

RESEARCH ON TRADITIONAL MADARIS IN ARMM AND ADJACENT REGIONS



INSTITUTE FOR
AUTONOMY AND
GOVERNANCE

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GOVERNANCE

Established in 2001, the Institute for Autonomy and Governance (IAG) seeks to provide research, training and technical assistance to promote meaningful autonomy, governance, and security in the southern Philippines. IAG is located at Notre Dame University, Cotabato City, Philippines.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ALIVE	Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BOL	Bangsamoro Organic Law
BME	Bureau of Muslim Education
CAFGU	Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit
CHED	Commission on Higher Education
CPA	Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Assessment
CO	Capital Outlay
DepEd	Department of Education
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IAG	Institute for Autonomy and Governance
MOOE	Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses
NABEI	National Association of Bangsamoro Education Inc.
NCMF	National Commission for Muslim Filipinos
NUCP	National Ulama Conference of the Philippines
PD	Professional Development
PS	Personnel Services
PTO	Permit to Operate
PSA	Philippine Statistics Authority
RDI	Regional Darul-Ifta
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TM	Traditional Madaris
VET	Violent Extremism and Terrorism

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GLOSSARY

Adat, addat	Customary practices
Adl, adalah	Justice
Ahadith (plural)	Prophetic traditions; singular form is hadith
Ahmadiyyah	A messianic movement originally from the Punjab in India, with presence in the Philippines
Akhlaq	Ethics
Aleema (sing., fem.)	Female religious professional graduated from overseas; plural form is aleemat
Alim (sing., mas.)	Male religious professional graduated from overseas; plural form is ulama
Al-Nahdah	Awakening, often refers to intellectual awakening
Al-Qaedah	Considered as extremist group
Aqeedah	Belief system
Aqliyyah	Acquired knowledge, rational sciences
Asatidz (plural)	Locally-schooled religious professionals
As-Suffah	Literally, a sofa-like seating structure, often referring to the teaching-learning interaction between the Prophet and his companions and students
Balaghah	Rhetoric
Darul-Ifta	House of Rulings
Da'wah	Islamic propagation
Daesh	Arabic acronym for ISIS, an extremist group
Dayah	Religious boarding school in Indonesia, particularly in Aceh
Din, deen	Religion, faith
Du'a	Supplication
Dukturah	Doctorate
Dunyawiyah	Mundane
Fatwa (sing.)	Legal opinion; the plural form is fatawa
Fiqh	Jurisprudence
Guru, guro	Religious teacher
Ghufirat al tadrīs	Faculty room
Ghuluww	Excessiveness
Hadith (sing.)	Prophetic sayings
Halal	Anything legal and permitted, or considered moral or ethical
Halaqah	Circle, often refers to study circle
Hisab	Mathematics
Ibtida-i	Primary education
Idadi	Intermediate education
Ijazah	Chain of authority
Ilmu'	Knowledge
Imlah	Spelling
Insh	Writing composition
Islam	Islamic faith or religion; one of the Abrahamic faiths together with Judaism and Christianity
Jami'ah	University
Jawi	Arabic-based form of writing

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Jihad	Struggle
Khatt	Writing
Khutbah (<i>sing.</i>)	Sermon
Kitab	Book, also refers to the Holy Qur'an
Kopiah	Head cover
Kulliyah	College education
Kulliyat	Colleges; plural of college
Kyai	Religious teacher in Java
Lihal	Book rest upon which the Qur'an is placed when recited
Lugatul Arabiyyah	Arabic language
Ma'had	Secondary level
Ma'ahid	Secondary schools; plural of ma'had
Madaris	Schools; plural of madrasah
Madrasah (<i>sing.</i>)	School
Madhhab	School, often refers to the different schools of theology and jurisprudence
Madhhab Shafi-i	The historical/traditional school of jurisprudence followed by Moros
Majistir	Master's degree
Maktab	Office
Maktabah	Library
Markadz	Center
Masjid	Mosque
Maute	Extremist group from Lanao del Sur
Morits, murid	Students
Muhadathan	Conversational speaking
Muqsat	Canteen
Musallah	Prayer nook
Muslim, Muslims	Adherent or follower of Islam
Nahwu	Grammar
Naqliyyah	Revealed or religious knowledge
Pagbanta	Family or clan feud in the island provinces of ARMM characterized by a cycle of violent vendetta
Pesantren	Religious boarding school in Indonesia, particularly in Java
Pondok	Religious boarding school in Malaysia and southern Thailand
Ponok, pho no	Religious boarding school in southern Thailand
Qital, kital	War
Qur'an	Islam Holy Book
Qurban	Distribution of cow's meat to indigents during Islamic holidays
Rido	Family or clan feud in Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao areas characterized by a cycle of violent vendetta
Sadaqah	Charity

GLOSSARY

Salafi pesantren	Term used in Indonesia to refer to traditional madrasah, as opposed to integrated or modern
Salam	Peace
Santri	Teacher-organizer
Sarf	Conjugation
Seerah	The Prophet's Biography
Shahadah	Certificate or diploma
Shar'iyah	Religious
Shari'ah	Islamic Law
Shi'a	The smaller of the two branches of Islam, with presence in the Philippines
Sirat	Prophetic and Islamic histories
Sunnah	Sayings
Sunni	The larger of the two main branches of Islam
Surah	Chapter
Surat Sug	Indigenous form of writing in Sulu based on the Arabic orthography
Tafawut	Tolerance
Tafsir	Exegesis
Tahderiyyah	Kindergarten
Tahfiz Center	A center for Qur'an memorization, also called Tahfidhul Qur'an, widespread in Southeast Asia
Talipapa	Small stalls
Tanattu	Harshness
Taqwa	Piety
Tarbiyyah	Education
Tarikh al Alam	World History
Tariq al hayah	Way of life, code of life
Tashaddud	Severity
Tatarruf	Extremism
Tawheed	Monotheism
Teuku	Religious teacher in Aceh
Thanawi	High school
Tok Guru	Religious teacher in Malaysia
Toril	Indigenous boarding school in Lanao or among Meranaw communities
Tuan Guru	Religious teacher in other areas of Indonesia and also in the Philippines, often refers to male teacher
Ukhrawiyyah	Hereafter
Ulama	Religious professionals collectively
Uloom	Science
Umayyad	Political dynasty
Ustadz (<i>sing., mas.</i>)	Male religious professional locally-schooled
Ustadza (<i>sing., plu.</i>)	Female religious professional locally-schooled

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Usuluddin	Islamic Fundamentals of Faith/Theology
Wasat	Balance, middle, middle way or ground, moderate, better, best
Wasatiyyah	Islamic principle of moderation, antidote for extremism
Wudhu	Ablution
Zakat	Charity
Zina	Illegal sexual deeds

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There are four types of madrasah programs in the Philippines:

- Integrated madaris, which are private and sectarian schools accredited by the government
- Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE), a program for Filipino Muslim learners enrolled in public schools nationwide
- Tahdiriyyah Program in MILF areas developed with UNICEF targeting learners 5 years old and less
- Traditional madaris, which are private Islamic schools that operate outside the Philippine educational system.

This study provides the baseline information to promote the use of data and evidence in crafting public policies on traditional madaris in the Philippines and in the evolving education system of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

Research Objectives and Methodology

Based on data on the state and current directions of the traditional madaris in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and adjacent regions, this study identifies the issues and challenges confronting these institutions and recommends ways to move forward.

It gathered stakeholders' perceptions on the role of madaris in socio-economic, cultural, and political development, and in peace and security. It elicited suggestions for the improvement of the traditional madaris, and the stakeholders' vision of education for the Bangsamoro and traditional madaris.

Finally, this study provides policy and program recommendations on how to enhance the traditional madaris so they can contribute to the development of peaceful and prosperous communities.

The following research activities were conducted:

- A census of 1,850 traditional madaris
- Survey of 169 madaris, using a multi-stage random sampling design, with census as the sampling frame
- 6 focus group discussions with madrasah leaders, madrasah alumni, parents, and community members
- 21 interviews with knowledgeable members of the academe; national, regional, and local government; civil society organizations; and the security sector.

Research Findings

There are at least 1,534 traditional madaris in ARMM. In addition, there are at least 316 madaris in the adjacent regions. They are distributed as follows, according to the program they offer:

- 90% offer tahderiyyah (kindergarten)
- 79% ibtida-i (primary)
- 62% idadi (intermediate)
- 21% thanawi (secondary)
- 2% kulliyah (college)

The current direction of traditional madaris is towards the preservation and transmission of Islamic faith and identity. Traditional madaris are instrumental in providing students with teachings about Islam and molding them to become practicing Muslims in their respective communities. As learning institutions, they serve as venues where Islamic values and practices are passed on to the next generation. The traditional madaris are centers for Islamic values and leadership formation, producing graduates who may assume as government and religious leaders.

The traditional madaris are struggling for existence and sustainability. Personnel services — i.e., honoraria and allowances — are the top priority expenditures of the traditional madaris. Most madaris rely heavily on donations and volunteerism in communities. Serious finance constraints threaten their sustainability. Traditional madaris have no access to public funds since they are not accredited by the Philippine government. About 90% of madaris leaders surveyed aspire for government recognition and support.

Most students of traditional madaris offering ibtida-i, idadi, and thanawi also study in secular schools, where classes are held on weekdays. Often, makeup classes and other activities in secular schools are held on weekends, preventing students from attending their madrasah classes. This impairs class attendance in the madaris.

The graduates of madaris offering thanawi and kulliyah have limited employment opportunities due to lack of employable skills. Degrees offered by kulliyat include tarbiyyah (education), shari'ah (law), da'wah (Islamic propagation), and usuluddin (fundamentals of religion). Madrasah degree programs are confined to learning Islamic religion and Arabic language. Most graduates of thanawi or kulliyah seek employment or pursue further studies. Those who seek employment end up teaching in traditional madaris or in the ALIVE program of the Department of Education (DepEd). The limited prospects for employment and engagement of madaris graduates limits their contribution to security and socio-economic development of Muslim communities particularly in rural areas. They cannot compete with graduates of secular schools in finding jobs.

The traditional madaris are being linked to violent extremism or terrorism. Madrasah leaders and key stakeholders are seriously concerned about the growing perception that traditional madaris are being used for recruitment by terrorist groups. This perception became more pronounced after the Marawi siege in 2017, when a drastic decrease in

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

enrollment was recorded, dampening the morale of personnel. The flow of donation and other similar support to the traditional madaris was also greatly reduced. Leaders and key stakeholders are willing to take necessary steps to correct this perception.

Key stakeholders call for enhancing the Muslim-Moro identity and their greater role in socio-economic development, governance, and security. This can be done by equipping the Moro youth with Islam, encourage them to live its tenets, and model it at home and in the community. They call for integrating Moro history and “Islam in the Philippines” in the curricula of the Bangsamoro.

On socio-economic development, they propose that the madrasah be standardized just like the secular schools so that graduates will have more skills and competencies after graduation. At the very least, traditional madaris should offer vocational trainings in job fields that are in demand.

On local governance, peace and security, they recommend that traditional madaris participate in community service, such as ulama participation in conflict resolution and elections.

The vision of key stakeholders is for traditional madaris to offer both secular and Islamic curricula supported by government subsidy. Their vision of Bangsamoro education system is for madaris and public schools operating as an integrated system. This is in line with the intent of the Bangsamoro Organic Law and the vision of the ARMM Bureau of Madaris Education.

