# Integrated Islamic Schools: Emergent Property, Branding, and Expectations of Urban Communities in Lombok

Emawati
*Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram*
Mataram, Indonesia
emawati@uinmataram.ac.id

*Abstract*- **Advances in information and technology increasingly require parents, especially urban Muslim communities, to seek an appropriate educational institution for their children. The needs for religious education and the knowledge and skills in information and technology are contemporary children's needs. Integrated Islamic schools have been developed in Indonesia since the reform era to meet parents' expectations. This study aimed to explore the development of an integrated Islamic school as an emergent property, branding, and expectations of Islamic schools. The research was conducted at SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1, Lombok, from 2018 to 2019. A phenomenological approach was used through observation, interviews, and documentation. The "autopoiesis system" theory by Maturana and Varela was employed as an analytical tool in this research. This study shows that the SDIT's concepts and practices demonstrating the school as an emergent property of Islamic educational institutions. However, those concepts seem to be the school branding. Nonetheless, urban communities in Lombok consider the SDIT's concepts and practices could fulfil their expectations.**

*Keywords: branding, expectation, emergent property, integrated Islamic school, SDIT*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Muslim society in Europe until today still experimenting to find the right form of education for their children. Islamic schools were established to eliminate the dichotomy that has been occurring between religious and general sciences. The term Islamic school becomes a new identity, it is not a madrasah and schools that integrate religious education and general education at the same time. Furthermore, the Islamic school was established to strengthen Islamic values in children so they always self-esteem as Muslims and at the same time they still get a modern education [1] [2] [3].

Meanwhile, the appearance of Islamic schools in Indonesia is a little different from the phenomenon of Islamic school trends in Europe. Islamic schools in the homeland as the new identity of Islamic educational institutions that are in very popular by urban communities after post-reforms are Integrated Islamic Schools (SIT), starting from elementary to secondary levels (SDIT, SMPIT and SMAIT) [4].

These schools explicitly refer to the institution by the name of an integrated Islamic school. This model is also referred to Islamic school for urbanites because it is growing rapidly in urban areas [5], including in the Mataram, as the capital of NTB, Indonesia. The terms of the school with name "Integrated Islamic School" which the reason for this research is to related the context of the meaning of the integrated Islamic term intended by the school and the expectations of the urban Muslim community. This is interesting to studied further because the community considers this school model is able to meet their educational needs for the millennial children [6]. The fact, even though the integrated Islamic label is in line with the expectations of the new community will be answer when the research focus is done. I adapted the perspective of the autopoiesis system theory which developed by Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela to analyze this problem [7] [8]. With this theory, schools are understood as a living system [9].

One integrated Islamic school that has existed in the city of Mataram is SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1. This school has become a locus of research because the school which was established by the Ibnu Abbas Integrated Islamic Education Foundation (YPIT) in 2006 received the grade A in school accreditation since 2012 until now and occupies the top position in terms of enthusiasts among schools and other private madrassah in this city. This is evidenced by the opening of 3 branches school in 2014 to accommodate the high interest in this school, namely SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 2, SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 3 and SDIT Al-Falah. SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1, now has established 4 groups study for each level with a total number of 661 students in 2019 (Interview with Lilik Sri Hartini, Deputy Director of SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram, on 2 July 2018). The concepts and practices of learning as well as school policy programs have a distinction between madrasah and other Islamic schools.

There has been some research focus on the development of Islamic education institutions and its' educational system, especially in current Muslim communities. Shah, S.F,. et al,. study the developments of Islamic educational systems in five countries (Egypt, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and

Turkey), and the links of those systems to the wider educational systems. Naturally, as a result of the massive changes that occurred in the Muslim world over the past 200 years, the shape and design of Islamic education varies from one country to the other. However, after reviewing the Islamic education system in various countries, it becomes clear that educational institutions in the Muslim world offer varying mixes of Islamic and general education. Islamic education faces challenges from within as well as the challenges that the system poses to communities and societies in the Muslim world and beyond. The examples of the government role with Al-Azhar in Egypt and with Islamic education institutions in Indonesia demonstrate that state supervision prevents the spread of such institutions in unpredictable directions [10].

Douglass and Shaikh describe many U.S. Muslim schools increasingly emphasize that students learn the meaning of passages in translation and the reasons behind Islamic practices, rather than simply memorizing the words and practices in Arabic without regard for understanding. Muslim educators in the U.S. widely believe that, in order for the youth to live as Muslims in a free society that places few outward constraints on individual behavior, students must truly understand and internalize Islam's principles, beliefs and practices, and learn how to apply them in contemporary society. Like other parochial schools in the American tradition of private schools, Muslim schools carrying out education for Muslims strive to achieve educational excellence, but also to integrate religious values into instruction across the curriculum and through service-learning in the family, the school and the community. In Islamic schools, educators deliver both "secular" and Islamic education. More accurately, these institutions may be considered Muslim schools, indicating the goal of living up to the standards of Islam, rather than implying its achievement [11].

