rahman 1980). The success of AAIS in the Kebayoran Baru district of Jakarta has furthermore inspired other Muslim communities to build Islamic schools of a similar nature, taking AAIS as

their model. Many foundations have in fact proposed working relationships with AAIS.

Despite its success, AAIS always has to work hard to improve its efforts and services. For example, although many people feel that the goal of preparing students for future schooling is being accomplished quite well in AAIS, they worry about two aspects of this goal: the educational ambitions of a significant proportion of their students and, the ability of many Al-Azhar students to succeed in their studies at university level. The concern is whether many students will end up having to work in jobs they have not been prepared for.

Moreover, despite the fact that most students practice Islamic rituals, embrace Islam's moral precepts, and have a strong social commitment, only a few of them really commit themselves to learning Arabic and religious subjects more deeply. To be well versed in Islamic religious knowledge and practices, students have to be fluent in Arabic and master religious subjects at the same time. But it is quite normal for only a few of the students in general high school to make the effort to deepen their religious knowledge beyond what they need for daily duties such as prayer, fasting and morality. In this sense, the AAIS high school is basically a general high school. It is not a school specializing in religious subjects. Students are not expected to learn Arabic and Islamic sciences as eagerly as they learn other subjects. Students who aspire to specialize in religious or Islamic sciences usually continue their studies either in faculties of Islamic and Arabic studies at the state and private universities, or go to study to Islamic universities in Egypt, Malaysia, Pakistan, India, Iran, Saudi Arabia or other Middle East countries. Moreover, parents who want their children to learn Arabic and Islamic sciences from an early age, to become religious experts or *ulama,* usually send them to a *madrasah* or a *pesantren,* which specialize in teaching these subjects, along with other general subjects including English. Modern Pesantren Darus Salam Gontor, Ponorogo, in East Java has been well-known since its foundation in the 1920s for its emphasis on mastery of English and Arabic.

Islamic School of Al Azhar has to be better prepared to face a variety of new problems and challenges, such as producing graduates who are able to enroll in recognized universities abroad. The school had to stop the O Level program, for

example, because of the financial difficulties and the limited ability of teachers to give instruction in English. Moreover, it seemed that the school foundation was not fully prepared to deal with the program. It still had to draw up guidelines to manage the implementation of international programs as such and it needed to provide more information to students and parents about the program.

Despite its good performance, learning facilities, and service, Al Azhar still has to work hard to pursue equally its several goals in education such as fostering a sense of community, teaching social responsibility and focusing on academic excellence. In view of the fact that most students come from well-to-do families of urban, middle class Muslims, it is particularly appropriate to emphasize building social responsibility and empathy with the poor, as well as reduce elitist attitudes among the students. Likewise, to prepare students to be good Muslims and good citizens could, to some extent, conflict with the idiosyncratic, independent, autonomous directions of adolescent growth, to say nothing of their aspirations to study abroad or work for international companies in foreign countries.

The school also has to improve its services and academic quality. The quality of the school has to be enhanced by more qualified teachers. It seemed to me that many teachers felt their responsibilities to be more than they could bear. More attention also has to be given to the development of rational thinking as a necessary major goal. This goal is not being fully met as yet. Critical thinking means the students' ability to critically analyze situations and learn from personal experience. And most respondents felt that the school is a secure and safe environment for students to study, nevertheless the school still has to pay more attention to many adolescent problems, such as the phenomena of brawling and drug use. Some student problems never seem to go away.

3. Elite Islamic Schools: Implementations and Challenges

The need for Muslim society to build elite Islamic schools that produce students who can maintain their religious and national identity even while developing their ability to adapt to modern technology is an important issue nowadays. Educational practitioners, experts, and government officials believe that elite school

organizers are making good progress in providing quality education and facilities. The change from teacher-centered to student-centered learning and active learning has begun to be implemented at schools. Teachers are hired based on academic performances, motivation, and skills in order to meet the needs of schools and society at large. Principals function almost as CEOs who have vision and leadership, who can work collaboratively with the school community, other schools, businessmen and even with government officials at the regional and national levels.

Nevertheless, educational practitioners and government officials still see elite Islamic schools as privileged and elitist because they are very expensive, independent and isolated from the society in its environs. These schools are also criticized for not being transparent enough in the areas of organization and administration. This creates conflict within the school community and with society at large.

Indonesia is a multi-cultural society. Diversity in terms of economy, culture, tradition, race and religion has been a reality for centuries in Indonesia. Therefore, in the future, elite Islamic schools should provide access to other religious groups, races and ethnicities, just as Catholic or Protestant schools have done. Elite Islamic schools should accept non- Muslim students, such as Catholics, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, etc. and students from other ethnicities. The policy will benefit the progress and development of the schools themselves. It will create favorable circumstances for students to adapt to a pluralistic society and cultivate the habit of working together with people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds. Moreover, it will lead to greater motivation and healthier competition among students to do their best in their studies. It will also inspire school management, including teachers, to provide better services, and to adopt continuously more modern approaches to teaching and learning, management and organization.

4. A New Concept of Islamic School

This study proposes a new model of Islamic schools that is better adapted to the changes in social behaviour and the demands of global competition. These schools should focus on the development of academic, emotional and spiritual abilities, but at the same time have the potential to be fun and enjoyable. Islamic

schools have to produce excellent students, good citizens and leaders in this country. Schools have to teach the reality of Indonesian society, which is diverse in terms of economic background and religion, race, tradition, and culture. Elite Islamic schools have to develop teachers' professionalism in the area of knowledge and pedagogical skills. These schools have to implement an active student- centered and multiple intelligences approach to learning. They should be accountable, transparent, and efficient. Islamic schools must not depend on government aid. They have to develop and empower their capacities, autonomy and community participation. In other words, school-based management and community-based management should be implemented in proactive, creative, and strategic ways. They should also open up access to other religious groups, races and ethnicities. Consequently, elite Islamic schools should be prepared to provide religious education teachers appropriate to their students' belief systems.

In developing the Islamic school, first of all, it is essential to change the paradigm of all educational organizers who participate either directly (such as foundations, principals, teachers, parents and communities), or indirectly (superintendents/supervisors and district offices of education) in both the Ministries of National Education and Religious Affairs. The old paradigm of the Islamic school as an auditorium (which still exists) needs to be reformed and to be shifted to a new paradigm, i.e., the school as laboratory. In this connection, principals and teachers are the prime factor, and so change must start with them. They, above all, need to have a clear understanding of the vision behind an excellence-oriented school and global education. The success of elite Islamic schools will depend on the understanding they have of the latter vision and on the extent to which commitment to excellence is shared among Islamic school organizers.

The principal has to have the ability to work together with teachers as a team and to build networks. The principal plays a role as an academic supervisor, in that he or she has to develop and improve the quality of teachers and other staff. Finally, the principals of Islamic schools should be capable of building working relations with the government whether local or national, educational experts and practitioners, and businessmen.