Recommendations

1. DepEd, the National Commission for Muslim Filipinos (NCMF), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and the Commission on Higher Education should simplify the requirements and processes for accreditation and recognition of traditional madaris.
2. Traditional madaris should be given some form of assistance so they can generate and sustain additional sources of income. This will be used to pay for personnel services, from honorarium/allowances to fixed salaries of teachers/ staff, maintenance, and other operating expenses, capital outlay, and professional development of teachers and staff of madrasah.
3. Traditional madaris that do not wish to be accredited should receive some support from local governments units, as currently practiced in some cities and municipalities (for example, the Davao City Madrasah Comprehensive Development and Promotion Program). The BARMM government and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) must explore with other LGUs the institutionalization of similar programs.
4. TESDA, the Department of Trade and Industry, and the Cooperative Development Agency should work with traditional madaris to offer employment and

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enterprise training, make employment referrals, and provide enterprise startup for students before graduation.

5. Support from donor communities and non-governmental organizations should be mobilized for traditional and integrated madaris that are ready to enter partnerships for long-term goals.
6. Local governments should engage the community at large, and parents and alumni in particular, to institutionalize the practices of zakat (charity) and awqaf (endowment) for the support of traditional madaris. This will lessen their dependence on government and foreign donors, and will promote communal self-help and assistance.
7. The Department of Education should fill in the vacancy and appoint an Undersecretary for Muslim Affairs, charged with the critical role of continuing engagement with traditional madaris and ulama.
8. The Office of the President should create an inter-agency coordination board for madrasah education with the purpose of providing strategic policy and programming leadership, mobilizing government resources and similar support, and as a platform for effective and efficient coordination.
9. The government, through the NCME, should assess the needs of the traditional madaris. It should partner with or mobilize and support religious sectors (ulama, aleemat, asatidz[a], duat, huffaz, tabligh, shabab, etc.) in the Muslim community so they take proactive and leadership roles in their spheres of influence. These Muslim leaders should be at the forefront of promoting Islam as faith and as a way of life guided by the principles of moderation, tolerance, and clemency.
10. The incoming Bangsamoro government in the region and the national DILG and Department of Justice (DOJ) should strategize on how to involve the madaris and religious sector in the following: local governance and development; socio-economic and cultural development; and peace and security, especially at the municipal and barangay levels. Particularly, they should help resolve issues related to community-based violent extremism and terrorism (VET), drugs, and rido.
11. The Office of the President and the Department of Foreign Affairs should promote and facilitate exchange of local Muslim religious leaders and experiences among Moro communities in the country and across ASEAN and the international community. Special focus should be made on human rights-based redress of violent extremism and terrorism, drugs, and rido.
12. The community of religious leaders should organize themselves to work with the government in various areas, such as media advocacy, people-to-people contact, passage of congressional bills addressing Muslim concerns. They should also work to get the Bangsamoro Transition Authority and, eventually, the Bangsamoro Parliament, to support the policy and program initiatives of the madrasah and the ulama sectors.

Background

THE Philippines is a predominantly Christian country, with more than 85% of the population listing Christianity as religious affiliation. A minority of more than 5% are Muslims concentrated on the southern islands of Mindanao and the provinces of Sulu and Palawan (World Population Review, 2018). The Muslims, as followers of Islam, have their own cultural identity and a common history.

The Muslims also maintain their own educational system, which at the start came in the form of maktab, or Qur'anic schools for young children to learn the Qur'an. It later developed into the madrasah, a school based in and managed by the community where the teaching is focused on the Qur'an, Islam, and moral education. As a Muslim school, it teaches Arabic and Islamic Studies, especially Qur'anic reading and Arabic language. It is considered as an institution of learning in most Muslim communities and is also a symbol of Islam.

A madrasah is usually set up by private individuals or groups to provide Islamic education for the children in the community. Since profit is not the essential motive for opening the school, there is no compulsory payment of fees. Parents pay on a voluntary basis, depending on what they can afford. Teachers are also volunteering and are paid minimal salaries (Abu Bakar, 2001).

According to Dr. Manaros B. Boransing, a former undersecretary for Muslim affairs at the Department of Education (DepEd), these community schools later became established schools responsible for the deepening of the Islamic process, especially in Mindanao (Boransing, 1987).

There are four types of madrasah programs in the Philippines. They are the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE), the integrated madaris, the tahdiriyyah, and the traditional madaris.

The ALIVE program, which is already in place, is for Filipino Muslim learners enrolled in the public schools nationwide. The integrated madaris are private, sectarian, and government accredited. Depending on their offering, their recognition may come from the Bureau of Madaris Education (BME) in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), the DepEd Central Office, the Technical Education and Vocational Development Authority (TESDA), or the Commission on Higher Education.

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The Tahdiriyyah program is a preschool program for 5 years and younger, targeting the traditional madaris in the areas covered by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

The bulk of the madaris in the Philippines are the traditional madaris. These are largely left to fend for themselves and follow divergent standards when it comes to curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment implementation. These varying standards are often associated with where the madrasah manager and teachers have completed their collegiate religious education. This type of madrasah is the focus of this study.

To date, government and non-government databases on the quantity, profile, and characteristics of madaris in the country are very limited. A rudiment database has been started by the Regional Darul-Ifta' (RDI) in the ARMM. The National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCFM) has a list of madaris and contact details.

Increasing public awareness and basic knowledge of the madaris in Muslim Mindanao is crucial in fostering these institutions' contribution to societal development.

Objectives

The goal of the research is to give impetus to the socio-economic, political, and cultural enhancement of the madaris, and to encourage the active participation of madrasah and madrasah leaders in the realization of the Bangsamoro people's aspirations.

Specifically, it aims to:

1. Provide information on the state and current directions of the traditional madaris.
2. Identify issues, concerns, and challenges confronting these institutions.
3. Chart ways forward for the traditional madaris by:
 - a. eliciting their perceptions on their role in socio-economic/cultural and political development, and peace and security
 - b. generating stakeholders' suggestions for the improvement of the traditional madaris
 - c. determining their vision of education for the Bangsamoro and traditional madaris
4. Formulate policy and program recommendations for their enhancement and participation in the development of their communities.

Conceptual Framework

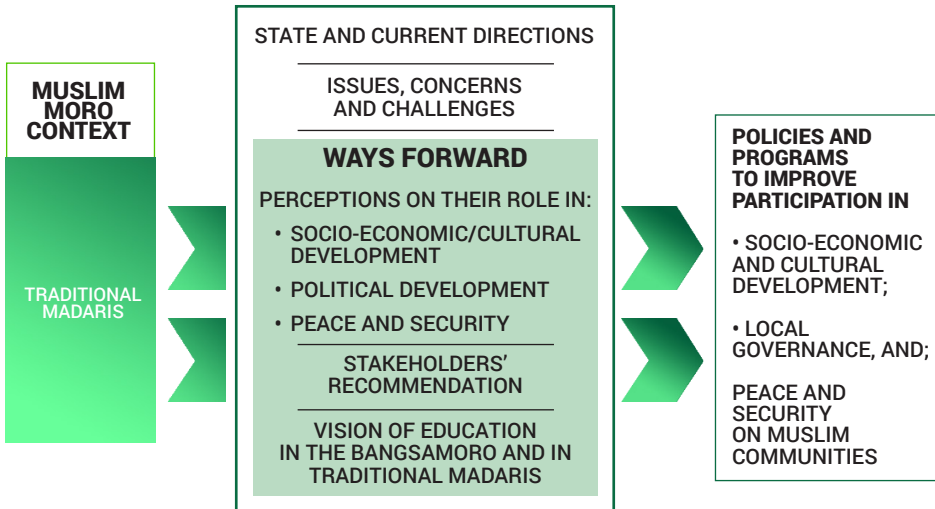


FIGURE 1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Definition of Terms

As used in this study, the following concepts are defined as:

Traditional Madaris. They are the type of unregulated madrasah left to fend for themselves. They follow varied standards when it comes to curriculum, pedagogical, and assessment implementation. Their offerings vary. Some offer only ibtida-i and idadi; others, like the ma'ahid, offer thanawi (high school) and idadi; while the kulliyat offer kulliyah (collegiate), thanawi, and ibtida-i and idadi.

Muslim-Moro context. This research was conducted in communities with Muslim-Moro context. A Muslim context refers to the presence of Islam as a religion and as a cultural expression in societies where Muslims live or aspire to lead their lives according to Islamic practices. Although the inter-relation between Islam as a religion and Islam as a cultural expression is usually complex, it is important from methodological and practical points of view to be cognizant of their parameters and influences. For the Bangsamoro, the Muslim cultural expression inter-relates also with the cultural practices of the 13 Moro groups in the Philippines. These 13 Moro groups all profess the Islamic faith, but they each have their own unique languages, cultures, and identities.

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State and current directions. These were sourced from census and survey, which provide brief descriptions of madaris. Common census information on madaris include official name, year established, complete address, current head and contact details, nature of ownership, and building type.

Issues, concerns, and challenges. These are the problems commonly faced today by the madaris in the study areas.

Socio-economic and cultural development. The study explores the madaris' participation in or influence on the socio-economic development of the local population as well as on the peaceful and creative redress of grievances around identity and culture.

Local governance. This study also explores the madaris' participation in the political and institutional processes of the local government units, especially in planning and implementation of activities.

Security and peace. The research seeks to show the current and future voices of the madaris in influencing improvement in local security and in the long-term promotion of the rule of law.

Identity and culture. This study shows the stakeholders' understanding of cultures and traditions of the Moro communities and how these define their identity.

Ways forward. This research generates ideas from stakeholders and experts on ways to mitigate current issues, to resolve long-standing concerns, and to identify future challenges that can impact on the growth and development of madaris.

Methodology

This is a descriptive qualitative study that made use of census, survey, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews. A census of madaris in the study areas was conducted in June 2018 to serve as sampling frame for the survey. From this, a database of 1,850 madaris was established (Annex 1). The survey employed a multi-stage random sampling design. A total of 169 madaris were sampled for the survey.

Sampling Design

- The first stage of the sampling process was the selection of municipalities among all provinces in the research areas. An initial scanning of municipalities per province was done and those with 10 or more madaris were identified. Out of this, a simple random sampling was undertaken to select the final list of municipalities per province. For ARMM areas, a maximum of 10 municipalities per province were sampled, while three municipalities per province were sampled for non-ARMM areas.

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- The second stage of the sampling process was the selection of barangays. An initial scanning of barangays among the sampled municipalities was done and those with two or more madaris were identified. A simple random sampling was undertaken to select the final list of barangays. For ARMM areas, a maximum of three barangays per municipality were sampled, while only one barangay per sampled municipality was selected for non-ARMM areas.
- The third stage in the process is the selection of madaris. Based on the list of madaris operating in the sampled barangays, simple random sampling was done to select three madaris for ARMM areas, and one madrasah for non-ARMM areas.

Following the above-mentioned procedure, a sample was formed with 41 madaris offering thanawi, 89 madaris offering ibtida-i and idadi, and all 39 madaris offering kulliyah. A total 169 madaris were identified.

In addition, six focus group discussions were also conducted among madrasah leaders and other stakeholders. Key interviews were done with 21 knowledgeable members of the academe; national, regional, and local government leaders; NGOs; and security sector.

Processing and Analysis

The survey was conducted and data were processed using the Quicktap Survey software subscribed to by the Institute for Autonomy and Governance (IAG) for this research. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was also used to supplement the analysis of the survey data.

The results of the focus group discussion and key informant interviews were analyzed and interpreted by the members of the research team. These were used for purposes of triangulation.

The Setting

The study includes provinces in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and non-ARMM provinces where Moro people are concentrated and the primary institution for Islamic education are the Traditional Madaris. Brief discussions of the socio-demographic indicators of these provinces are presented to provide the context of the study sites.

