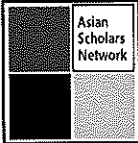


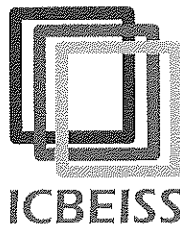
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Empowerment of Ma'ahad Tahfiz in Kelantan Through TVET@Tahfiz

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Abstract: *In Malaysia, the government's proposal to establish a comprehensive Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) plan to help the future workforce face the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Industry 4.0) has recently received a widespread attention with the emphasis on TVET. One of the comprehensive TVET plan is to empower the educational system at the Ma'ahad Tahfiz by the collaborating between the Community College and the Maahad Tahfiz. The purpose of this paper is to determine the importance of TVET@Tahfiz applying in Ma'ahad Tahfiz in supporting the 4.0 industry in the Tahfiz. This exploratory study suggests there are two main components that could affect the empowering of Ma'ahad Tahfiz through TVET@Tahfiz in Tahfiz field namely in the administrative and financial resources. This paper enhances the awareness to empower the Ma'ahad Tahfiz in TVET@Tahfiz in Malaysia perspective. Qualitative methods are used to assist researchers through the interviews with the management of the Kok Lanas Community College, Pasir Mas Community College, Maahad Tahfiz Pubimas Al-Amin and Maahad Tahfiz Al-Quran Darul Saadah. The study outcome pertaining to the Financial problems in private Tahfiz institutions have in fact been made public and have received the attention and feedback from the Central Government, State Government and the local community. Various initiatives to help upgrading the private Tahfiz premises and provide learning assistance to the Private Tahfiz students are being carried out by the Malaysian Government allocating a considerable amount of fund to assist the survival of Private Tahfiz in the country. Apart from that, the State Government through the Zakat and Baitulmal Body also allocates fund to assist the Private Tahfiz. However, some tahfiz who are too weak and drop out of the mainstream education is due to their failure to register their institutions with the authorities such as the Malaysian Islamic Development Department (JAKIM) or the Kelantan Islamic Religious Council (MAIK).*

Keywords: TVET, Ma'ahad Tahfiz, Financial resources, Industry 4.0.

1. Introduction

The on-going changes at work, the job itself and the development of advanced technology would certainly be that the employees ought to have an advanced knowledge of the job areas, elevated talents and optimistic attitudes. The advancement of new technology is changing the way the works are done and brought a change in workforce of the low skills criteria for a well-informed workforce of highly trained and highly skilled (K-Worker). The contemporary workforce needs employees with a high technical skills, as well as the relevant opportunity. To resolve the

challenges in an ever-changing work environment, society requires education and training commensurate with the prerequisites. Taking into account of the current latest developments, the workplace and the job itself the present and the future workforce generation must be well educated and well trained in the technical-vocational education, as a significant role in industry workforce production. Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) curriculum is structured to help the students excel (Bakar & Hanafi, 2007).

Tahfiz centers are divided into two, namely tahfiz under government administration established by the Federal Government or State Government and private tahfiz managed by individuals or organizations. In strengthening the education system of huts and maahad tahfiz, the government has introduced TVET @ Tahfiz Technical Vocational Education and Training to expose tahfiz students in the country with various knowledge and skills. About 300 of the 1117 Al-Quran tahfiz schools nationwide have introduced Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for their students as an added value to religious education at the institution. (Kemahiran: 300 Sekolah Tahfiz Perkenal TVET Utusan 4 Dis 2017, n.d.) TVET is the type of education that offers skills, expertise and attitudes to individuals for successful employment in particular occupations (Itohan Oviawe, 2017).

At certificate, diploma and degree levels, TVET programmes in Malaysia are offered by seven ministries, including the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), which provides the most TVET programmes to the largest number of students. Qualifications for the academic (higher education and technical education sectors provided by the universities, polytechnics, and community colleges of MOHE are currently accredited by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA), while skills training programmes offered by skills training programmes are currently accredited by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) (Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Malaysia, n.d.). This TVET@Tahfiz offer the students at the age of 16 years and above to join the Skill Courses offered by Community College through the collaboration between Community College and maahad tahfiz. In other word the students are at the secondary school level in general. Besides for students below the age of 16 years they are focusing on memorizing the Quran and the characters.