Teachers are role models for students in their learning. They need to demonstrate the right attitude and qualities, so that their students will be inspired to be bold and to be unafraid of making mistakes as they search for answers and solutions. One acute task in the education system is to promote constant innovation and experimentation in teaching itself. Teaching needs to be an exercise in creativity to discover new ways to spark questioning in the classroom, or to excite students to explore and to think through issues for themselves. If students are encouraged to be risk-takers, teachers must be risk-takers too (Hargreaves, 2003).

These efforts at reforming Islamic schools can only be successful if the school foundations and organizers, the communities, and the government have the same vision, the same approach to the task and the same appreciation of what is needed. They have to implement a policy that recognizes the problems and needs of the school and society at large – school-based development and community-based management – while at the same time giving each Islamic school the kind of autonomy it needs to reach its potential through innovation and creativity. In addition, the organization and management of a school should be accountable and transparent, just as the relationships between school organizer, foundation and investors have to be clear. All three have to support the Islamic schools with the resources needed.

The network or alliances concept, i.e., the grouping together of (usually) nearby schools, often around a core school, for the purpose of redesigning and reforming education programs is needed by Islamic schools to plan their own development and achieve their own goals and targets. Such a network can contribute in several ways to facilitating school management. Together they can mobilize community support and share common resources (a learning centre, specialized teachers, facilities, materials and books). They can also collaborate in needs assessment, data collection and data analysis. They can, in addition, increase the efficiency of administration and information flow (down, up, and across the entire education system), often serving as an intermediate (but more informal) layer of management between overburdened school foundations, district offices and often distant schools.

More importantly, perhaps, these Islamic school alliances can also provide continuous professional supervision and support, based on a larger pool of resources and talent and too often isolated teachers and schools. They can do so by promoting collaboration across schools in both curricular activities (e.g., teacher training, lesson planning, curriculum development) and co-curricular events (e.g., science, music, sports and other kinds of competitions). They can work together to improve the monitoring and supervision of school quality, and they can help overcome educational disparities among member schools by sharing available resources and providing extra services as required. More generally, they can work out their own alliance development plans and perhaps even promote the networking not only of schools but also of school-community partnerships, school-university alliances, and even school-business collaboration, leading to more area-based development activities.

Decentralization is key to reforming elite Islamic schools. Teachers and schools are then empowered to make their own decisions about how to do things. Parents and community also become involved. Borrowing from the practices of efficient business organizations, this theory assumes that "the way to get control over things is by connecting people to standards rather than by connecting them to bureaucratic rules or to procedural work scripts" (Sergiovanni, 2000, p. 21). Although these standards constitute "one best system" of outcomes applying to all students, teachers, and communities in a particular district, state, and province, or country, schools are free to decide how to achieve the standards. Principals, teachers, and parents can organize schools and make decisions about teaching that they think will best enable them to achieve the required standards, such as through standardized testing (Sergiovanni, 2000).

5. The Significance of the Study

I chose the title, "The Emergence of Elite Islamic School in Contemporary Indonesia: A Case Study of Al Azhar Islamic School, for several reasons. Indonesia has had a long history of Islamic educational institutions dating from the colonial period until the present. There are a number of historical and analytical studies that

concentrate on Indonesian Islamic education in the modern era. However, these studies have not critically examined the period 1970-2000, a time of significant development for the Islamic educational system. Moreover, these studies do not attempt a critical assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of these developments. Therefore, I used a case study approach to understand this particular case holistically and analytically. I wished to examine the historical aspects of the evolution and expansion of Islamic education, and the encompassing influences and impacts of modernity on Islamic education in Indonesia. By investigating the present conditions at one of the elite Islamic schools, I was able to gather relevant information regarding their character and culture; their uniqueness and complexity. Moreover, the study also identified the strengths and weaknesses as well as the challenges and limitations in developing the quality of schools and students. This research also demonstrated more accurately the position and role of Islamic education in the development of Islam in Indonesia.

The emergence of elite Islamic school began two decades ago as a result of Islamic missionary activity (da`wa), improved economic conditions, the growth of the Muslim middle class, and the fact of Islamic resurgence at a global level. The phenomenon has never been researched before. As an effort to draw a portrait of an elite Islamic school, the parameters of my investigation were limited to: examining the culture and values of the school that defines its curricular goals and institutional structure; leadership style; types of teaching-learning methods implemented in classrooms; teachers, staff and student performance; and parent involvement.

6. Limitations and Challenges

Constraints of time, financial and other resources did not permit me to visit every major city in which there is an elite Islamic school. This research project seeks to avoid a brief topological analysis which provides little substance. Instead, the research concentrated in more depth on an elite Islamic school, i.e., the AAIS high school in Jakarta, which is known to be the pioneer and innovator of the private excellent Islamic school system in Indonesia.

I believe this study differs from other, previous research. Creating a portrait of an elite Islamic school is one of the strengths of this thesis. Originally, I had wanted to cover the individual story and activities of Al Azhar Islamic School; however, as I mentioned above, constraint of time and finances meant that my presentation was not as deep as it should have been. For any future next study, it might be better if it focused on only one aspect of school activity.

In the course of drawing this portrait, I also attempted to 'colour in' some of the background. Thus, although participants did not necessarily expand on all aspects of religious foundation of such schools, I as an 'insider' in terms of understanding something of the cultural context, drew attention to this background so that the outside reader will also have a deeper understanding of the educational situation in Indonesia.

A particular challenge in writing this thesis has been to separate 'telling the story' of an Elite school to an international and non-Indonesia readership from engaging in an investigation of a particular type of school for the purpose deepening an understanding of the phenomenon of Elite Islamic schools in Indonesian society. In the first instance it was hard to refrain from being something of a tour guide, an issue that can arise within comparative studies. In the second instance, it was often necessary to engage in what Margot Ely et al. (1997) describe as "making the familiar unfamiliar."

7. Contributions to New Knowledge

There are a number of important contributions made by this study. It demonstrates that dissatisfaction with the prevailing school systems, whether religious or general, has been one of the driving forces behind the emergence of elite Islamic schools in Indonesia. In this case, it is almost similar to the current rise of Charter schools in the US, which is based on the opinion that the present educational system is no longer reliable (Sarason, 1998). Elite Islamic schools and Charter schools have both been created to satisfy the demands of certain educators, parents, and others in the community. The founding group has full responsibility for its governance, organization and purposes. However, elite Islamic schools in Indonesia

are fully funded by the community whereas Charter schools still receive financial aid from the American government. Unfortunately, according to Sarason (1998), Charter schools have no conceptual "road map" to sensitize them to or to help them prepare for and overcome (partially at least) the predictable problems they will encounter (p. 98).

The same critiques were also offered by Wahyu and Ali (practitioners) and by Hasan and Rahman (policy makers), as we saw in Chapter 5. Wahyu, for example, insisted that elite Islamic schools have no comprehensive vision that allows them to integrate educational concepts, present-day needs, and plans for the future. The only concern of these schools is to attract a certain class, admitted on the basis of either highly competitive examinations or ability to pay the tuition fees (Azyumardi, 2000). Thus, in reality, the elite schools of Indonesia remain an area that perpetuates class distinctions. However, there are some strategies that have been implemented to reduce such disparities. For example, the Lazuardi School has built a sister school for the less privileged in its vicinity; Madania School is helping to renovate a neighbouring school's building; Al Azhar School provides scholarships to poor but promising students; and Al Izhar School is training teachers from neighbouring schools to improve their professionalism (see above in Chapter 5 for more details).