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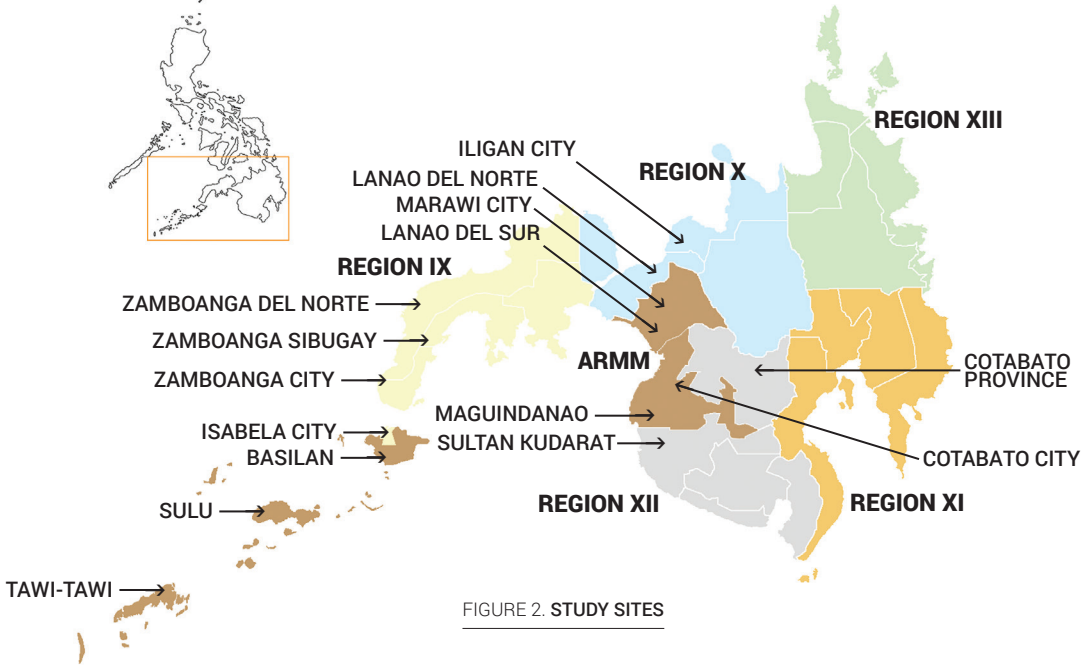


FIGURE 2. STUDY SITES

The ARMM Study Sites

The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) is the home for the Moro people in the Philippines. It is the fastest growing region with an average annual population growth rate (PGR) of 2.89% (Population Census, 2015). About 3,781,387 or 91.3% of the total population living in the ARMM are Moro (PSA, 2015). Of this total, more than half (58.6%) reside in Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao provinces, with 27.6% and 31.0%, respectively. Close to 22% are in Sulu while 10.3% are in Tawi-Tawi. The province of Basilan has the least number of Moro people with 9.2%.

Among the regions in the Philippines, the ARMM is the poorest, with poverty incidence of 48.7% in 2012 and 48.2% in 2015. This is almost twice the poverty incidence in the Philippines, with 25.2% in 2012 and 21.6% in 2015.

The poverty incidence is much higher in the province of Lanao del Sur (67.3% in 2012 and 66.3% in 2015). Tawi-Tawi has the least poverty incidence among the five provinces in the ARMM, with 21.9% in 2012 and 10.6% in 2015. The poverty incidence rates in other provinces are shown in Table 1.

ARMM has a total land area of 3,665,095 hectares, with five provinces and two cities. It has 116 municipalities and 2,490 barangays. Its population is growing at 1.98% annually. Majority of its ethnic tribes are Maguindanaon, Meranaw, Bangingi, Tausug, Yakan, and Sama. Agriculture (farming, fishing, and hunting) is the region's primary source of income, contributing to the gross domestic product of 56.3%. In 2016, the region produced 544,486 metric tons of palay and 590,580 metric tons of corn. Other products include coconuts, cassava, and seaweeds.

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The region “suffers from poor infrastructures and inadequate basic services such as health and education, poor local governance and a weak private sector.

Armed conflicts, including the struggle for self-determination by Moro groups, clan disputes, communist’s insurgency, and banditry, among others cause of severe economic and social displacements.” (projects.beta.worldbank.org/en/results/2013/04/10/philippines-autonomous-region-in-muslim-mindanao-social-fund-project).

POVERTY INCIDENCE RATE	2012	2015
PHILIPPINES	25.2%	21.6%
ARMM	48.7%	48.2%
LANAO DEL SUR	67.3%	66.3%
MAGUINDANAO	54.5%	48.8%
SULU	40.2%	49.6%
BASILAN	41.2%	37.0%
TAWI-TAWI	21.9%	10.6%

TABLE 1. POVERTY INCIDENCE RATES IN THE ARMM BY PROVINCE, 2012 AND 2015

A brief barangay profiling was included during the survey, describing the basic amenities and primary sources of livelihood in the area.

1. **Maguindanao.** The province has 36 municipalities with 508 barangays. It has a total population of 1,173,933, according to the 2015 census (PSA, 2015). Majority of its population are Maguindanaon (64.5%), Iranun (18.4%), and non-Moro indigenous people – Teduray and Dulangan Manobo (8.4%). Close to 83% of the total population professes Islam as religion.

The economy of the province is dependent on agriculture, with main crops such as rice, corn, banana, palm oil, coffee, cacao, rubber, and mango. Majority of its inhabitants are engaged in farming and fishing. Banana and palm oil plantations are thriving in the province. The road networks of the province connect only the main highways to the town centers. Interior barangays are connected with unpaved rough roads passable only during the dry season.

Fifty-three barangays in the province were included in the survey of traditional madaris. The following common facilities are found in the barangays: masjid (53 barangays), schools (46), barangay health stations (44), market (22), and Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) detachments (5) manned by some military personnel and Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit (CAFGU).

The primary sources of income of the households in these barangays are farming (47 barangays), fishing (17), paid labor (16), and small business undertakings like sari-sari stores (11). Majority of the households in five barangays are engaged in driving “habal-habal” (single motorcycle). The incomes generated from these economic activities are mostly seasonal and hardly enough to feed a family with six members.

2. **Basilan.** The province is one of the island provinces of the ARMM, composed of one city and 11 municipalities. It has 210 barangays with a total population of 346,579 in 2015 (PSA) composed of Yakan, Sama, Tausug, Chavacano, Badjao, and Visayan migrants (Cebuano and Ilonggo).

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The economy of Basilan depends on agriculture. It produces coconut, coffee, corn, banana, and cassava.

Of the 210 barangays, 28 were included in the survey of madrasah. Twenty-three barangays have masjid and school buildings (madaris or public schools). Sixteen have barangay health stations, eight have talipapa (wet or dry market), and four have Christian or Catholic churches. Only two barangays have covered basketball courts and one has a multi-purpose center.

A military detachment is present in two barangays and there is a Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT) in one barangay.

Farming is the main livelihood of the households in 20 barangays, while in 12 barangays most households are engaged in fishing. Majority of the households in some barangays generate income from trading (4 barangays) and through self-employment.

Interior barangays are reached by riding tricycles, single motorcycles, or jeep.

In mid-2016 the various forms of violence that once beset Basilan began to subside, and since then the people have been enjoying relative peace in the area (Douglas, 2018).

3. **Sulu.** The province has 19 municipalities classified into mainland and island municipalities. There are 410 barangays in the province. The terrain of the mainland island is described as hilly, rolling, swampy, and forested. It has a total population of 824,731 in 2015 (PSA). Tausug and Sama comprise the majority of the population.

The economy of the province relies on agriculture and is suited to the production of exotic fruits, like marang, mangosteen, and durian.

Out of 410 barangays, nine barangays were included in the survey of madaris. All nine barangays have masjid, and eight have barangay health stations and school buildings. Six barangays have police stations, five barangays have wet or dry markets. Two barangays have a Christian church each. The households in one barangay are engaged in fishing while the households in two barangays derive income from farming. Households in eight barangays derive income from self-employment, while most households in nine barangays have members employed in the government sector.

Motorized bancas are the common means of transportation to reach the island municipalities, while tricycles or single motorcycles are used in the mainland.

4. **Tawi-Tawi.** The province is composed of 307 islands and islets. It has 11 municipalities and 203 barangays. In the 2015 census (PSA) a total population of 390,715 was recorded. Sama, Tausug, Badjao, and Jama

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Mapun form majority of the population. The primary sources of income of the households are fishing and seaweed farming. Aquatic products include lobster, crabs, prawn, squid, and the like. The economy of the province is fast developing because of its rich and vast aquatic resources.

From the 203 barangays, four were taken for the madrasah survey sample. All four barangays have schools and masjid. Three barangays have health stations, and two have wet or dry markets. These barangays have no police station. Fishing is the main occupation of the majority of households in two barangays. Households in other three barangays are engaged in driving, vending, or operating sari-sari stores.

Motorized bancas are the common means of transportation in the islands and islets, while residents in the interior barangays use single motorcycles or tricycles.

The province is described as generally peaceful.

5. **Lanao del Sur.** The province is home to Lake Lanao, which is the second largest lake in the Philippines suitable for drinking, fishing, and tourism. It has 39 municipalities, one city, and 1,159 barangays populated by 1,045,429 people. About 99% of the total population are Meranaw. The economy of the province depends on agriculture and fishery. Majority of the households are engaged in farming and fishing, while some are involved in small or medium enterprises. The main products of the province are corn, rice, cassava, sweet potato, abaca, coconut, and coffee.

A total of 30 barangays (26 in the province and four in Marawi City) were included in the survey of madrasah. Out of 30 barangays, 29 have masjid, 24 have school buildings, and 14 have health stations. A small number of barangays have facilities like markets (6 barangays), police stations (9 barangays), BPATs (3 barangays), and a military detachment (1 barangay). Majority of the households in 27 barangays derive income from farming, while most households in five barangays are engaged in fishing. Other families derive income from trading of dry goods.

Common modes of transportation in the province are habal-habal (single motorcycles), multi-cabs, and tricycles. Remote barangays are reached through the use of single motorcycles.

The Marawi siege in 2017 destroyed a large part of the city, and displaced residents are yearning to return to their respective sites of origin. With the declaration of martial law in Mindanao, military detachments have been strategically put up throughout the city and in the province to avert any similar incidents in the future.

The Non-ARMM Study Sites

The survey of madrasah was also conducted in the barangays that are largely populated by the Moro. These barangays are located in the provinces of Zamboanga

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Sibugay and Zamboanga del Norte of Region IX; Lanao del Norte of Region X; and Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, and Cotabato City of Region XII. Below is a brief socio-demographic background of each province:

1. **Cotabato.** The province is generally inhabited by non-Moro people, but there are barangays where a majority of the inhabitants are Moro. It has 18 municipalities and one city (Kidapawan City), with 543 barangays. In the 2015 census, the province registered a total population of 1,380,000, majority of which are migrants from the Visayas and Luzon. The economy of the province is dependent on agriculture. Its major products are rice, rubber, banana, corn, sugar cane, and fruits (durian, mangosteen, lanzones, marang, and pomelo). However, despite its flourishing agriculture-based industry, the province has a high poverty incidence rate of 41.4% in 2015 (PSA).

One of its municipalities is Pikit, with a registered total population of 154,441 (2015 census). It has 42 barangays, the residents of which are mostly Moro. In this study, eight barangays were included in the survey of madrasah. All eight have barangay health stations, schools (public and private), and masjid. Only three barangays have markets (talipapa), two have police stations, and three have Christian churches. Two barangays have a BPAT, CAFGU, or military detachment that secures the peace and order in the area.

Majority of the households of the seven barangays derive income from farming, while most of the families in one barangay earn income from vending or driving.