Therefore, the central of research objective of this paper focuses on to identify the perception of the management of maahad tahfiz on the application of entrepreneurial knowledge through Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in their institutions. The second research objective is to review the tendencies of maahad tahfiz students towards the courses offered by TVET. Then the third research objective is to know the extent of the implementation of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training system can be carried out in the institution depending on the financial resources.

2. Literature Review

Administrative Structure

Administration and Financial Resources of Tahfiz institutions that exist in Malaysia are administered by 3 parties, namely the Federal Government, the State Government which is responsible for managing of the Islamic religious affairs and the private sector or private groups (Yusoff et al., 2018). Darul Quran is the first Tahfiz al-Quran study institution established in 1966

administered by the Federal Government under the parent department of JAKIM. Darul Quran was formed from the brainchild of the first Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj (Ahmad et al., 2018). Tahfiz institutions under the federal government are fully funded by the Malaysian government. Apart from JAKIM, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) is also one of the government agencies involved in tahfiz education. KPM has developed the Tahfiz Integrated Curriculum (KBT) which is being implemented in several Government Aided Religious Schools (SABK). (Official Portal of the Federal Territory Islamic Religious Council, 2017). Meanwhile, Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA) is also an agency under the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development (KKLW) has also implemented tahfiz education at 5 Mara Ulul Albab Science Junior Colleges (MRSMUA) and 4 others are still under construction (Portal of Majlis Amanah Rakyat, 2016).

The administrative and financial management structure of the Government Tahfiz Center is managed by the Board or a Special Committee which is fully responsible for the progress and performance of the center. The power of administration is entrusted to the Head or Principal appointed by the assigned portfolio. Its members are made up of government officials at the central and state levels. 70% of them are from religious agencies. All expenses of the State Government Tahfiz Center such as teacher salaries, allowances, utility bill payments and so on are borne by the government through the State Zakat Fund or Baitul Mal. (Abdullah et al., 2005)

As for the Private Tahfiz Center, it is managed by a Board where 90% of its members are locals and 10% are government officials as well as politicians such as Qadi, District Officers and other local officials. Their appointments are made in their personal capacities. The administration was unsatisfactory as the board members are often changing jobs. All expenses of the Private Tahfiz Center depend entirely on the efforts of its Administrative Board through obtaining public contributions or donations and student fees (Abdullah et al., 2005)

The Malaysian government is very concerned with the current situation of the Private Tahfiz institutions regarding their financial problems. As such some fund is allocated in National Budget assist the Private Tahfiz institutions registered with the government to ensure their continuity of the institution in achieving the desire of all parties to produce a generation of professional huffaz. According the Budget 2020 has provided an allocation of RM 100 million to the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) for financing the maintenance and upgrading of registered tahfiz institutions, huts (pondok) and religious schools.

There is a 'one-off' assistance amounting to RM 21 millions will be channelled to all the registered with the authorities private tahfiz centers throughout the country (Harian Metro, 2020). This one off assistance is part of the RM 100 millions allocated in the 2020 National Budget to JAKIM. The one-off assistance was announced by the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs) Datuk Seri Dr Zulkifli Mohamad Al-Bakri, aimed at easing the burden of Islamic educational institutions affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Financial Resources

Financial resources are the most important aspect to ensure the sustainability of an institution. However, most private Tahfiz institutions which are not registered with the authorities have very

limited financial resources as the institutions operate with students fees collection as well as expecting contributions from the public and corporate bodies. (Abdullah et al., 2005)

Through data sources released by the Malaysian Islamic Development Department on 24 March 2019 in a media statement from the Director General of the Islamic Development Department of Malaysia/Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM) there are 908 privately owned tahfiz educational institutions in Malaysia registered under JAKIM and the number is increasing every year (Portal Official of the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia, 2019).