Even though some parents in Indonesia feel they have to spend a lot of money to do so, preserving their children's identity as Muslims is very important to them. This is true not only in Indonesia but also in Western countries like Canada, the US, and the UK. As a means of comparison, it may be instructive to look briefly at Islamic schools in Canada. There are around 47 Islamic schools across Canada, five of them are in the Montreal area (http://www.mwlcanada.org/canada/schools.htm). It seems as though they share similar objectives and purposes as well as comparable curricula. They even have some similarities with specifically excellence-based or elite Islamic schools in Indonesia, such as AAIS.[2] These similarities are no a coincidence. Islamic theology and historical experience dictates a distinctly Islamic approach to learning and to the role of secular knowledge in this process. The Indonesian and Canadian experiences confirm what I mentioned earlier, viz., that Muslims have always avoided admitting the full range of modern secular education into their

educational schools, preferring instead to combine or integrate the normative values of Islam with the general educational requirements of modern society.

However, there are some dissimilarities or differences between elite/excellent Islamic schools in Indonesia and Islamic schools in Western countries such as Canada. First is the difference in social and historical context. Muslims in Western countries, unlike those in Indonesia, are a minority. Muslim schools in the West, including those in Canada, are a response to the crisis of integration. "Canadian culture is increasingly secularized in the context of modern industrial society ... [F] Canadians, ethnic and religious loyalties pull together against the demands of secular assimilation, ..." (Husaini, 1990, p. 10, in Spurles, 2003, p. 45).[3] In her study of an Islamic school in Montreal, Spurles (2003) observed that "the school distinguished itself from non-Muslim Quebec schools not only through the inclusion of obligatory Islamic-content courses, but also through other formal and informal practices and structures that characterized the space as culturally Muslim" (p. 50).[4]

Second, although Islamic schools in Canada are private schools, funded partly by fees levied by the school, and mainly by generous donations from Muslims, they also receive partial funding from their respective provincial governments. Accordingly they must follow education ministry curriculum guidelines, although they may incorporate additional classes such as Arabic, the Qur'an and Islamic studies. They also employ non-Muslim teachers and administrative staff (Spurles, 2003); www.bcmuslimsschool.ca; www.edmontonschoolmuslims.com/islamicsch). Elite Islamic schools in Indonesia are, by contrast, fully funded by donations from the Muslim community and fees levied by the schools. Nevertheless, despite being privately funded, elite Islamic schools in Indonesia are obliged to follow the national curriculum, whatever supplementary courses they may offer. There are, however, no non-Muslim teachers or administrative staff in these schools.

The question then is: How can Muslim communities elsewhere build schools that meet the needs of parents and society as a whole, especially in areas or countries where Muslims are a minority. It might be possible that the new model of Islamic school exemplified by AAIS could be adopted by Muslim communities in other

regions or countries. The success of such a venture would depend on a great many factors, but it would be worth investigating.

There are other potentially contributions made by this study. From a theoretical perspective, research into a school's character and culture is a complex, multifaceted task, requiring a contextual framework that includes a case study approach and field research concerning the educational policy and people involved. The present study provides important information for school administrators, the Muslim community, educators, and makers of government policy who wish to improve the quality of schools in Indonesia. The kinds of issues explored in this thesis add to our understanding of the educational and institutional resources needed to further the development objectives of Islamic education.

This thesis hence makes both theoretical and methodological contributions. The theoretical contributions are to our understanding of what constitutes a good school in absolute terms. Current theories on successful schools are inadequate and overly mechanical, assuming clear demarcations between levels of success. A successful school is not simply reflected in achievement scores, numbers of students attending college or university, literacy rates, or attendance records. It refers to the mixture of parts that produce a whole. The whole includes people, structures, relationships, ideology, goals, intellectual substance, motivation and will (Lightfoot, 1983). On the methodological level, the contributions are to the study and interpretation of the role of the new Muslim middle class in Indonesia and Islamic societies in general. Another contribution is the way in which it also allows us to explore the impact of modern education on the development of Islam in Indonesia. In terms of Islamic schools, this dissertation helps us to understand their character and culture: how they engage with global society, science and technology, and "modernity" and still remain faithful to the teachings of the Prophet. Throughout the Islamic world, education has become an important locus of debate about this problem (cf. Reichmuth 1993; Sperling 1993; Mottahedeh, 1985).

This study reveals the need within Indonesian society for a more comprehensive educational service. However, this kind of education requires a lot of money. In this case, the government has to make educational improvement a priority.

The existence of excellent public schools and model *madrasahs* in big cities, districts, and provinces should be increased by maximizing partnerships and alliances between government, university, school and community. Meanwhile, in villages or remote areas where people are not capable of raising sufficient funds and where community participation is very weak, the government should provide financial and human resources support in order to create good schools that are close, or even equal, in quality to the best public schools or private elite schools.

8. Implications for Further Research

The main advantage of doing a case study of a school is that the researcher can gain a better understanding of that particular school and its uniqueness. I learned much, both good and bad, from the people, the life and the culture of a school. Future studies, however, might also focus on how elite schools transform the culture in relation to human rights, gender equity, multiculturalism, and so forth. An area that is clearly of significance to all aspects of schooling is the extent to which gender equity is a feature of organization, curriculum and ideology more generally. In my interviews with teachers and policy makers, I did not pose questions specifically about gender, though I did note in Chapter 4 some of the differing responses of girls and boys to my questions. I also made some references to the female dress code at Islamic schools. Clearly an area for further research, both in the elite schools and government schools, is the extent to which women are being promoted to positions of leadership in such institutions, the extent to which schools can be central to promoting issues of equity, and indeed, the extent to which the interests of boys and girls and men and women are being promoted through professional development. In raising the possibility for further work in this area, I draw on the burgeoning body of research work on women and leadership in education by such scholars as Blackmore (1996), Reynolds and Young (1995), Reynolds (2002), Schmauk (1987) and Shakeshaft (2002), as well as a recent work by Collard and Reynolds (2005) entitled *Leadership, Gender and Culture in Education.* As well, a recent UNESCO (2006) study that makes strong links between women teachers and women as leaders and the progress of girls in schools.

I believe that elite Islamic schools need to begin to pay more attention to gender. I remember attending a one-day workshop on human rights issues at Al Izhar Islamic School (Observation, September 2003). The presenters included a social movement activist who at that time was studying at the University of London and a movie star who was actively involved in gender issues. They talked about the rights of people as citizens and the duty of governments to implement human rights regulations. Students (male and female) participated in discussions on how to react and solve the problems of recent rioting throughout Indonesia due to political and economic unrest. Indeed, this study addresses international concerns on democracy, human rights, gender issues, and multiculturalism from the perspective of Indonesian Muslims, since Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world.