2. **Sultan Kudarat.** The province has 11 municipalities and one city. In the 2015 census, the total population was 812,095. Most of the people in Sultan Kudarat are migrants from the Visayas (Ilonggo and Cebuano). Farming and fishing are the main sources of livelihood in the province. Those who are engaged in farming produce rice, corn, coconuts, coffee, banana, mango, and durian. Large African palm plantations are common in the area, making palm oil production as its fast-growing industry. The province has high poverty incidence of 48% in 2015 PSA data.

Three coastal municipalities of Sultan Kudarat province (Lebak, Kalamansig, and Palimbang) were included in the study because they have a significant number of Moro inhabitants. From these municipalities, 13 barangays were sampled for the survey. All 13 have barangay health stations and masjid. Twelve have schools for basic education (elementary and secondary), eight with Christian churches, four have markets, four have military detachments, and three have police stations.

Most households in 11 barangays are engaged in farming, while the primary source of income of most households in six barangays is fishing. Paid labor is the common source of income in three barangays, and majority work as drivers in two barangays.

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3. **Cotabato City.** The city, which has 37 barangays, is located in the province of Maguindanao. Although under Region XII, it is the seat of the ARMM government. Its population in the 2015 census was 299,438, composed of 60% Moro and 40 % non-Moro. The city has a thriving economy spurred by the presence of various commercial establishments, like banks, food chains, hotels, and restaurants. Majority of the households obtain income through employment in public or private institutions. Others derive income from driving, fishing, and farming, particularly in barangays located in the coastal areas of the city.

The city's poverty incidence, based on the PSA 2015 census, is 36.1%.

Seven barangays were sampled in the madrasah survey. All of them have barangay health stations, six have public or private schools and masjid. Three barangays have markets and police stations. Primary sources of income among majority of the households in six barangays are employment in private or government sectors or through driving. In four barangays, majority are engaged in business, while in two barangays most households are into vending. Most of the households in one barangay are farmers.

In 2017, the city bagged the second top spot for the government efficiency category. In the first quarter of 2018, it was the safest city in Mindanao and among the safest cities in the country (Philippine National Police Crime Research and Analysis Center).

4. **Zamboanga Peninsula.** Zamboanga Sibugay, Zamboanga del Norte, and Zamboanga City were identified for this study. Zamboanga Sibugay has 16 municipalities with 389 barangays. The 2015 census showed it had a total population of 633,129, majority of whom are Cebuano and Chavacano. The economy of the province is agriculture-based. Most of the products are rice, corn, coconuts, rubber, and fruits. The province is also engaged in rattan and wood furniture production. The sample barangays in the survey were taken from the municipality of Alicia, which is a third-class municipality with 27 barangays. Majority of its 36,013 population are Cebuano and Chavacano. The municipality is known for its marine products and handicrafts. These are also the main sources of income of most households.

Zamboanga Sibugay has a poverty incidence of 44.9%.

Zamboanga City is a first-class highly-urbanized city in the Zamboanga Peninsula. It has 98 barangays with a total population of 861,799 (PSA 2015). About 70% of its people derive income from agriculture and fishing. The main products of the city include coconut, rice, and marine products, especially seaweeds.

Because of its proximity to island provinces, barangays in the coastal areas are inhabited by the Tausug, Sama, and Badjao.

The poverty incidence of the city was 13% in 2015 (PSA).

5. **Lanao del Norte.** The province has 22 municipalities, one city and 462 barangays. In the 2015 census, the province registered a total population of 676,395, with a mixture of Meranaw, Cebuano, and some Chavacano. The economy thrives on agriculture with products such as coconut, copra, rice, mango, corn, banana, and aqua-products. In 2015, the PSA posted a poverty incidence of 50.0%.

The survey of madrasah included seven Moro-populated barangays of the province. The facilities in these 7 barangays are limited to: masjid (7 barangays), schools (3 barangays), and health stations and market (2 barangays). The source of income of majority of households in six barangays is farming, while in one barangay paid labor is the primary source of income among the households.

Respondent's Profile

The Survey Respondents

Of the 169 survey respondents, majority (63.9%) are managers or heads of madrasah 20.1% are teaching staff, and a little over 10% are owners or members of the board of the schools.

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The Focus Group Discussion Participants

There were two groups of participants to the focus group discussion (FGD): the madrasah leaders and the madrasah stakeholders. The madrasah leaders who were not respondents to the survey became the participants of the focus group discussions. The madrasah stakeholders – namely, teachers, graduates of madrasah, parents, and community leaders – participated in the FGD.

- The madrasah leaders. Majority (83%) of the madrasah leaders are males, and the greatest number are Meranaw (41.7%) and Maguindanaon (37.5%). A good number are college graduates from secular schools, with some training on Arabic studies (41.7%). Others are thanawi graduates (29.2%) and kulliyah graduates (16.7%). More than half (54.2%) of them are members of the ulama. The mean age of the madrasah leaders is 41.9 years.
- The madrasah stakeholders. Majority of the participants in the FGD of stakeholders are females (52%). Three ethnic groups comprised the majority of the stakeholder-participants: the Meranaw (32%), Maguindanaon (36%), and Tausug (28%). Most (68%) were college graduates, with training on Arabic studies. Forty percent are ulama, 12 % are government employees, and the same number (12%) are self-employed. Their mean age is 39.8 years.

Key Informant Interview (KII) Respondents

Twenty-one leaders of government and non-governmental organizations are respondents in the key informant interviews. Of these, 10 are from the regional and local government units, three from the security sector, seven from the academe, and one from an NGO.

UNDERSTANDING MADRASAH EDUCATION

The chapter discusses topics associated with madrasah education. These include etymology, history, context, types, comparison, and contribution.

Etymology

THE word “madrasah” is Arabic for “school.” While it refers to any school in Arabic-speaking countries, the Moro context has come to mean that it is a school for learning the Qur’an, the prophetic model (Sunnah) as foundation of Islamic Law (Shari’ah), and its ensuing jurisprudence (fiqh). The Moro’s madrasah is differentiated from the Philippine mainstream school system, either public or private, as clearly a place for Muslim children to learn Islamic values, morals, ethics, and way of life, and as the place for the formation of their ulama or religious professionals.

Today, the term “traditional madrasah” refers to the madrasah that is unregulated and unsupervised by government, while the one with government permit is known as “integrated madrasah.” Whether traditional or integrated, the schools offer programs from primary (ibtida-i), ‘idadi (intermediate), high school (thanawi), college (kulliyah), majistir (master’s), to dukturah (doctorate). Those offering ibtida-i and ‘idadi programs are often referred to as madaris (plural form of madrasah). Those offering up to thanawi are called ma’had (institute). Those offering up to higher programs are called kulliyah (college) or jami’ah (university).

Across these types and offerings are two types of religious professionals: those locally-schooled referred to as “asatidz[a]” (male, ustadz; female, ustadza), and those who graduated from overseas universities are called “ulama” (male, alim, aleem; female, aleema). The term “ulama” is also used as a composite of both local- and overseas-schooled ones.

Historical Evolution

Many Muslim religious scholars often point to the first five verses¹ received by Prophet Muhammad² as beginning reference to the importance of seeking

¹The first five verses of Chapter (Surah) 96: Al-‘Alaq – [1] Recite in the name of your Lord who created, [2] Created man from a clinging substance, [3] Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous, [4] Who taught by the pen, [5] Taught man that which he knew not. (English translation by Saheeh International). The Arabic word for recite is “iqra,” also translated as read. The Qur’an: English Meanings. Al-Muntada Al-Islami. 2004. Page 1. <http://www.islamwb.com/books/Quran-Saheeh-International-English-Translation.pdf>

²There is a practice among Muslims to add the phrase “may peace and blessings of God be upon him” (PBUH) after mentioning the Prophet’s name as a sign of respect.

knowledge in Islam. Later the Sunnah (sayings) of the Prophet Muhammad himself point to seeking knowledge as obligatory on every Muslim male and female³, and is mandated from cradle to grave (Ayub, 2016). Those who have gained it have the obligation, in turn, to teach one's fellows, and this is considered a rewarded act (Sunan Ibn Majah, Hadith 236 and 240).

In Islamic practice, knowledge ("ilmu") is divided into revealed knowledge (naqliyyah) and acquired knowledge (aqliyyah) (Salahuddin, 2017). Al-Ghazzali identified the same as religious (shar'iyyah) and rational ('aqliyyah), respectively (Sherif, 1975). Knowledge falling under "naqliyyah" are obligatory on individual Muslims, while "aqliyyah" are communal obligation (Cheng, 2012) and covers mundane sciences. Thus, the study of the Qur'an and the Sunnah falls under individual obligation (Bhabha, 1997), while the pursuit of professions is initially a communal obligation, and when such profession is present in the community, it becomes the professional's obligation to serve his or her community. Al-Ghazzali also divides knowledge into dunyawiyah (mundane) and ukhrawiyah (hereafter) (Sherif, 1975).

Because of its prescription for politics, economics and so on, Islam is more than a religion. The Arabic word "dīn" or "deen" also means faith⁴, but theologians explain Islam is more than religion or faith, it is also a "way of life" or "code of life" (tarīq al hayah) – that is, there is no demarcation between religious and secular realms, legality and morality, both are one and the same (Khan, 2009). It is because of this nature of Islam that Muslim's religiosity is reflected both in personal and in communal life. The inward nature among Muslims in reference to their peculiar way of life and living is based on the phrase reflected in Verse 3 of Surah 5: Al-Ma'idah of the Holy Qur'an: "This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion."⁵ Thus, emerged among them the need to strike a balance between their daily mundane demands and preparation for the hereafter – the balance with dunyawiyah (mundane) and ukhrawiyah (hereafter). Education wise, this is reflected in the conception of "integrated education" that came to play in the 1970s and the recent "balanced

³Ahman, Aini. "Islamic perspective of the learning organization", in Anders Örtenblad, Handbook of Research on the Learning Organization: Adaptation and Context (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013), page 147. Book review from https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=idMMAQAAQBAJ&dq=Islamic+learning+obligatory&lr=&source=gbs_navlinks_s
⁴Mahmoud Ayoub, "Religious Pluralism and the Qur'an". Book-in-Brief: Contemporary Approaches to the Qur'an and Sunnah (International Institute of Islamic Thought [IIIT], 2016), pages 8-9. Book review available from https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=v_9DDAAQBAJ&pg=PA1&dq=seek+knowledge+from+cradle+to+grave,+sunnah&lr=&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=4#v=onepage&q=seek%20knowledge%20from%20cradle%20to%20grave%2C%20sunnah&f=false

⁵Translation by Sahih International - <https://quran.com/5/3>

education” as the battle cry of present advocates in Bangsamoro, recognizing that while the ultimate goal of a Muslim is happiness in the hereafter, mundane life should also be considered as a stepping stone to the former.

The value of learning and teaching⁶ the faith among Muslims resulted in the evolution of knowledge and learning spaces. Studying, teaching, and managing madrasah are considered religious deeds. Any form of support extended to it is considered an act of religious charity (sadaqah). Thus, Muslim individuals, families, organizations and communities are encouraged to support, while those who have the means can establish and operate a madrasah in their locality. This is consistent with a hadith⁷ reported by both Bukhari and Muslim⁸: “On the day when all other shade will be gone, Allah will shade and shelter those who give charity.” Thus, the motivation to support madaris is not just for immediate worldly gains. For Muslims, this form of charity is to beef up one’s future in the hereafter or life after death. Many of these charities are not reported or publicly announced simply because, in the same hadith, there is a prescribed etiquette – to conceal it to such an extent that “the left hand does not know what the right has given.”