The development and establishment of tahfiz institutions in Malaysia is very encouraging nowadays. It is estimated that there are more than 1000 tahfiz institutions that exist in our country now. Of these, only 612 are registered with their respective state religious departments (The Malaysian Insight 2018). Meanwhile, JAKIM statistics state that there are 704 institutions in Malaysia but only 166 are registered with Darul Quran JAKIM. Local newspapers reported that the number of tahfiz institutions involved about 150,000 students (Utusan Malaysia 20 October 2017).

Table 1: Statistics of Tahfiz Institutions Registered With JAKIM

No.	State	Registered with JAKIM
1.	Johor	9
2.	Kedah	17
3.	Kelantan	10
4.	Kuala Lumpur	3
5.	Melaka	8
6.	Negeri Sembilan	2
7.	Pahang	8
8.	Perak	22
9.	Perlis	3
10.	Pulau Pinang	9
11.	Sabah	5
12.	Sarawak	1
13.	Selangor	65
14.	Terengganu	4
	Total	166

The request from parents who are interested in sending their children to Ma'ahad Tahfiz is more than the offer made by the government tahfiz. This causes parents to decide to send their children to private tahfiz as an available alternative to fulfill their desire so that children can memorize and appreciate Islamic education better. In this regard, the empowerment of private tahfiz institutions is seen as significant and appropriate nowadays so that the standards set by the government can be met in line with the National Tahfiz Education Policy/Dasar Pendidikan Tahfiz Negara (DPTN). (Muaz et al., 2020). Constraints on financial resources, poor education and deteriorating performance of tahfiz students are among the weaknesses that have been identified (Yahaya,

2018). In other words, the biggest issue in management is financial management because it involves the question of the longevity of a school (Muaz et al., 2020)

The issue of financial problems in Private Tahfiz also occurs in Kelantan. According to Mohd Amar (2017), most of the Maahad Tahfiz and huts (pondok) in Kelantan are experiencing financial problems because the institutions operate only on student fees. Following this financial problem, he called on all Maahad Tahfiz and huts (pondok) in Kelantan to immediately register with the Kelantan Islamic Religious and Customs Council (MAIK) and get the approval of the Fire and Rescue Department to ensure the safety of the residents. Apart from that, he reminded that unsafe huts (pondok) and Maahad Tahfiz need to be assisted and the owners or operators of Islamic centers need to ensure that the number of students in their institutions is appropriate to the size of the premises.

Table 2: List Of Maahad Tahfiz Registered With The Kelantan Islamic Religious Council (Maik) in The Year of 2019.

No.	District	Registered with MAIK
1.	Kota Bharu	21
2.	Bachok	3
3.	Pasir Mas	15
4.	Pasir Putih	6
5.	Tanah Merah	4
6.	Tumpat	3
7.	Kuala Krai	3
8.	Jeli	1
	Total	56

According to Nawi (2014), some of the Private Tahfiz are registered with the Majlis Agama Islam of their respective states and some are not. Some still exist and some have already ceased operations (Nawi et al., 2014). Therefore, the management of Private Tahfiz must take the initiative and proactive in registering their institutions with the authorities so that the financial assistance from the Central Government or State Government can be channelled immediately to ensure that tahfiz students are not left behind in obtaining benefits and facilities specially provided for them in ensuring that the effort to produce a generation of professional huffaz runs smoothly.

3. Methodology

Qualitative methods are used to assist researchers through interviews with the management of Kok Lanis Community College, Pasir Mas Community College, Maahad Tahfiz Pubimas Al-Amin and Maahad Tahfiz Al-Quran Darul Saadah. Qualitative methods are suitable for use by researchers to obtain information directly through questions posed to the parties involved.

4. Conclusion

Financial problems in private Tahfiz institutions have in fact been made public and have received attention and feedback from the Central Government, State Government and the local community. Various initiatives to help upgrade the private Tahfiz premises and provide learning assistance to

the Private Tahfiz students are being carried out by the Malaysian Government which allocates a considerable amount of fund to assist the survival of Private Tahfiz in the country. Apart from that, the State Government through the Zakat and Baitulmal Body also allocates fund to assist Private Tahfiz. However, some tahfiz which are too weak and drop out of the mainstream education are due to their failure to register their institutions with the authorities such as the Malaysian Islamic Development Department (JAKIM) or the Kelantan Islamic Religious Council (MAIK).

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