This study has also raised a number of other pertinent questions and implications for further research. This study has essentially focused on school reform issues. In Chapters 4 and 5, I inferred from the participants that teacher training and professional development should be a priority. The responses to the study indicate that there are still many teachers who are not qualified in terms of knowledge, pedagogical, and language skills. There is also a correlation between students' achievement and teachers' ability and commitment. In this case, the most direct and effective way of raising instructional quality is to introduce changes in teacher education and recruitment, to improve the teachers' knowledge and pedagogical skills and to ensure that the organizational conditions under which teachers work promote effective instruction and focus on student outcomes (The World Bank, 2005). Utilizing the results of this study, how might a teacher education curriculum be developed that suits the changes of a global society? How would it be implemented in a teacher education program as a means of helping teachers become reflective practitioners? In addition, how might such a curriculum help prepare novice teachers for culturally diverse classrooms? Moving beyond conceptualizing the curriculum, further research is needed in implementing the curriculum, particularly in the Indonesian context.

This study covered some areas rather broadly and thus did not explore deeply enough several interesting areas, such as curriculum, organization, and the teaching

of Islam. Therefore, in the future, it could be more interesting to focus on only one aspect, like curriculum for example: How do Islamic schools accommodate both different curricula and interests – the government policy/requirements and the school's missions to provide good quality education and Islamic identity/character? How do Islamic schools integrate secular and religious knowledge at school? How do teachers implement it in the learning process? How values can be transformed? And how do students react to and perceive Islamic values?

At the beginning of this thesis I shared the aspirations and expectations of good Islamic schools. This study revealed that good Islamic schools had certain characteristics and attributes that other schools wanted to emulate. These attributes corresponded to their aspirations of becoming outstanding schools, accountable and transparent. Another implication of the study relates to the issues of decentralization, school-based management, and community-based management. How do Islamic school organizers and the school community in general understand those concepts and how do they implement them? And how far does it go? Another question raised by the study relates to the kinds of roles that should be played respectively by the school, university, government, and community in any partnership.

The research I conducted was limited to an elite Islamic school where the students spend most of their daytime hours and then return go back to their parents' homes after finishing their classes. There is, however, another type of elite Islamic school that provides dormitories for its students such as Insan Cendekia Islamic High School and Dwi Warna Islamic High School, both located in suburban Tangerang and Bogor. I think there is a need to conduct research examining this latter type of school in terms of implementation of ritual practices and moral attitudes as well as students' academic achievements and their level of independence. Students at Islamic boarding high schools spent 24 hours a day on the school compound. Are these schools more successful in their efforts? Do they achieve better results?

Despite some weaknesses, the elite/excellence Islamic schools such as AAIS, are still among of the best Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia. They can become a model for Islamic schools in Indonesia. But the main problem with outfitting such institutions is that it requires substantial financial support. It is hard for

the Muslim community in a small town, for example, to build such a school. One answer is for the Muslim community to build up existing schools, either private or public, according to the standards of elite Islamic schools. The government i.e., the Ministry of Religious Affairs, can increase the number of model *madrasahs,* since these have already been founded in some towns. Such efforts require a partnership between the community, the private sector and the government. It is expected that such as partnership will reduce tuition fees and make it easier for those at a lower socio-economic level to have access to better quality education. An increased number of public model *madrasahs* and private elite Islamic schools will also help to reduce gradually the gap between rich and poor in Indonesian society. Therefore, there is a need to conduct research into such possibilities, including the possible areas or regions in which the proposed programs can be started.

The discussion in this study of the evolution and expansion of Islamic educational institutions raises specific questions: Is there any possibility of extending the model of the excellence-oriented Islamic school throughout Indonesia, at least in urban areas? Can the successful experiences of the AAIS high school and other elite Islamic schools be replicated in other private and public schools in urban areas? The research also revealed the strengths and weaknesses of the AAIS high school as a pioneer of elite or excellence Islamic Schools. Is there a need for a model of an ideal Islamic school and an ideal Islamic educational system?

9. Concluding Thoughts

Elite Islamic schools exist as an alternative to publicly funded and government-controlled schools in Indonesia. They are also part of an effort to provide high quality education and religious/moral values. The fact remains, however, that these schools are expensive and thus only certain people can afford them, whereas in fact, the majority of Muslim families are still poor. The question is how Islamic school organizers can offer good facilities and quality education without imposing too great a financial burden on parents – all of whom have a right to expect a good education and high academic achievement for their children. Access to these schools is thus a key concern.

It is important for elite schools to increase the possibilities of allowing students from different backgrounds to attend these institutions so that the student population better represents the diversity of Indonesian society in general and Muslim community in particular. The Quran (Sura al-Ahzab/49: 13), for example declares: "O mankind, We (God) have created you male and female and made you nations and tribes, so that you might come to know one another. Surely the noblest of you in God's sight is the most pious". This verse upholds the principle of equality among the human beings created by God. In this verse Muslims have found sanction for egalitarianism of many kinds. Therefore, it could be used here to illustrate that Islam discourage Muslims to segregate themselves and set themselves apart from other Muslims or other members of society. Similar in tone are the several verses in which the Quran makes clear that sons and wealth, while they may be marks of precedence in this world, will be no assistance in attaining salvation in the next (Al-Shu'ara'/26: 88-89).[5] Thus, it could be argued that it is a paradox when an Islamic school only caters to an elite group, since Islam is a religion that teaches its followers to be sensitive to the plight of those who are needy and less fortunate. By taking care of the needs of the poorer classes, the school would indeed be teaching its students Islamic values, not only by words but also by deeds. As the Quran (Sura al-Baqarah/2: 177) says: "Righteousness is not to turn your faces towards the East and the West; the righteous is he who believes in Allah (God), the Last Day, the Book and the prophets; who gives of his money, in spite of loving it, to the near of kin, the orphans, the needy, the wayfarers and the beggars, and for the freeing of slaves; who performs the prayers and pays the alms-tax...." (Translated by Ali, 1989/1990; Fakhry, 1997/1998).

Therefore, there is a need for elite schools to further integrate this kind of philosophy into their practice, which could be done in a variety of ways, ranging from ensuring that a certain percentage of students get bursaries but perhaps other things like sharing resources (a learning centre, specialized teachers, facilities, materials and books) with local disadvantaged schools, having an outreach program, and so. Such a network can contribute in several ways to facilitating school management. Together they (elite and disadvantaged schools) can mobilize community support and share

common resources. They can also collaborate in terms of needs assessment, data collection and data analysis in relation to effective schools. They can, in addition, increase the efficiency of administration and information flow (down, up, and across the entire education system) by serving as an intermediate (but more informal) layer of management between overburdened school foundations, district offices and often distant schools. These strategies can strengthen disadvantaged schools and reduce elitism. An elite school can even adopt a 'sister school' concept which could inspire other schools to improve their quality of education.

In future, elite schools can play a greater role in producing leaders of society and the country who demonstrate a broader knowledge of Islam and who observe Islamic values. As explained in various parts of the thesis, Indonesian society has been affected by the process of globalization -- both in relation to progressive and retrogressive impacts. The removal of barriers to free trade and the closer integration of national economies can be a force for good and it has the potential to bring prosperity. It has given many people in the developing countries access to knowledge, and has reduced their sense of isolation by giving a greater sense of interconnectedness with people in other countries and places, including with Muslims in many parts of the world. It is important to cultivate among students an understanding of other people and culture dialogue. In addition to spiritual and moral values, elite Islamic school could educate their students to commit themselves to upholding social justice, equality, prosperity, democratic culture, tolerance and an inclusive attitude in national life. These are Islamic values as well as universal ones.