The madrasah started as an informal learning space and unstructured teaching-learning interaction referred to as “As-Suffah” (Khan, et al., 2015) attached to a mosque during the time of the Prophet Muhammad and his successors in Medina. It was an outgrowth of the masjid-based learning (Britannica, 2019). This is why many early and oldest functioning and well-known Islamic universities are often associated with a particular mosque, having grown out of it. The classic examples in the Muslim world are the Al-Al-Qarawiyyin University⁹ in Morocco and Al-Azhar University¹⁰ in Egypt.

Eventually, through more than 1,400 years of Islamic history, they became full-blown academic institutions – formal and specialized.

They are formal in the sense that they have graduated offerings, from elementary to high school or secondary to higher education – kulliyah (collegiate), majistir (master’s), and dukturah (doctoral) – and they issue ijazah (diploma) or shahādah (certificate) at the end of each stage as mark of completion.

Specialization resulted in the spread of religious sciences and offerings from the core corpus of Islamic texts (Qur’an and Sunnah). Common specializations include Qur’anic tafsīr (exegesis), Ahadith (prophetic traditions), Shari’ah (Islamic Law), and

⁶The learned people are considered superior than the pious ones and are considered the heirs of the Prophets. Sunan Abi Dawud, Book 25 (Book of Knowledge), Hadith 3634 (Grade: Sahih, Al-Albani).

⁷Hadith is a collection of the Prophetic Sayings.

⁸Hadith 449, Book of Miscellany, Riyad as-Salihin - <https://sunnah.com/riyadussaliheen/1/449>

⁹Also spelled Al Quaraouiyine and Al-Karaouine, is considered by the Guinness World Records and UNESCO as “the oldest continuously operating, degree-granting university in the world” - <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/university-of-alkaraouine>

¹⁰Founded in 970s AD and “chief center of Islamic and Arabic learning in the world, centered on the mosque of that name in the medieval quarter of Cairo, Egypt.” - <https://www.britannica.com/topic/al-Azhar-University>

Usuluddin (Islamic fundamentals). *Lugatul Arabiyyah* (Arabic language) is integral to religious sciences as the corpus of Islamic faith is written in this language. Despite the existence of formal and specialized institutions, the non-formal, unstructured learning in the mosque or at homes continues to exist in many Muslim communities. As before, they are “varied in size and layout, some are small with one or two classrooms, whilst others are much larger, with huge libraries, and facilities and large lecture halls” (<http://muslimheritage.com>).

By the 1960s, the likes of Al-Azhar University embraced secular sciences, like business, economics, science, pharmacy, medicine, engineering, and agriculture (Skovgaard-Petersen, 2010). In Egypt, this “modernization” can be traced to the intellectual awakening or *Al-Nahdah* that began in the 19th century, led by its religious scholars (Livingston, 1966). This formalization of madrasah offering would have a deeper impact on the wider Muslim world. The returning Malay scholars converted “pondoks into madrasahs” by adopting structured system and combined instruction in Islamic fundamentals with Western-influenced pedagogy and technology (Abdul Hamid, 2017). It is from this system in neighboring Malaysia and Indonesia that early religious teachers in Moroland graduated from. In the 1960s, the first batch of Moro graduates from Al-Azhar¹¹ returned and converted the informal *lihal* and *kuttah* systems following the Al-Azhar model.

In Arab countries, the madrasah became integral part of the national educational system, while in non-Arab Muslim countries there continues to exist traditional *madaris* as private sectarian schools with minimal government intervention and supervision. Anzar (2003) posits that, as Islam expanded, there was a need “to preserve religious conformity through uniform teachings of Islam for all,” and this gave rise to the prominence of madrasah as center of formal learning and formation of the community’s religious leaders. In countries with Muslim minorities, this need is urgent and perennial, as the mainstream secular system is the norm. Meanwhile, the madrasah system ends up in the margins, and continues only because of the Muslim demand for it.

The Moro Context

Bangsamoro is historically and culturally part of the Nusantara (Rahim, 2009; Singh, May 2015; Riddell, 2001) and, thus, the beginning of Islam in the country is closely intertwined with the coming of Islam in this part of the world. Islam reached what is now southern Philippines by the end of the 13th century (Majul, 1966) or by the 14th century (Taylor, 2017; Harvard Divinity School, 2018). With Islamic faith came its language and a form of governance common in the Muslim world, the sultanate. A variant of Arabic language evolved to become the Malay’s form of writing called

¹¹Among the first batch of Moro graduates in the Sulu Archipelago from Al Azhar University in Egypt were Sheikh Laja Bangsaja, Sheikh Galib Jundam, Sheikh Kalbi Tupay, Mufti Sheikh Ibrahim Ghazzali, Sheikh Ali Taupan, Mufti Sheikh Abdulgani Yusop, Mufti Sheikh Abdulbaki Abubakar, Sheikh Jackwan Ismi, Sheikh Abdulquddus S. Hussein, Sheikh Arshad Hassan, Sheikh Said Balahim and Sheikh Hashim S. Matingka. - https://web.facebook.com/search/str/Al+azhar+university+guro/keywords_search?epa=SEARCH_BOX

Jawi¹², which is also referred to as “Surat Sug” in Sulu. The Sultanate of Sulu started with Shariful Hashim in 1450 (Majul, 1977; Tuban, 1994), and the Sultanate of Maguindanao with Shariff Kabungsuan in 1515 (Abreu, 2008). In turn, the Sultan, aside from being the highest political authority, is also the head of the Islamic religion within his domain and, consequently, patron of Islamic education system (McCutchen, 1919).

With the introduction of the public school system by the American regime, the educational system in Bangsamoro became officially dichotomized into spiritual and secular – the madrasah with focus on religion, and the public school system focused on Western sciences (Kulidtod, 2017). Despite this legal and policy disadvantage, the traditional madaris survived through local sadaqat (charities) and annual zakat (tithes) (Mohamed Ariff, 1991). This typifies the so-called “educational divide” among Muslim Filipinos: going to mainstream schools on weekdays and to madrasah on weekends. This is because Muslim parents expect their children to gain livelihood and employment skills in mainstream schools, and they leave it to the madrasah to train their children on Islamic morals, ethics, and norms.

In the collective Moro experience, Islamic learning started with circles (halaqah¹³) around a learned person, called by various names through time: pandita, imam, khatib, bilal, or guro. Learning happened either in the latter’s home or at the mosque (colloquially langgal, maskid, and masgit; Arabic, masjid) and primarily focused on learning and memorizing the Qur’an. This is also called the “lihal” or “kitab” approach. Kitab refers to the Qur’an as the textbook, and lihal refers to the bookrest upon which the Qur’an is placed on. Later on, this informal setting moved into more formal madrasah-based schooling with specialized subjects on offer aside from the study of the Qur’an, such as Sunnah (Prophetic Model), Ahadith (Prophetic Sayings), Sirat (Prophetic and Islamic Histories), Aqeedah (Belief System), Fiqh (Jurisprudence), and so on. Over time, with more religious professionals trained locally and overseas, there arose three major centers of Islamic learning around Lanao, Maguindanao, and Sulu.

Largely in the Lanao region of Bangsamoro, a residential form of schooling but with similar focus with lihal and kitab approaches emerged and continues to exist. This is the toril residential school (Hadji Latif, 2014). The primary function is to memorize the Qur’an with supplementary religious subjects. The idea is to mold the students with Islamic basics while in residence.

Overseas scholarships for Moros were initially accessible and available from nearby Malaysia and Indonesia. Egypt was the first Arab country to offer scholarships for Muslims in Southeast Asia. Pioneer Malay graduates of Al-Azhar completed their

¹²Jawi is the Arabic script adapted to write the Malay language. <https://www.omniglot.com/writing/malay.htm>

¹³Halaqah is Arabic for circle. It can mean a study group. While the students are gathered in circle around their teacher, their point of learning is the Qur’an which is resting on a crossed wood colloquially called as lihal or liar, thus this mode of learning is also referred to as lihal system of learning.

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studies in the 1920s (Abdul Hamid, 2017). When Gamal Abdel Nasser became president of Egypt, he pursued a pan-Islamic scholarship program (Hefner & Horvatic, 1997), with the first batch of Moro ulama graduating from Al-Azhar between the 1950s to 1960s (Lingga, 2004). Egypt was also sending its own ulama to live with and mentor Muslim communities, especially in Southern Philippines. After the Western colonial regimes turned over political powers, and with the burgeoning of Arab states, plus the oil boom in the 1970s, the petro-dollar¹⁴ overseas largesse exploded to include scholarships for Moro ulama – from Libya to Syria, Jordan to Lebanon, Saudi Arabia to Iraq, Kuwait and Qatar. Iranian scholarship came about after the religious establishment headed by Ayatollah Khomeini came to power with the downfall of the Pahlavi dynasty in 1979 (Warnk, 2009).

By the end of the 20th century, madrasah education had expanded across Moro lands and communities, but more pronounced in areas with high number of ulama or religious professionals. Without government support after the demise of the sultanate government, a number of ulama who graduated from overseas scholarship established network with charitable individuals and organizations to finance their madrasah operations, in addition to local donations and school fees. Aside from financing madrasah operation, overseas monies came to be associated with infrastructure development (mainly madrasah and masjid), Islamic propagation (da'wah), and qurban charities (distribution of cow's meat to indigents during Islamic holidays).

In the 1970s, the regime of President Ferdinand Marcos started noticing the importance and influence of madrasah education in the Muslim community. It was by no coincidence that many madrasah leaders joined the ranks of the secessionist movement and became ideologues of the anti-Martial law revolution. The buzzword was "integration" (Abubakar, 2011). In April 1973, Marcos issued Letter of Instruction (LOI) 71-A to his Secretary of Education and Culture "to allow and authorize the use of Arabic as a medium of instruction in schools and/or areas in the Philippines where the use thereof so permits." In March 1982, he issued LOI 1221 (<https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1982/03/31/letter-of-instruction-no-1221-s-1982/>) to the executive department. It was premised on optimizing the country's human resources and preserving and enhancing the nation's Islamic heritage. Part of the government initiatives were geared toward:

1. Formulating and adopting a program for the development of the madrasah schools, at least for the improvement of their teaching staff and instructional

¹⁴Warnk, Holder. (2009). "Alternative Education or Teaching Radicalism? New Literature on Islamic Education in South-east Asia". In *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, Volume 28, Number 4, Page 114. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/14508047.pdf>

"Petro dollars have also funded many other Islamic organizations and institutions in Southeast Asia. Some of the generous donation include the following: the foundation of the Indonesian Islamic Mission Council (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia) received substantial financial backing from Saudi Arabia to build mosques and establish madrasah together with free copies of the Qur'an and Saudi textbooks for educational institutions or to train Indonesian preachers (Noorhaidi 2008: 251; Dhume 2008: 144). The International Islamic University of Malaysia was largely financed with money, alongside Malaysian governmental funds, from the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and from Saudi Arabian and Kuwaiti sources (Roald 1993: 232) especially in the field of madrasah schools, the impact of Middle Eastern connections has been felt more strongly since the 1980s."

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facilities, but priority must be given, wherever possible, to their progressive integration as a sector in the national educational system, with enhanced curricula, to the end that their graduates join the mainstream of Philippine education, endowing them with the capability to contribute to the modernization of their communities within the framework of their Islamic faith.