Badawi argues that parents in North America have reasons for choosing Islamic schools for their children. He states that when parents were asked to give the single most important reason for choosing to put their child in an Islamic school, all of their responses had to do with one of the following: 1) Islamic environment, 2) religious education, and 3) preserving their children's religion and identity. There was an additional reason why parents prefer Islamic school is protecting their children from the negative influences of public schools; for example, drugs, violence, sexual promiscuity, and student behavior and attitudes [12].

Musharraf & Nabeel mention some research about parents preference in sending their children to Islamic school. Among of its reasons: to retain religious and cultural values; to avoid bullying and intimidation and to ensure their safety; to certain religious value e.g. Islamic concept of modesty

where gender segregation is required in certain cases such as mixed-gender physical exercises, swimming classes and difficulties in sticking to Islamic dress code. Finding of this study is most Islamic schools to be very young and in a stage where they are in the process of establishing and strengthening themselves. However, some schools that are really sophisticated well-established organizations, making strong contributions for Muslim communities. Islamic schools have to make their mark in coming decades, offer a competitive service and increase their ability to offer enrolments to broader community (Muslim and non-Muslim), they will need to plan their way to move from 'challenging' stage to 'stabilizing' and then 'professional' stage [13].

Prior research related to Islamic school in Indonesia was conducted by Ismatu Ropi. His focus of study is on the background, the objectives of establishment and curriculum in Islamic schools, Al-Azhar, Insan Cendikia, and Madania. These schools were built to answer the dynamics of interaction and the prevailing rules. Azyumardi Azra mentioned Islamic schools as new pattern of 'santrinization' in Indonesia and contribute the professionalization of Islamic education institutions in Indonesia [14]. They are not be related to Islamic parties and religious movements, thus be known as 'newborn Muslim' [15]. Bryner described the Islamic schools of Al-Azhar and Luqman Hakim Yogyakarta manifested piety project in learning and responses of students' parents [16]. Meanwhile, Hasan N. notes the integrated Islamic schools under JSIT were ideological organization of political parties (PKS) [6].

These studies have not specifically discussed the concept of integrated Islam that used in school name and the forms of learning practice of its concept as well as school programs designed to accommodate community's hope in more detail.

The qualitative inquiry will be conducted to investigate how Islamic integrated elementary school Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 have fullfiled expectations of community in Mataram. Within the phenomenological approach, this qualitative study seeks to understand and develop meanings [17] of emergent property of integrated Islamic elementary school phenomenon as the branding of Islamic educational institution in urban community in Lombok. The unit of analysis in this study is integrated Islamic elementary school Anak Sholeh Mataram 1.

The data source consisted of administrators of YPIT (Yayasan Pendidikan Islam Terpadu) Ibnu Abbas, the principal of SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1, teachers, students and parents. The data collection techniques iclude observation, interview and documentation.

Data will be analyzed through coding and analytic memo writing. Coding means organizing data

into categories based on themes, concepts, or similar features. Analytic memo writing is linking concrete data or raw evidence to abstract, theoretical thinking [18]. While doing this, researchers may develop new concepts, formulate conceptual definitions, examine the relationships among concepts, and link concepts to each other concerning a sequence, as oppositional sets, or assets of similar categories that are interwoven into theoretical statement [18].

## II.    INTEGRATED ISLAMIC SCHOOL: EMERGENT PROPERTY AND BRANDING

The  study is based on the perspective of the autopoiesis system theory which presupposes schools as living systems. Living system consist of organization, structure, and behaviour of its system. In this case,  the organization system of the school includes; the vision, mission, objectives, competency standards of the school graduates, and curriculum. While the structure of the school system includes the learning practices (plan, implementation and evaluation of learning). The behavior of the school system appears in school programs.

These elements can be analyzed by using indicators of the fulfillment of characteristics of living system, namely unity, connectedness, circularity and emergent property [7]. Thus, the clarity of integrated Islamic concepts and practices of learning by SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 will show its emergent property and branding. Meanwhile school's programs indicate efforts of school to respond expectations of community.