Indonesia is the largest Muslim population in the world. If education is the prime determinant for expanding Muslims' career opportunities, social status, and identity, therefore, all elements of society -- government, politicians, educators, the community, universities, and schools -- should make improving the education system and services a priority. The new concept of Islamic schools, therefore, should be supported by all. If it succeeds, it can improve the quality of Indonesian society and become a general model that can be adopted by Muslim communities in other cities, districts, provinces, regions, and even countries. To what extent can this model of Islamic school satisfy the needs of a global society which is highly competitive and

diverse? Are Islamic schools ready to accept non-Muslims into their schools? What are the advantages and disadvantages of diversity for Islamic schools, Muslims, and Indonesian society at large? These are questions that merit more research.

In an attempt to propose a new paradigm of Islamic schools as described in Chapter 6, I submit that the definition of a 'good school' is not necessarily related to how high the school fees are; rather, a school's effectiveness should be measured by how school organizers find new strategies to make all stakeholders, including parents, government, practitioners, businessmen, and community feel responsible for educational matters. Education should be carried on by all segments of society. Indeed, education is not only the individual concern of formal educational institutions like schools. It is also the responsibility of society as a whole. In other words, school need not only be understood as a formal institution; rather, it can be everywhere, especially in the home and its environs. Thus, all aspects of life can be an instrument and medium of learning. This situation can provide a constructive and conducive climate for producing a learning society.

If we look at the philosophy and the aims of education from an Islamic point of view, I believe that AAIS attempts to follow this framework in how it integrates secular and religious curriculum and instruction into teaching and learning processes in order to improve students' achievement and character.

After the Tsunami hit Aceh on December 2004, many educational institutions from primary to university level were destroyed. The Ministries of National Education and Religious Affairs took on the responsibility of rebuilding those educational institutions. The new model of Islamic school may well inspire Muslim communities in Aceh to build Islamic schools that suit their own customs and traditions. This makes not only cultural sense, but it is also practical if the ministries are to garner the support of the Acehnese people in sustaining these schools. Acehnese society should be involved directly in designing the school system and its implementation. The government, in this case, should limit itself to giving financial support and to supervising the administrative side.

The more that schools can provide for children's needs -- for food, uniforms, text-books and guidance -- the more we can lessen the burden on families and allow them to focus on rebuilding their lives. "Schools are often the heart of a community, so this effort to get them up and running has real impact on the long-term recovery effort. For many people who are hurting, a busy schoolyard is the best medicine" (Bellamy, UNICEF News, January 15, 2005). What this study has meant to me is that it has allowed me to look critically at quality education as not only determined by material resources or funding but also by the vision of school leaders and society as to what constitutes excellence. We need to know more about how people define their own leadership and how they implement their educational goals in reality. This is the challenge.

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[1] The differences of belief and experience between Islam and Christianity are related to the relation between religion and state, to concerns with schism and heresy, and to the absence of any institution in Islam corresponding to, or even remotely resembling, the church in Christendom: no ordination, no sacraments, and no priestly mediation between the believers of God (see Lewis, 2002, pp. 96-106).

[2] For example Ecole Dar al-Iman in Montreal places emphasis on "love of knowledge and of their religious obligation as Muslims, motivating our youth to pursue their advanced studies. All the while preserving their own identity and allowing them to actualize the words of our prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him: 'Those that pursue the way of the knowledge, God will facilitate him the way of the paradise'. Thus, we bring our student to academic excellence and to the development of morality, social-consciousness and compassion"(www.dar-al-iman.org/).Cf.www.edmontonmuslims.com/islamicSch; www.bcmuslimschool.ca; and, www.iqraschool.com.

[3] Prejudice against Muslims as well as against any form of social or racial difference increases the pressure on them to assimilate. Most of them have difficulties to deal with a new culture and social system. They turned to Islam and the Muslim community for support upon their survival. Mosques and the Muslim community provide support and a sense of belonging (Hoodfar, 2003, 13). Muslim youth in Canada who is committed to maintaining an Islamic lifestyle, experience negative social pressures that are contradictory to their faith such as dating, premarital sex, alcohol and drug uses, as well as racism and discrimination (Zine, 2001).

[4] An interesting study conducted by Zine (2000) shows how Muslim students who enrolled in secular public schools use their social organization in schools to represent nascent forms of Islamic subcultures and utilizes, to varying extents, the politics of resistance to counteract their marginality and subordination as a religious minority in a secular public school system. This 'formalized resistance' is

a strategy used by Muslim students to resist marginalization and develop the institutional conditions necessary for the development of an Islamic subculture in schools.
[5] "The day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail except for him who comes to Allah with a pure heart."

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Appendix A

Certificate of Ethical Acceptability

MCGILL UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Received

MAY 1 2 2003

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL ACCEPTABILITY FOR
FUNDED AND NON FUNDED RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMANSiversity
Faculty of Education

The Faculty of Education Ethics Review Committee consists of 6 members appointed by the Faculty of Education Nominating Committee, an appointed member from the community and the Associate Dean (Academic Programs, Graduate Studies and Research) who is the Chair of this Ethics Review Board.

The undersigned considered the application for certification of the ethical acceptability of the project entitled: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN CONTEMPORARY INDONESIA
as proposed by:

Applicant's Name   Nurlena Rifai   Supervisor's Name   Dr. Claudia Mitchell

Applicant's Signature/Date_____05-05-2003____ Supervisor's Signature _____

Degree / Program / Course   PhD Adhoc I   Granting Agency   C I D A

Grant Title (s)   Indonesia Project

The application is considered to be:
A Full Review _____   An Expedited Review _____V_____

A Renewal for an Approved Project _____   A Departmental Level Review _____
                                         Signature of Chair / Designate

The review committee considers the research procedures and practices as explained by the applicant in this application, to be acceptable on ethical grounds.

1. Prof. René Turcotte
   Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education

_____
Signature / date

2. Prof. Ron Morris
   Department of Integrated Studies in Education

_____
Signature / date

3. Prof. Ron Stringer
   Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology

_____
Signature / date

7. Member of the Community

_____
Signature / date

4. Prof. Kevin McDonough
   Department of Integrated Studies in Education

_____
Signature / date

5. Prof. Brian Alters
   Department of Integrated Studies in Education

_____
Signature / date

6. Prof. Ada Sinacore
   Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology

_____
Signature / date

Mary H. Maguire Ph. D.
Chair of the Faculty of Education Ethics Review Committee
Associate Dean (Academic Programs, Graduate Studies and Research)
Faculty of Education, Room 230
Tels: (514) 398-7039/398-2183 Fax: (514) 398-1527

_____
Signature / date

Appendix B

Consent Form
For School Community

Greetings,

My name is Nurlena Rifai. I am a PhD student at the Faculty of Education McGill University, Montreal-Canada. I am currently planning to do my research project for writing my dissertation. The title of my thesis is "An Ethnographic Case Study of Islamic Education in Contemporary Indonesia".