2. Strengthening the development of programs in Islamic Studies in state institutions of higher learning, especially in Mindanao, including the accelerated strengthening of programs in Sharia law.
3. Establishing and strengthening programs in the teaching and learning of the Arabic language, which was vital not only to educational programs in Mindanao, but was also a valuable field of study and professional education in higher education as a required or optional subject, wherever appropriate. (Abubakar, 2011)

With government initiative at hand, Islamic Studies became also an optional subject in both public and private schools. Islamic studies and Arabic language were offered as collegiate courses at the King Faisal Center (Marawi City)¹⁵ and the College of Islamic and Arabic Studies (Tawi-Tawi)¹⁶ in the Mindanao State University (MSU) system, at the College of Islamic and Asian Studies (CIAS) at Western Mindanao State University (WMSU) in Zamboanga City, and at the Institute of Middle East and Arabic Studies (IMEAS)¹⁷ at the University of Southern Mindanao (USM) in Kabacan, North Cotabato. Presidential Decree 1083 (Muslim Personal Code of the Philippines) was also turned into course offerings as prerequisite for the shari'ah bar examination. The Institute of Islamic Studies (IIS)¹⁸ at the University of the Philippines Diliman campus offers graduate degrees.

However, "integration" eventually became unpalatable for the madrasah leaders and teachers, as it brought to memory the bad experiences of attempts towards "national integration" of ethnic minorities into Philippine society. In Philippine setting, integration connotes "assimilation" at worst and "containment" at best (Mercado, 2009). According to Mercado, the present trend of "integrating" the madaris system into mainstream Philippine educational system requires a serious examination.

¹⁵The complete name is King Faisal Center for Islamic, Arabic, and Asian Studies (KFCAIAS). KFCAIAS is an autonomous college in the MSU Marawi City campus. It was organized as a separate college in 1983. By 2005, the US Embassy observed that aside from this, KFCAIAS also operates a "koranic school" under an agreement with the MSU Board of Regents with funding from the Mecca-based Muslim World League. - https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/05MANILA1098_a.html

¹⁶The College of Islamic and Arabic Studies (CIAS) was initially known as the Southern Philippines Center for Islamic Studies and Training (SPCIST) established in the 90s and came to be known by its present name in the 2000s.

¹⁷IMEAS was established in 1998. The Institute is one among the eleven academic units of the University of Southern Mindanao (USM). offers Bachelor of Arts in Islamic Studies (BAIS) with five majors, such as: Political Economy, Shari'ah Law, Arabic Language, Islamic History, Islamic Values Education, and Halal Management and Technology. It also offers Bachelor of Science in International Relations (BSIR). - <http://www.homelandmedia.com.ph/news/imeas-celebrates-27th-anniversary-foundation/>

¹⁸The institute was created on November 22, 1973, by Presidential Decree 342, as part of the Philippine Center for Advanced Studies (PCAS). Following the Abolition of PCAS on July 9, 1979, by virtue of Executive Order No. 543 issued by the then-President of the Philippines, the Institute was re-established as a separate unit of the University". - <https://iis.upd.edu.ph/about-iis/>

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In the 1990s, another set of government initiative came about as a consequence of the peace process with secessionist groups. The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), with their own network of ulama, mosques, and traditional madaris, included madrasah education in their advocacy agenda. Republic Act 9054 or the Expanded Organic Act¹⁹, passed by the Philippine Congress in 2001, explicitly provides that the regional education system in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) shall be a subsystem of the national education system. As a subsystem, it provides for Arabic language as an auxiliary medium of instruction and that it shall be taught as a subject across grade levels. The integration of Islamic Values is also advocated.

In the Government of the Republic of the Philippines-MNLF Peace Process of 1996, madrasah education was a key component. It was articulated in the Mindanao Nation Agenda and the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (2004-2010). In 2005, Manaros Boransing – who, in the 1980s, wrote about an inventory of traditional madaris in Moroland – was appointed as Undersecretary for Muslim Affairs during the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. At the end of the term, the Madrasah Education Program (MEP) in the Department of Education (DepEd) had an annual investment of P800 million. This investment focused on the seven-point roadmap, which included a Private Madrasah Program that would recognize traditional madaris based on their adoption of DepEd-prescribed secular curriculum together with Islamic Studies and Arabic Language subjects (Saada, 2017). To date, according to the DepEd database, more than 300,000 learners are enrolled in ALIVE Program, and more than 15,000 learners are enrolled in 80 integrated madaris.

From the administration of President Benigno Simeon Aquino III to the current administration of President Rodrigo Duterte, no new undersecretary for Muslim education has been appointed. The absence of strategic leadership for madrasah interventions and the MEP investment has resulted in a decrease in government investment to about P300 million annually – a reduction by 62.5% – at a time when the country as a whole is facing the damaging effects of violent extremism and terrorism (VET)²⁰. While the MEP is being updated and new and additional goals are being pursued under the Duterte administration, the roadmap has not been released or adopted to date.

The passage of Republic Act 11054²¹ or the Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao in mid-2018 provides the Moros another legal opportunity to chart their political destiny. Plebiscites were held on January 21 and February 6 of 2019. The madrasah is considered integral to the Bangsamoro education system (Section 18, Article IX - Basic Rights); in turn, the Bangsamoro

¹⁹Republic Act 9054 – “Act to Strengthen and Expand the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 6734, Entitled ‘An Act Providing for The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao’, As Amended.” - https://www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2001/ra_9054_2001.html

²⁰The Marawi Siege started in May 2017 and continued until October of the same year with government forces capturing the main battleground and declaring the termination of its military assault.

²¹Bangsamoro Organic Law, Republic Act 11054 - <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2018/07/27/republic-act-no-11054/>

system is a subsystem of the national education system (Section 16, Article IX - Basic Rights). Even the public schools will see the integration of Islamic and Arabic studies.

As part of its transition preparation, the MILF Tarbiyyah Committee and its network organization Ittihadul Madaris bil Philippines Inc. have started preparatory and trust-building works with their ARMM counterparts: DepEd, including the Bureau of Madrasah Education (BME), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and a number of donor agencies with existing education initiatives in Bangsamoro areas.

Madrasah Education in the Philippines

Warnk (2009) concludes that “many features of present Islamic education are not the result of traditions dating back to time immemorial, but rather must be regarded as expressions of and reactions to modernity. This becomes even more obvious if one takes into consideration the fact that Islamic educational institutions only became widespread in Southeast Asia at the end of the 19th century.” In Cambodia, the Southern Philippines or Sulawesi, specialized schools in the Islamic sciences only appeared between 1900 and 1950. Generally speaking, the institutionalization of Islamic education in Southeast Asia is a fairly recent phenomenon, occurring over the last 200 years.

Contemporary madrasah education in the country has four categories:

1. The teaching of Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education in public schools nationwide for Filipino learners of Islamic background. ALIVE Program is one of many under the DepEd, articulated under its inclusive education policy.
2. The integrated or private madaris registered with DepEd to implement the ulama-developed and government-prescribed Standard Madrasah Curriculum (SMC) or the Revised Standard Madrasah Curriculum (RSMC).
3. The Tahdiriyyah Program, which is a preschool program for those five years and younger. It was developed by the UNICEF, Tarbiyyah Committee, and BDA, targeting the traditional madaris under the MILF-covered areas.
4. The traditional madaris, which constitute the bulk of all madaris in the Philippines. The latest estimate on the number of madaris and their enrollees is pegged between 600 and 1,000, and the student population is between 60,000 and 100,000. Lanao del Sur, Basilan, and Maguindanao have the biggest number of madaris in operation (Moulton et al., 2008).

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Attempts at making an inventory of madaris in the Philippines can be traced to three important studies:

1. "The Madrasah Institution in the Philippines: Historical and Cultural Perspectives, with a Directory," undertaken in 1987 by Manaros Boransing, Federico Magdalena, and Luis Lacar through a grant from Toyota Foundation.
2. "Survey and Directory of Madaris Institutions in the Philippines," undertaken in 2004 jointly by the DepEd-ARMM and The Asia Foundation (TAF).
3. The third one was undertaken under the Harnessing Opportunities for Muslim Education (HOME) component of the then-AusAID-funded Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao (BEAM) Project Phase 1.²²

The 1987 madrasah inventory covered 647 madaris in predominantly Muslim areas in Mindanao: one was offering tertiary religious education, 30 were offering secondary religious education, 40 were offering primary education, and 35 were offering complete elementary education. The majority were offering incomplete lower-level religious education.

Based on the old regional grouping, the highest concentration of madaris (506) was in Region XII, particularly Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Cotabato City, Iligan City, Marawi City. It was followed by 118 in Region IX, particularly Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Zamboanga City, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte, and Pagadian City. Region X, composed of Agusan, Bukidnon, Cagayan de Oro City, and Butuan City, had 16 madaris. Finally, Region XI, composed of Davao Oriental, South Cotabato, and Davao City, had 11 madaris. A total of 647 madaris were identified.

A total of 104,660 madrasah students were enrolled during this period, supervised by 5,034 madrasah teachers. The same inventory put the Muslim population at more than 2.5 million in 1980. This indicated that the madrasah enrollment and the inventory were only able to cover not more than 0.5 of the Muslim population.

Curricula varied due to differences in educational background of founders and advisers, differences in teacher training orientation, lack of contact among madaris, dialogue among different ethnolinguistic groups, and government indifference. The 1987 inventory found that the curricula were strong on Islamic sciences and Arabic languages, but they did not offer subjects or courses like Filipino and technical and vocational training. Secular subjects like Uloom (Science), Hisab (Mathematics), Tarikh al Alam (World History) were offered and were taught using Arabic as medium of instruction.

²²No copy of this inventory had been successfully accessed during the research period.

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Common Islamic subjects offered included Tawheed (Monotheism), Hadith (Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad), Tafsir (Exegesis), Qur'an, Seerah (The Prophet's Biography), Akhlaq (Ethics), Fiqh (Jurisprudence), and Prayer Practicum. Arabic subjects included reading and writing (khatt), Imlah (Spelling), Muhadathah (Conversational Speaking), Insha' (Writing Composition), Nahwu (Grammar), Balaghah (Rhetoric), Arabic Literature, and Sarf (Conjugation).

The 1987 inventory also mentioned policy conferences in 1982 and 1985 conducted by the national government, which resulted in the first-ever attempt at accrediting madaris. The accreditation aimed to offer government curriculum and give the madaris freedom to determine and integrate Islamic and Arabic learning. Among the schools mentioned that underwent this government accreditation were Jami'at Al-Philippine Al-Islamia, Pangarungan and Pacasum Colleges in Marawi City, Southwestern Islamic Institute in Jolo, Sulu, and Al-Rasheeda High School in Cotabato City.

Most of the madaris then operated on weekends, and it was common for Muslim learners to be enrolled in secular schools on weekdays and in madaris on weekends. The researchers observed that madrasah at that time continued to actively cater to the religious needs of local Muslims more than their economic concerns. The superficial understanding about this sector led to lack of coherence and articulation of support. The "integration" policy was viewed as assimilative by Muslims, as a consequence of clash and dichotomy between secular and religious education. Also, there was an expressed need for a national organization or federation of madaris to address common issues around standardization and accreditation, improvement of facilities and financing, and the need for new policy engagement and program development.

Interestingly, the 1987 inventory summed the prospects:

- The madrasah and development pattern would continue, regardless of internal and external political events.
- Government sincerity and policy of maximum accommodation were considered critical to forging national unity with Muslim in the south of the country.
- The desire within the Muslim community to make education whole for Muslim children and youth was ever-present.

The 2004 Inventory

The DepEd-ARMM and TAF inventory was able to cover madaris in the ARMM, as well as in Muslim communities outside ARMM across Mindanao, Western Visayas, Central Visayas, and the National Capital Region. Listed were 568 madaris in the ARMM and 109 madaris outside of the region, for a total of 673 madaris. The bulk of madaris in the ARMM were found in Lanao del Sur and Basilan. Outside of ARMM, a big number of madaris were found in Lanao del Norte, including Iligan City, followed by those in Zamboanga City and Davao City.