The concept of education as organization system of SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 includes; the vision, mission, objectives, competency standards of graduates, and the school  curriculum. These points are becaused they are still on the level theory and have not in actualization practice. The components contained in the organization of the school system are inseparable from  the basic of Islamic education, namely the Qur'an Hadith. SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 has a Smart, Creative and Devoted (taqwa) Vision. These visions are clearly connected to the Qur'an-Hadith circularly and intactly. The unity of these elements indicates to the integration system, but when it is continued on the curriculum then different things will be appear. Siti Aisyah, Deputi of Curriculum SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1, on May 13, 2018 explained that SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 as one of the education units under the Ministry of Education and Culture implemented the curriculum 2013 starting in the 2015/2016 school year. In accordance with the vision and mission to be developed by Sholeh Mataram's Integrated Islamic Elementary School (documentation from Profil SDIT Anak Sholeh), the curriculum is directed to be: 1) A curriculum that develops intelligence (Language, Science, mathematical logic), 2) A curriculum that develops creativity (Outbound, physical education,

entrepreneurship, art , scouting and social), and 3) A curriculum that develops devotion (faith, worship, al-Qur'an, life attitude, and integration with nature).

Meanwhile,  curriculum  development formulated by SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1, if included in the Trianto categorization, is referred to as integrated curriculum model, where lessons are centered on a particular problem or topic. Which is presented at school, adjusted to students lives in outside of school. Lessons in school help students in dealing with various problems outside of school [19]. The term  from Robin Fogarty is an integrated model, that is the curriculum has seen through a kaleidoscope: interdisciplinary topics which are rearranged with intersecting concepts in new patterns and designs. Integration is the result of a cross-disciplinary approach between several scientific disciplines by finding points of skills, concepts and attitudes in these disciplines [20]. Some of the analyzes put forward depending on the researchers need to be reconsidered using the perspective of the autopoiesis system theory. Different findings from those analyzes are more clearly illustrated in figure 1 .
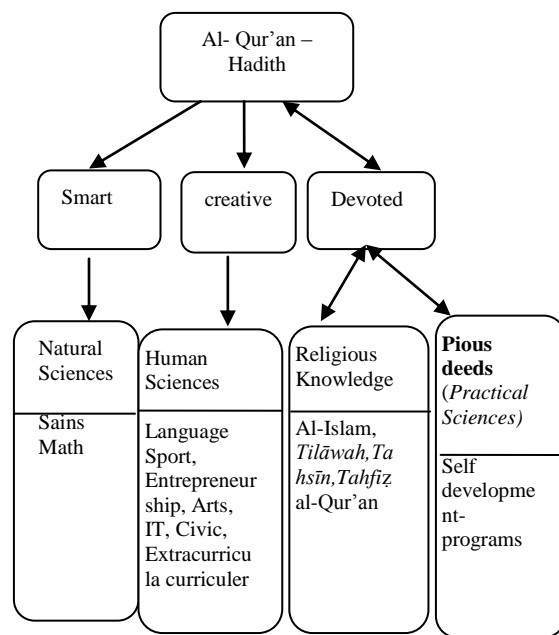


Figure.1 Educational system of SDIT Mataram 1

Figure 1 shows that, if observed carefully with the perspective of  autopoiesis theory system, the organization of the school system indicates problem. Based on indicators characteristics of connectedness and circularity, we find two-ways and one-way relation between its' components. The two-ways relation as the ideal character of a living system can be seen in the relationship between the components of the Qur'an and Hadith with the component of pious deeds and the component of religious knowledge. However, this situation does not apply to the relationship between the components of the natural sciences and the human sciences with the school's vision and the Qur'an- Hadith. I see one-way

connectedness on the relation, that the natural sciences and human sciences were not taken directly and formulated from the Qur'an and Hadith, but instead adopt Western theories that have been standardized so far (based on the documentation of the textbooks used at SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram, on May 5 to June 10, 2018).

Despite these weaknesses, the organizational elements of the SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 system still can be said to be a distinctive integrated Islamic education system. Almost all of the components in the system actually have unity formed, but there is a uniformity in the form of the relation of its components, one-way relation and two-ways relation so that it cannot be said to be one hundred per cent integrative. The concept of integrated Islamic education developed by SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 is the emergent property concept of Islamic education.Then, the structure of the system will be known through learning practices that are applied in this school.

The integration of curriculum of SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 which is tend to the curriculum 2013 occurs to developed the subject matter in several subjects, not in the substance of its knowledge. The religious sciences are not explicitly associated with natural sciences and human sciences in the plan of learning implementation. The approaches of these more often used by teachers in learning natural sciences during the learning process at SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1. Meanwhile, evaluations for learning theoretical sciences are carried out using written test, oral test and practice tests (observation, 7 May and 1 June 2018). Learning outcomes are not enough to get knowledge mastery (cognitive), but the affective and personality of students at the same time [11][12]. Practical sciences at SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram is seen in the school curriculum in 'unprogrammed self-development' and 'personal life skills' and 'social life skills'.