Through this research I will investigate the student performance, school activities, and parent involvement. By exploring the strengths, weaknesses, limitations and challenges of Islamic schools of Al Azhar, my study will help with the improvement of Islamic School of Al Azhar in particular and national education system in general.

Because of the important of this study, I would like to invite you to participate in the study as a resource person.

As a person that has a connection with the Islamic school system, your participation is very important in this study. For further information about this study you can read the attached brief proposal or you can ask me questions.

Before you sign your agreement to become my resource person, I would like to emphasize that:
1. Your participation is on a voluntary basis, which means you are free to either participate or not to participate;
2. You might decide the time and place that make you comfortable to answer my questions;
3. You have the right to withdraw your participation at any time;
4. Your privacy and confidentiality will be highly respected.

After reading this page, please fill in the form in the next page.
Thank you for your attention and participation.

Sincerely yours,

Nurlena Rifai

Consent Form
For Practitioners and Policy Maker

Greetings,

My name is Nurlena Rifai. I am a PhD student at the Faculty of Education McGill University, Montreal-Canada. I am currently planning to do my research project for writing my dissertation. The title of my thesis is "An Ethnographic Case Study of Islamic Education in Contemporary Indonesia."

Through this research I will investigate the phenomena of the development of elite Islamic schools in Indonesia. The study will focus only at one school, i.e., Al Azhar Islamic high school in Kebayoran Baru, Jakarta-Indonesia. The study takes special note of several themes. These are: the school philosophy and mission, the curriculum and academic structure of the institution, the school organization and staffing, school leadership, teachers, teaching learning, student character, and parents' involvement. Furthermore, by exploring the strengths, weaknesses, limitations and challenges of elite Islamic schools, my study will help with the improvement of Islamic educational system in particular and national education system in general.

Because of the important of this study, I would like to invite you to participate in the study as a resource person.

As a person that has a lot of experiences in the development of Islamic educational system and in leading the Al Azhar Islamic School, your participation is very important in this study. For further information about this study you can read the attached brief proposal or you can ask me questions.

Before you sign your agreement to become my resource person, I would like to emphasize that:
5. Your participation is on a voluntary basis, which means you are free to either participate or not to participate;
6. You might decide the time and place that make you comfortable to answer my questions;
7. You have the right to withdraw your participation at any time;
8. Your privacy and confidentiality will be highly respected.

After reading this page, please fill in the form in the next page.
Thank you for your attention and participation.

Sincerely yours,

Nurlena Rifai

**An Ethnographic Case Study of Islamic Education
in Contemporary Indonesia**

Nurlena Rifai

McGill University, Montreal

I, _____ consent to participate in the research

project as described by Nurlena Rifai, knowing that the process will involve

participation in interview sessions, to be arranged at times and in places convenient to

me. I understand that individual data will remain confidential and that the real name

will not be used.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C

Interview Guides

Interview guide for principal

This interview guide is designed to help me collect information regarding the leadership style of the principal in the Islamic School of Al Azhar including his personal and professional experience, his vision, mission, and goals, role and responsibilities as a principal at this school. All responses will remain confidential. The data derived from this study will be coded anonymously and used only for analysis and scholarly publication. Your voluntary and informed participation is understood to indicate your consent.

1. What is the major personal, professional and occupational experience that you had prior to coming to the Islamic School of Al Azhar?

2. What is your primary reason for being principal at this school?

3. What are your role and responsibilities at this Islamic School of Al Azhar?

4. What are your mission, vision, and goals as a principal at the Islamic School of Al Azhar?

5. What are the unique expectations for you as a principal at this school?

6. What kind of school organization and staffing do you implement at the Islamic School of Al Azhar?

7. As an Islamic school, how do you consider the relationship between religious doctrine and educational practice?

8. What is the nature of the relationship between the Islamic School of Al Azhar and the surrounding communities?

9. In your opinion, what is the most innovative curriculum or teaching practice at this school?

10. What is the greatest source of personal/professional satisfaction at this school?

11. In your opinion, what is this school's most significant accomplishment?

12. What is this school's most serious unsolved problem?

Interview guide for Teachers

      This interview guide is designed to help me collect information regarding practical issues including personnel experiences, curriculum and instruction, workload, relationship with students and parents, training and professionalism. All responses will remain confidential. The data derived from this study will be coded anonymously and used only for analysis and scholarly publication. Your voluntary and informed participation is understood to indicate your consent.

1. What are your major personal, professional and occupational experiences that you had prior to coming to the Islamic School of al-Azhar?

2. What is your current gross annual teaching salary?

3. What is your primary reason for teaching at this school?

4. What is the most innovative curriculum or teaching practice in this school?

5. What is the greatest source of personal/professional satisfaction at this school?

6. What is your greatest source of discontent in teaching at this school?

7. What is this school's most significant accomplishment?

8. What is this school's most serious unsolved problem?

9. What your responsibilities, other than your teaching responsibilities, at this Islamic School of Al Azhar?

10. What are the unique expectations for you as a teacher at this school?

11. In your experience, how would you describe your workload at this school?

12. How satisfied are you with specific features of this school and your experiences in it?

Interview guide for students

This interview guide is designed to help me collect information regarding practical issues including students' experience, academic performance, and school activities and facilities. All responses will remain confidential. The data derived from this study will be coded anonymously and used only for analysis and scholarly publication. Your voluntary and informed participation is understood to indicate your consent.

1. How did you find out about Islamic School of Al Azhar in general?

2. What sources of information did you use in making your decision to study in this school?

3. What are the important reasons for choosing this school?

4. Why did you select such Islamic school rather than public schools, madrasahs, pesantrens, and private school within the regular school system?

5. What are your expectations of this Islamic school?

6. What aspects of this school do you regard positively?

7. How would you compare your academic performance at this Islamic School of al-Azhar to your previous school?

8. If your academic performance has improved, what factors do you believe have helped to improve your achievement?

9. Do you presently plan to keep in Al Azhar Islamic School for as many years as it is available? Why or why not?

10. How satisfied are you with the school facilities?

Interview guide for parents

This interview guide is designed to help me collect information regarding practical issues surrounding the implementation of Islamic School al-Azhar including organization, finance, regulations, facilities, instructional program, personnel and enrolment. All responses will remain confidential. The data derived from this study will be coded anonymously and used only for analysis and scholarly publication. Your voluntary and informed participation is understood to indicate your consent.

1. How many children do you have in Al Azhar Islamic School?

2. How long have you had one or more children attending this school?

3. How did you find out about Al Azhar Islamic School in general?

4. Why did you select Al Azhar Islamic School rather than public school, madrasah, or pesantren?

5. What are your expectations of this Islamic school?

6. Do you volunteer at this school? If so, what do you do?

7. What aspects of this school do you regard positively?

8. What aspects of this school do you think require improvement?

9. What educational challenges does your child face, if any?

Interview guide for school organizer

This interview guide is designed to help me collect information regarding the historical background of Al Azhar Islamic School and its vision, mission, and goals. All responses will remain confidential. The data derived from this study will be coded anonymously and used only for analysis and scholarly publication. Your voluntary and informed participation is understood to indicate your consent.