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In terms of registration, 63.49% (428) madaris were not registered or recognized. Only 22.89% (154) were registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), 9.36% (63) with overseas connection, and 4.16% (28) with DepEd permit. Most madaris (91.38%) could no longer specify the year of their establishment, while the rest (8.62%) were put up between 1998 and 2000.

Total student enrollment was 97,926; teaching force was 5,684; and non-teaching force, 404.

In terms of grade or level offering, 35.07% of the listed madaris offered kindergarten (rawdhatul-athfal); 36.50% offered primary education (idadi); 22.50% offered complete elementary (ibtida-i); 4.93% offered secondary education (thanawi); and 0.97% offered college degrees (kulliyah) in da'wah (evangelism), tarbiyyah (education), shari'ah (law), and usuluddin (theology).

In terms of curricular offering, 82.02% were exclusively offering Islamic and Arabic education; 10.10% focused on Qur'an memorization; and 7.88% offered integrated curriculum.

School days in the madaris were mostly on weekends (78.7%), either Friday-Saturday or Saturday-Sunday. There were also those offering classes three days a week (13.67%), and weekdays (8.61%), either Sunday to Thursday or Monday to Thursday.

The majority of madaris were situated either on titled lands (16.05%) or public lands (45.77%); many (38.03%) could not specify land ownership; and one madrasah stood on a military reservation.

In terms of building type, 33.14% were made of a combination of concrete and wood; 26.89% entirely of concrete; 25.26% were made of wood; and 5.20% made of bamboo. 37 madaris were located inside the mosque; eight used residential buildings; and 19 were unspecified.

A little more than half (54.68%) of these buildings were rented; 13.52% were owned; 5.35% were purchased; 9.96% were borrowed; 1.63% donated; and 14.86% unspecified building procurement.

The study also included information such as book collection, sources of income and matriculation fees, classroom equipment and facilities, budget and expenditure; age, civil status, sex, ethnic origin, and educational qualification of madrasah teachers and managers; and employment and service status, salaries, and benefits.

The study has a set of recommendations around governance policy, curriculum; professional development, accreditation and equivalency; and madrasah facilities development and financing.

- The study looks more into the ARMM as a fertile ground for madrasah recognition and development. Thus, it suggests the adoption of a policy on

regional madrasah system, the establishment of a regional madrasah council as a policy-making body, and the standardization of madrasah teachers.

- It proposes the adoption of Arabic language and Islamic values in the national education system for Muslim learners, a unified curriculum for traditional madaris, and piloting of an integrated curriculum for traditional madaris to be able to comply with government requirements for sectarian schools. To make the curricula meaningful, this study also proposes the development of support instructional materials.
- It explores professional development and accreditation. Those teaching Arabic in public schools have to be grounded in English and Filipino, and those teaching in traditional and integrated madaris have to be grounded in pedagogy and child-centered development. Further, this study explores improving their teacher education credentials.
- Finally, it looks into getting subsidy to improve the physical learning environment from both government and non-governmental organizations.

During research for this study, the HOME inventory was not accessed, but lessons were drawn from working with the madrasah sector in Mindanao. Saada (2007) pointed to the need to work with the religious sector, especially with madrasah managers and ulama leaders. This requires an emphatic appreciation of their long-standing issues. Interaction with them is about building space and opportunity conducive for long-term partnership, which in turn are aimed at catalyzing improvement in this sector. It also requires a paradigm shift from dole-out and appeasement mentality towards “can do” developmental approach. Other unresolved legitimate grievances – such as poverty, disenfranchisement, long running conflict, and historical disadvantage – are also playing into the VET ideological narrative.

Madrasah Education Overseas

Traditional madaris are run differently across Southeast Asia, although there is some degree of similarities in curricular contents and teacher qualification. In Muslim-majority countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei, the madrasah is part of the mainstream education system.

In Indonesia, varied modalities exist, such as the ones under the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) and the Ministry of National Education (MONE), as well as those operating independently of these government departments. Luckens-Bull (2001) put the number of elementary and high school enrollees in pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) at 20% to 25% of the total enrollment.

Unlike public schools, whose management and supervision have been decentralized to the district and city governments, the madaris under MoRA are still managed and supervised centrally. In one of his keynote addresses, Dr. Bahrul Hayat, MoRA secretary-general in 2007, pointed to policy and implementation problems brought about by regional differences and varying levels of commitment among madaris (Hayat, 2007).

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Traditional education systems, like the pesantren (Java) and the dayah (Aceh), in Indonesia have close relationships with the community as most of them are owned by the same community that built them. By and large, the pesantren puts more emphasis on learning of Islamic knowledge and sciences while it also serves as a center for Islamic da'wa (propagation) within the Muslim community (Husin, 2018). The dayah provides Islamic knowledge to the community and, in turn, the community supports it. Some of these have remained traditional (salafi) while others have incorporated elements of modernity (Nur, 2007).

These traditional institutions are also teacher-centered. The teacher's position is considered elevated and superior and regarded with respect. The teacher – known as kyai (Java), teuku (Aceh), and tuan guru (in other areas) – is a local leader regarded as someone who knows everything, if not one who knows a lot, destined to teach and not to learn anymore. The teacher is not subject to feedback because the view is that what the teacher does is for the interest of promoting learning (Sri Marpinjun, 2007). While acknowledging the function and relevance of madrasah and pesantren, Sri Marpinjun believes a paradigm change is needed because education is associated with child rights coupled with the indiscriminate intake quality, relatively professional staff, less than optimal learning process, and limited facilities and equipment.

Dr Bahrul Hayat (2007) concludes that the continuing improvement of the management of traditional institutions, and therefore an increase in the quality of learning, graduates will achieve better competence in religious as well as academic subjects and life skills. Heyward (2007), taking off from the Decentralized Basic Education (DBE) project, points to the following needs:

- to learn from projects, both donor- and locally-funded, that have benefitted the sector
- understand how political and developmental needs should complement each other
- go deep to work within the system
- find the balance between technical and financial support
- to build trust and credibility among Islamic schools and madaris in Indonesia, since this is a highly fragmented and sensitive sector, and engaging it takes time

Thus, it is imperative that engagement be flexible and consultative (Powell, 2007). In Malaysia, madrasah recognition can come from either federal or state government. Pondok is considered the forerunner of the Islamic institution in the country. It is a place of learning where students, mostly boys, study and learn for the duration of their schooling. It is near the residence of and is run by a teacher, locally referred to as "guru" or "tuan guru," who is viewed by the community to be exemplifying traditional Malay norms of piety and religious propriety. Because these teachers are not remunerated, parents give them gifts for their sons to be admitted. In return for admission, parents make periodic contribution based on their harvest or trade income. Graduates of pondok often end up as teachers themselves. Hashim, et al. (2011)

explain that given these teachers' high stature in the locality, parents gladly give their daughters' hands in marriage to them so they can receive blessings and secure paradise in the afterlife, and for the couple to build a religious family themselves.

By 2017, the mushrooming of private Islamic schools in Malaysia has received media attention. The *Strait Times* reported in 2017 that 900 new madaris, particularly tahfiz centers focused on Qur'an memorization, had been established within six years prior to 2017. Islamic institutions like tahfiz centers, operating on their own and setting up their own syllabus, are viewed by Muslim parents as able to build character, strengthen religious beliefs, and instill good moral values in their children – features that they do not see in the public school system. Hence, even though many of these institutions charge tuition, while public schools do not, they send their children to them. Tahfiz schools attribute their phenomenal growth to the policy of making their students memorize the Qur'an as a key requirement for graduation. This is unlike the madrasah (Islamic school) system in Malaysia, where some of the madaris are funded by the government, which requires students to take national assessments.

The federal government also allocated RM30 million (S\$9.7 million) to develop tahfiz education, the first time the government provided financial aid to empower privately-run institutions. With more than 600 unregistered tahfiz centers in the country, the federal government is setting up a National Tahfiz Education Policy to integrate and closely oversee their operations. In 2018, the federal government expressed its desire to include other subjects into the tahfiz syllabus, thereby allowing graduates to pursue higher education and join the regular workforce (*The Strait Times*, 2018). In countries where Muslims form an indigenous minority, the madrasah is often not part of the mainstream system and continues to operate without government recognition and supervision. This is not the case in Singapore, where, in return for government recognition, all six local madaris follow the "compulsory education" policy and has been offering non-religious, secular subjects, such as English, Science, and Math since 2003.

Aside from this, Madrasah students are also required to take the national Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) and pass it with a score better than the "average aggregate score of Malay-Muslim pupils in the six lowest-performing national schools" (Norruddin & Nurhaizatul, 2010).

These Singaporean madaris are subject to two levels of accountability. While retaining a degree of autonomy, they are subject to supervision by the *Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura* (MUIS), a quasi-government body, which in turn is responsible to the Singaporean Government (MUIS, 2018). The Muslim community in this city-state was also influenced by the modernist movement in Egypt with the establishment of its first formal madrasah in 1908 (Abdul Rahman & Ah Eng, 2006).

In the Philippine South, there is hope for the madaris with the peace agreement signed between the government and the MILF. The *Bangsamoro Organic Law* (BOL)

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was ratified in plebiscite in February 2019, creating a Bangsamoro political entity. This cannot be said of the madaris in the so-called deep south in Thailand. The assimilative nature of the central government policies in Bangkok in the 1930s and 1940s fueled dissatisfaction among Malay-Muslims and shaped attempts “to revive Malay identity and raise the level of Islamic consciousness, with ponoks or pondoks used to disseminate ideas of Pan-Malay nationalism and Islamic revivalism” (Madmarn, 1999).

The ponok system, whose content, teaching style, and learning space are dependent on the capacity, influence, and motivation of its tok guru or santri (teacher-organizer) is considered the forerunner of Islamic learning institution in Malay-Muslim areas in Southern Thailand. Ponok refers both to the school and to the huts where the students live for the duration of their study. A ponok is simple in structure with personal or intimate student-teacher relations. Although they are studying Qur’an and Arabic, the medium of instruction starts with Malay, the community’s language. Students are expected to observe proper decorum while studying, beginning with wearing the hijab or headscarf and loose dress for girls and the kopiah or head cover for boys (Medrano, 2006).

Two new types of Islamic schools emerged following the realization of the insufficiency of the ponok system (Chinyong Liow, 2009):

- The private or sectarian Islamic schools recognized by the Thai Ministry of Education which include academic and vocational components, aside from religious studies. An example of this is the Pondok Bantan in Nakhon Si Thammarat established by retired Association of Southeast Asian Nations secretary general Surin Pitsuwan and his family (Asia Sentinel, 2013). There is also an association of this type of school, such as the Privat Islamic School Association (PISA) with 86 member-schools, and the Integrated Islamic School Network (IISN) with more than 100 member-schools (Dina, 2017). This is the direction motivated by the central government’s intervention.
- The madrasah established as a consequence of the ponok’s interest to reform itself, driven by local scholars schooled overseas as early as the 1930s. An example of this is the Madrasah Al-Ma’arif Al-Watattaniah Fattani, considered the first madrasah in Southern Thailand organized in 1933 (Wekke et al., 2018). The movement from ponok to madrasah is an internally driven modernist approach.

It is said that many Thai Muslims prefer religion-based education as a matter of their human right, and neglect of this sector has long-term and negative consequences on improving the general well-being of the community. Lack of awareness or ignorance of the problem meant that the much-needed support forced local ponok and madrasah operators to approach any potential benefactors who are willing to assist.

The Asia Sentinel pointed out in 2013 that “what is happening in Southern Thailand shows a need for policy re-evaluation.” From a geopolitical perspective, it said, “the war on terror can only be won through assisting in the education and development

of Muslim communities around the world and not by drone warfare which is apparently the method of choice by the US administration today.” This re-evaluation of policy – to shift from warfare to education and development – is urgent as extremist groups “now understand that the battle for hearts and minds is an important facet of their strategy.”