These activities are realized through school activities as 'School Culture'. School culture is compiled and poured in 'the connecting book' which brought every day by students and filled out by parents so it can be read and understood by teacher and parents. Plans for this learning are not written and detailed as formal subjects in class. Evaluation of the implementation 'School Culture' activities is designed by the school in a number of techniques with various instruments. Portofolio evaluation techniques use instruments 'the connecting book' and 'the achievement book'. Performance techniques utilize instruments the observation sheet assessment performed during 'Friday Mubarok' activities, 'Mabit' activities and Camping Day activities. Thus fact condition occurs at SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1, integration is realized in the merging of learning theoretical sciences with the learning of pious deeds in the learning process. Integration between the study

of secular science (natural sciences and human sciences) and religion is not explicitly stated in plans and evaluations, but occurs when the learning process, for example by linking the subject matter with religious teachings. This uniqueness as the emergent property of SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 is not found in other Islamic schools.

## III. SPECIAL PROGRAMS OF SDIT ANAK SHOLEH MATARAM 1: RESPONDING THE EXPECTATIONS OF URBAN COMMUNITY

The challenge to stay current, especially during this time of rapid technological advancements—specifically in the areas of communication, and economic and social globalization—poses new challenges to education in the Muslim world in general and to Islamic education in particular. Islamic education institutions do not exist in a vacuum. They are strongly influenced by political, social, and cultural factors [11]. Using framework of autopoiesis theory, efforts of SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 to face those new challenges in Islamic education are seen as the behavior system.

The behavior system from SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 includes activities programs and school policies in order to have respond to environmental challenges. School environment can be in the form of environmental conditions, the situation of technological and information development. This school develop a model of Islamic educational institutions that combines madrasah, pesantren and school at the same time. The program activities developed by SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 include: 1) the tahfiz al-Qur'an's program for all levels, at least 2 juz to the end; 2) the tahfiz al-Qur'an class for who are interested in memorization 3) Public Test, the memorization al-Qur'an competition program for students who have passed a memorization test in their class, attended by parents and invited guests; 4) Mabit, in the end-of-semester evaluation program in the form of a one-night school stay for lower-grade students; 5) Camping days, the end of semester evaluation program in the form of a two-night stay in nature for high-class students; 6) Entrepreneur day, an entrepreneurial learning program on a particular day, some students sell and others buy. 7) Social charity, a compensation program for poor people around the school. Activities carried out by students accompanied by parents every month. 8). Shaum sunnah, a sunnah fasting habituation program every Monday; 9) Class forum, a monthly program of meetings between parents and teachers at the students's home (Interview with Aisyah, Deputy of Curriculum, on May 13, 2018).

The school policy to accommodate the wishes of parents is a model of 5 working days, with holidays on Saturdays and Sundays. This is to adjust to the parent's working hours. This model is commonly

called as the full-day school. This is a pragmatic reason for parents to send their children to this school even though the cost is quite expensive. The other SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 has policy is to use of WhatsApp Group (WAG) as a means of communication between the school and the parents. The use of this media is very effective and efficient to increase the ease communication so it can improve the school performance also increase public trust on this school.

The activities program and policies launched by this school are included in the emergent property which has proven to attract the interest of Muslim communities to choose this school as an educational institution for their children. Based on the perspective of the autopoiesis theory system, the concepts of education, learning practices and programs as well as policies which has developed by SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1 is an unity form with varies types of connectedness between one component with others so it impacts on learning practices, programs and the school's policies. Therefore, it is no exaggeration to say that "integrated Islam" within branding limit for this school. However, the model applied has become an emergent property of Islamic institutions especially in Mataram and Indonesia in general. This new identity is considered capable to answer the expectations of the current urban Muslim community.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

An integrated Islamic school as an emergent property of Islamic schools has developed recently in the city of Mataram, NTB, since 2002. SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram 1, which was established by Ibnu Abbas foundation in 2006, is the bestselling Islamic school in the city. The twelve years development proves this school is growing very rapidly in terms of quantity and quality. Based on the review of autopoiesis theory, it can be found that the integrated Islamic concept at SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram can be traced through the vision, mission, goals and standards of graduate competencies and school curriculum. Schools still have weaknesses so that the integrated Islamic label can be said to be still at the branding of schools. This phenomenon, on the other hand, shows that the development of integrated Islam as a concept and practice by SDIT Anak Sholeh Mataram is considered to meet the expectations of the community with indicators of successfully gaining high appreciation from the middle Muslim urban community.

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