1. What is the historical and philosophical background of the emergence of Al Azhar Islamic School?

2. How does Al Azhar Islamic School evolve and expand? And how do you manage it?

3. What are the vision, mission, and goals of Al Azhar Islamic School?

4. As an Islamic school, how do you consider the relationship between religious doctrine and educational practice?

5. What aspects of this school do you regard positively?

6. What aspects of this school do you think require improvement?

7. What educational challenges does your school face, if any?

Interview guide for educational practitioners

This interview guide is designed to help me collect information regarding their opinion on the development of elite Islamic schools and the policy of Indonesian government for the improvement of national education system. All responses will remain confidential. The data derived from this study will be coded anonymously and used only for analysis and scholarly publication. Your voluntary and informed participation is understood to indicate your consent.

1. Why have elite Islamic schools emerged in Indonesia today?

2. How do you supervise elite Islamic schools in Indonesia?

3. What are your role and responsibilities for the improvement of elite Islamic schools in Indonesia?

4. What aspects of elite Islamic schools do you regard positively?

5. What aspects of elite Islamic schools do you think require improvement?

6. What educational challenges do elite Islamic schools face, if any?

7. What are your expectations to elite Islamic schools?

8. What are the strengths, weaknesses, limitations, and challenges of elite Islamic schools in Indonesia?

9. What are your suggestions for the improvement of elite Islamic schools and quality education in Indonesia?

Interview guide for government officials

This interview guide is designed to help me collect information regarding their opinion on the development of elite Islamic schools and the policy of Indonesian government for the improvement of national education system. All responses will remain confidential. The data derived from this study will be coded anonymously and used only for analysis and scholarly publication. Your voluntary and informed participation is understood to indicate your consent.

10. Why have elite Islamic schools emerged in Indonesia today?

11. How do you supervise elite Islamic schools in Indonesia?

12. What are your role and responsibilities for the improvement of elite Islamic schools in Indonesia?

13. What aspects of elite Islamic schools do you regard positively?

14. What aspects of elite Islamic schools do you think require improvement?

15. What educational challenges do elite Islamic schools face, if any?

16. What are your expectations to elite Islamic schools?

17. What are the strengths, weaknesses, limitations, and challenges of elite Islamic schools in Indonesia?

18. What are your suggestions for the improvement of elite Islamic schools and quality education in Indonesia?

Appendix D

Survey

Table 1. Al Azhar students' point of view on school emphasis

(Percentages)

Items	School does emphasize	School less emphasize
Preparation for post schooling job	70	39
Intellectual development	76	30
Preparation for everyday life	55	51
Character development	64	42
Spiritual development	88	19

Table 2. Why do Al Azhar students like their school?

Items	Percentages
Provides good spiritual experience	84
Provides good academic experience	88
Gives me a chance to graduate and get a good job	59
My friends are there	73
The school is Safe	63
Gives me a chance to participate in sport and extracurricular activities	79

Table 3. Single most important reason for liking their schools

Items	Percentages
Good spiritual experience	84
Good academic experience	81
Chance to graduate and get job	57
Friends there	72
School is safe	62
Sport and activities	73

Table 4. Student ranking of attributes important for popularity of female and male students

(Percentages)

Items	Female	Male
Spiritual	77	87
Good looking	73	52
Fun-loving	51	43
Intelligent	100	83
Harmonious family	75	67
Athletic	65	72

Table 5. Conformity of students' beliefs with Al Azhar's standards

(Percentages)

Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	No answer
If I know a student cheated, I should urge him/her to report him/herself	1	5	-	38	51
If the cheater refuses to report him/herself, I should report him/her	2	5	-	48	40
It is a sin if I do less than my best	9	28	-	31	26
I am happiest when I live in God's will	35	51	-	0	9

Table 6. Conformity of students' projected behaviour with Al Azhar standards

(Percentages)

Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
If I marry, I'll marry a Muslim	81	9	0	3
If I can afford it, I'll send my children to a Muslim school	57	33	0	4
When I am adult, the Quran will be The center of my life	36	49	0	7
When I am adult, my best friend will be Muslim	2	10	20	59
If I go to college, I'll go to An Islamic university	26	43	12	14

Appendix E

School Performance

Human resources and enrolments

Table 1. Teacher and staff profile

Status	Male	Female	Total
Permanent teacher	16	11	27
Contract teacher	2	-	2
Computer team	1	1	2
Administrative staff	4	-	4
Office boy	2	-	2
Cleaning service	2	-	2
Total	27	12	39

Table 2. The degree of academic staff

Degree	Male	Female	Total
Bachelor/Stratum 1	8	4	12
Doctorandus/Doctoranda	8	8	16
Master/PhD.	3	-	3
Total	19	12	31

Table 3. Teaching experience

No.	Length	Total	Percentage
1.	Less than 3 years	12	37 %
2.	3 – 5 years	6	20 %
3.	6 – 10 years	10	33 %
4.	11 – 15 years	3	10 %

Table 4. Enrolments 2003/2004

Grade	Program	Male	Female	Total
10	General	71	85	156
11	Science	32	26	58
	Social Studies	22	19	41
12	Science	25	36	61
	Social Studies	29	27	61
	Total	179	193	372

School programs and activities

Table 5. Intra-curricular activities (the Allocation of subjects and hours)

No	Subjects	Grade 1 General	Grade 2 Science	Grade 2 Social Studies	Grade 3 Science	Grade 3 Social Studies
1	Al Quran	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
2	Religious education	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours
3	Arabic Language	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
4	Indonesian Language	4 hours	4 hours	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours
5	English	4 hours	5 hours	5 hours	5 hours	5 hours
6	Civic Education	2 hours	2 hours	4 hours	2 hours	2 hours
7	National/World History	3 hours	2 hours	3 hours	2 hours	2 hours
8	Sports	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	-	-
9	Mathematics	5 hours	6 hours	4 hours	9 hours	2 hours
10	Physics	4 hours	6 hours	-	7 hours	-
11	Biology	4 hours	6/5 hours	-	7 hours	-
12	Chemistry	3 hours	5/6 hours	-	6 hours	-
13	Economics/Accounting	4 hours	-	7 hours	-	9 hours
14	Geography	3 hours	2 hours	2 hours	-	-
15	Sociology	3 hours	-	6 hours	-	6 hours
16	Anthropology	-	-	-	-	6 hours
17	The State Order	-	-	-	-	6 hours
18	Art education	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	-	-
19	Counseling	1 hour	1 hour	1 hour	-	-
20	Computer skills	-	-	2 hours	-	-

Table 6. The classification of school activity

Time	Duration	Explanation
0	6:45 – 7:00	Reciting Qur'an
1	7:00 – 7:45	Lesson
2	7:45 – 8:30	Lesson
3	8:30 – 9:15	Lesson
4	9:15 – 10:00	Lesson
-	10:00 – 10:15	Break
5	10:15 – 11:00	Lesson
6	11:00 – 11:45	Lesson
-	11:45 – 12:40	Lunch and Praying
7	12:40 – 13:25	Lesson

8	13:25 – 14:10	Lesson
9	14:30 – 16:00	Remedial
10	14:30 – 16:00	Enrichment
11	15:00 – 17:00	Tutorial
12	14:30 – 16:30	Extracurricular activities

Table 7. Extra-curricular activities

No	Type of Activity	Date	Responsible (Teacher)
1.	Islamic Studies Group	Friday	Moh. Soleh
2.	Pasukan Pengibar Bendera (Waver of Flags Group).	Wednesday	Moh. Satori
3.	Avicenna Science Club (AVC)	Friday	Diah Wiyarsari
4.	Al Azhar English Club (AEC)	Thursday	Moh. Nurahman
5.	Al Azhar Communication Media	Thursday	Rusvanely
6.	Voice of Al Azhar (VOCAL),	Friday	Nur Hamidah
7.	Traditional Dance	Friday	Ida Kusuma Wardani
8.	Al Azhar Childrens' Theatre Group	Thursday	Nur Inayah
9.	Softball	Sunday	Moh. Nurahman
10.	Basketball	Sunday	Moh. Satrowi
11.	Pencak silat (self defence)	Tuesday&Thursday	Zahrudin
12.	Karate (delf defence)	Thursday	Ida Kusuma Wardani
13.	Volleyball	Sunday	Wasri
14.	Table tennis	Saturday	Ngadiman
15.	Soccer	Wednesday	Moh. Satrowi
16.	Nasyid (religious song group)	Friday	Jamalullail

Students' Achievement

Table 8. The most popular programs and universities of Al Azhar graduate students

Year	Program	University	percentage
2002/ 2003	**Social science:** Germany literature Technology of Agricultural industry Technical system of informatics Archaeology Law Tax and customs office Psychology Sociology Management Accountancy Fiscal administration Finance accountancy Science of social prosperity	University of Indonesia University of Gajah Mada University of Pajajaran School of State Accountancy	62 % 19 % 14 % 5 %
2002/ 2003	**Science:** Law Dentistry Medical doctor Psychology Chemical engineering Industrial technology Food technology Technology of Agricultural industry Accountancy Chemistry Architecture Physic Forest cultivation Architecture technique Civil technique Machine technique Biology Shipping technique	University of Indonesia University of Gajah Mada Bandung Institute of Technology Bogor Institute of Agriculture University of Pajajaran University of North Sumatra University of Sriwijaya School of State Accountancy	39% 17% 14% 11% 7 % 4% 4% 4%

Table 9. The percentage of students' acceptance in outstanding public universities

Academic year	Science program	Social science program	Average
1997/1998	57 %	20 %	39 %
1998/1999	36 %	14 %	25 %
1999/2000	34 %	11 %	23 %
2000/2001	68 %	28 %	55 %
2002/2003	87.50 %	55.26%	71.38 %

Table 10. Students' Academic Achievement and Awards in 2002/2003

No.	Type of competition	champion	Level
1.	Science of socio-economic	II	Jakarta and its environs (Bogor, Tangerang, Bekasi)
2.	Biology	I & III	Jakarta and its environs (Bogor, Tangerang, Bekasi)
3.	Pre-Olympiad of Biology	II	South Jakarta
4.	Pre-Olympiad of Biology	V	Province, Jakarta
5.	Pre-Olympiad of Biology	-	National
6.	Selection of a model student	II	Province, Jakarta
7.	Paper work on environment	I	National
8.	Paper work on environment	III	National
9.	Poetry reading	I & II	Province, Jakarta
10.	English speech	I	Jakarta and its environs (Bogor, Tangerang, Bekasi)
11.	English poem	I & II	Jakarta and its environs (Bogor, Tangerang, Bekasi)
12.	Baseball & softball	Best	National
13.	Islamic teaching	I	Jakarta and its environs (Bogor, Tangerang, Bekasi)
14.	Religious speech	I	Jakarta and its environs (Bogor, Tangerang, Bekasi)
15.	English speech	I	Province, Jakarta
16.	All subjects/lessons	General winner	South Jakarta
17.	Pre-Olympiad of computer	III	South Jakarta
18.	Pre-Olympiad of physic	III	South Jakarta
19.	Pre-Olympiad of Chemistry	I	South Jakarta

Source: Book of education information 2003/2004, pp. 1-18.

Rules of Al Azhar Islamic High School

No	Nature of Misconduct	Penalty
1	Twice late and perpetual lateness thereafter	Sent back home with an assignment from a teacher due the following day
2	Failure to attend congregation of *Zuhr* (afternoon) prayer	Sent for home study
3	Failure to participate in *tadarus* Quran (collective recitations) in the morning	Reminded and counseled by homeroom teacher
4	Unaccounted absence from school without notice twice in a row	Homeroom teacher invites parents for a rendezvous
5	Failure to inform and/or give the invitation letter from the homeroom teacher	Another invitation letter is sent with warning
6	Skipping school without consent of teacher on field duty	Sent for home study and asked to sign an agreement
7	Failure to participate in school activities and/or ceremonies	Reminded and counseled by homeroom teacher and asked to sign an agreement
8	Failure to dress school uniform in accordance to guidelines	8.1. Report to teacher on field duty to be recorded. 8.2. Second violation will ask the student homebound to change uniforms.
9	Wearing tight clothing, in violation of regulations	Said clothing will be confiscated by the school and student will be asked to purchase new uniforms from the school co-op store. Confiscated uniform will be donated.
10	Bringing and wearing excessive make-up, bringing walkman, CD's, cassettes and activating cell phones during class	Said possessions will be confiscated by a teacher and returned to the student's parents/guardian
11	Failure to wear the *hijab* (headscarf) in the school's vicinity	Summoned by homeroom teacher
12	Sloppy wearing of uniform, un-tucked shirts, ripped pants	12.1. Reminded by teacher and reported to teacher on field duty. 12.2. Knit in the teachers' lounge.
13	Bringing or consuming food and/or drinks during class	Food and drinks are confiscated, punishment left to the discretion of the teacher of that class
14	Bringing sharp weapons, fire arms or weapons of that sort	Said weapons are returned to student's parents or expulsion
15	Bringing, distributing and consuming cigarettes in school environment	Sent for home study for three days
16	Keeping, bringing and consuming illegal drugs such as ecstasy and heroine	Said weapons are returned to student's parents or expulsion

17	Keeping, bringing and distributing pornographic materials	Sent for home study for three days
18	Impolite and confrontational towards teachers and staff	Sent home or expulsion
19	Vandalism of school property, damaging school cleanliness and sanitation	Asked to tidy-up and/or replace damaged properties or objects
20	Fighting or causing hostility and problems with peers or actions of the sort	20.1 Sent for home study 20.2 Sent to parents or expulsion
21	Extorting, threatening or coercing other students	Parents called and suspension for three days
22	Stealing	Parents called, stolen objects returned and suspension for three days
23	Spray-painting uniforms upon graduation	Administrative sanctions
24	Conspicuous romanticism	Home study for three days