The importance of education and development intervention is reiterated in another paper, saying, “education, economic opportunity, and participation in local decision making are the basis from which peaceful development will emerge” (The Asia Foundation, no date).

Madrasah Education in Responding to Socio-Economic and Cultural Challenges

Mukhlis (2006), writing about madrasah in Singapore through the lens of state and citizen rights, reiterates the recognition “that the ultimate values and goals to which a society aspires are to be found in the manner by which it educates its young”. Because of this, the Muslim minority’s preference for traditional madrasah without clear placement within the mainstream or national education system is a concern for government, including its economic and social ramifications, potential threat of religious parochialism and extremism, all of which can undermine efforts at nation-building and societal development.

Tan (2009) observed that “as governments in many countries review their education systems to optimize their human capital in an age of globalization, religious schools such as madrasahs (Islamic or Muslim schools) have also come under state scrutiny”. The primary consideration is how prepared the graduates will be to compete in the world of work given that madrasah’s core focus is only on religious education. The challenge these days is how “economic survival rhetoric” and “tactical changes” can influence madaris to embrace them. This is more pressing given that the ASEAN Economic Community has commenced to form a competitive economic region integrated with the global economy (Mahmudah, 2016). While Mahmudah focused her paper on the need to equip madrasah teachers with hard and soft skills, a strategic paradigm shift is first required so that madrasah are not only grounded on religious education but also capacitate graduates with employable or entrepreneurial skills. With only religious education under their sleeves madrasah graduates will have difficulty having gainful employment for themselves and their families in what is now a highly competitive and globalized economy.

On the one hand, the economic benefits of educational and human capital are common government concern because education has a multidimensional impact on communities, e.g., it is one of the building blocks for sustainable development, and instrumental in promoting equal opportunities and higher income levels amongst the entire population. On the other hand, development is more than economic growth as it also encompasses other dimensions of human development. Since development focuses on improving the well-being of individuals on the basis of

their participation and the fair distribution of benefits resulting from their active participation, it does come to mind how madrasah graduates with employable and entrepreneurial skills can participate and benefit from the world of work to maintain their preferred lifestyle (Khan, 2015).

In the past, pondoks produced successive generations of Muslim scholars who in turn contributed to the Malay world of letters (Hashim et al., 2011). This was the time when Arabic-based Jawi was the form of writing in governance and society and the pondok was where elites and commoners sent their children to be educated. The changing socio-economic, cultural, and political scenarios brought about by colonial rule and post-colonial experiences have sidelined and transformed the dynamics away from madrasah frame towards a modern but largely secular world. This sidelining and transformation were created from continuity of the traditional madrasah, but a rupture with modern sciences (Mausen & Veit Bader, 2011).

Even prior to issue of violent extremism of the 21st century, extremism per se is shunned in Islamic theology. Islamic scholars point to Verse 143 of Surah 2: Al Baqarah in the Holy Qur'an: "And thus we have made you a just community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you..."²³. The translated term "just community" is rooted in Arabic words "ummatan wasatan". The word "wasat" is very profound theological term expressed as "balance", "middle", "average"²⁴, "moderate", "better" and "best" by various scholars. In short, wasatiyyah (moderation) is theological antidote to extremism. Aside from extremism, wasatiyyah is also antidote to ghuluww (excessiveness)²⁵, tanattu' (harshness) and tashaddud (severity) in all its forms (Khan, 2017). Therefore, associative values that can be taken out of wasatiyyah would be moderation, tolerance, and clemency. These are some of the Islamic principles at the disposal of Islamic scholars and teachers as they challenge and articulate counter-theological and juristic narrative against violent extremist narrative.

Bistamam-Ahmad (2015) argues that despite the internal and external challenges, traditional madaris across Southeast Asia will continue to exist because it has a unique status in the local culture and its offering of Islamic knowledge is best served through its own modality. Among its uniqueness lies in the following: transmission of Islamic knowledge, formation and networking of ulama, and the process of humanization, not to produce secular human but one that is balanced, in tune with humane nature and submission to God.

The growing interaction across the Muslim World and globalization has resulted in the crisscrossing of ideas and influences (Husin, 2018). In the Philippines, overseas studies among Moro religious leaders and the internationalization of the Moro cause meant that returning scholars and revolutionaries carry with them experiences and influences

²³Sahih International Translation - <https://quran.com/2/143>

²⁴Verse 89, Surah 5: Al-Ma'idah, Holy Qur'an - <https://quran.com/5/89>

²⁵In Verse 171, Surah 4: Al-Nisa' and Verse 77, Surah 5: Al-Ma'idah of the Holy Qur'an the word "taghlu" is used to mean exceeding, and in context, not to exceed.

which they consider worth emulating and transferring to their respective communities. Over time, the syncretic nature of Islamic belief and practices transformed and continue to transform to conform with Islamic orthodoxy. Globalization also meant that Moros are now interacting with other schools of theology and jurisprudence and even sects. Moros are historically Sunni and followers of Madhhab Shafi'i (Shafi'i). these days, there are religious minority within Moro groups such as Shi'a and Ahmadiyyah. Together, this internal reformation has an impact on ethnic practices. The dynamics between reformative Islam and syncretic ethnicities will have to be managed well or else this can result in a polarized Moro society. This also meant that madaris are now as varied as the individuals and groups operating them in the absence of government intervention especially at the national level.

Responding to Governance, Peace, and Security Challenges

Peace and Security: Christopher Blanchard in the CRS Report to Congress (2007) sums up the emergent view on madrasah after the 9/11 tragedy. He states that the Islamic religious schools known as madrasas in the Middle East, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia have been of increasing interest to U.S. policy makers. Madrasas drew added attention when it became known that several Taliban leaders and al-Qaeda members had developed radical political views at madrasas in Pakistan, some of which were allegedly built and partially financed by donors from the Persian Gulf states. This revelation has led to accusations that madrasas promote Islamic extremism and militancy, and are a recruiting ground for terrorist activities. Others maintain that most madrasas have been blamed unfairly for fostering anti-Americanism and for producing terrorists.

The West, the United States in particular, views the flow of charity and donation from the Middle East with concern, especially as these are tied with the propagation of conservative Arab values and radical interpretation of Islam, which they consider to be inconsistent with more moderate beliefs and practices in other parts of the Muslim world (Blanchard, 2007).

However, many, especially from within the religious and madrasah sectors, argue that there is a need to differentiate between the bulk of charities and donations intended for peaceful ends and that marginal portion unscrupulously ending up in the hands of extremist groups or used to further their violent narrative. Linking Islam and violence will give extremists greater scope to attract broad sectors of youth, warns Sheikh Rachid al Ghannouchi, leader of Tunisia's Ennahda (Renaissance) Party (Nada and Nozell, 2015).

So while Islam is in fact a religion of peace, tolerance, and moderation, as stated by Taha Basman of Mindanao Research Institute (Abubakar, 2011), there is now a need to understand the political temperament of some 50,000 Islamic schools in Southeast Asia alone. In the case of Jemaah Islamiyah operatives accosted by Singapore security, none can be traced to any of the local madaris. However, their connection to certain pondoks in Indonesia, together with that in Pakistan,

UNDERSTANDING MADRASAH EDUCATION

Thailand, Cambodia, Philippines, and Malaysia (Hefner, 2009), had tarnished the image of the traditional madaris. Because of this tarnished image, often overlooked is the madaris' role – through theological and juristic approaches as defined by Kassim and Hassan (2004) – as important conveyors of Islamic peace, mercy, and compassion, and as strategic partners in the fight against extremism.

Worldwide, there has been condemnation of violent extremism and terrorism from within the Muslim World, especially from the madrasah and religious sectors. For example, in 2001, Sheikh Abdulaziz bin 'Abdallah Al-Ashaykh, the grand mufti of Saudi Arabia and chairman of the Council of Senior Ulama, responded to the 9/11 attacks: "Hijacking planes, terrorizing innocent people, and shedding blood constitute a form of injustice that cannot be tolerated by Islam, which views them as gross crimes and sinful acts.... Any Muslim who is aware of the teachings of his religion and who adheres to the directives of the Holy Qur'an and the sunnah (the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad) will never involve himself in such acts, because they will invoke the anger of God Almighty and lead to harm and corruption on earth."

In 2014, with the emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), he came out denouncing the group, saying, "The ideas of extremism, radicalism, and terrorism do not belong to Islam in any way, but are the first enemy of Islam, and Muslims are their first victims, as seen in the crimes of the so-called Daesh (ISIS) and Al-Qaeda and their affiliated groups" (Saudi Embassy, Washington DC, 2014).

In 2010, a number of senior ulama took the challenge by scrutinizing the Mardin fatwa of Sheikh Ibn Taymiyyah, which had been misused by VET groups to justify their violent actions – e.g., suicide-bombing and their binary mindset that either people are with them or against them. A conference was convened by the Global Center for Renewal and Guidance (GCRG) and Artuklu University in Mardin, Turkey. Headed by Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Bayyah, the conference had the objectives of having full conceptual understanding of the fatwa, determining its correct text, identifying errors in its transmission, and, based on these, determining a correct understanding of the Mardin fatwa, and investigating the fatwa's benefits for the present day.

When the text of the fatwa was traced to its earliest possible source and investigated, it was discovered that two letters were substituted in a word, which had been the basis of extremist groups' actions – the word was rendered as yuqātal (meaning, "should be fought"), when the correct word turned out to be yu`āmal (meaning, "should be treated"). From its misprint up to this conference was a difference of 100 years (Al-Turayri, 2010). The ensuing Mardin Declaration "is the latest bid by mainstream scholars to use age-old Muslim texts to refute current-day religious arguments by Islamist groups" (Heneghan, 2010).

Concerns about rising violent extremism were also felt at the popular level. A survey by the Pew Research Center in 2014 showed that people have had increasing concerns about extremism in the Middle East, and hold very negative opinions of well-known extremist groups. "In Asia, strong majorities in Bangladesh (69%), Pakistan

(66%), and Malaysia (63%) are concerned about Islamic extremism. However, in Indonesia, only about four-in-ten (39%) share this view, down from 48% in 2013.”

In 2014, Sheikh Yusuf al Qaradawi, head of the International Union for Muslim Scholars, said: “The ISIL declaration of their so-called Islamic Caliphate is but an indication of their lack of knowledge regarding the reality-based jurisprudence. It is totally unacceptable and entirely rejected to deny the legitimacy of all Islamic organizations around the globe as a result of a sheer unilateral declaration of a so-called Caliphate and Caliph by a single group in a complete absence of the Ummah [Muslim community].” (Nada & Nozel, 2015).

In 2015, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation adopted what it called a principled position – it condemns “terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomsoever and wherever, and rejects all attempts to attribute it to any country, race, religion, culture or nationality.” It also believes that violent extremism cannot be tackled by security or military means alone, and that there is context to extremism – contexts that are considered by the OIC as conducive conditions for the spread of terrorism and violent extremism. These include historical injustices, occupation, deprivation, exclusion, discrimination, marginalization, and forced disintegration of institutions.

Extremism flourishes when human rights are violated and generates violence, and violence turns into terrorism. Therefore, there is a “need to counter all types of radical extremist discourse in order to delegitimize the violent and manipulative acts committed in the name of religion, ideology, or claims of cultural superiority” per Resolution 41/42-POL adopted by the 42nd Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers in Kuwait on May 27-28, 2015 (Sawt al Hikma Mandates, <http://www.oic-cdpu.org>).

In 2016, the Nahdatul Ulama, arguably the world’s largest Muslim organization, denounced those who supported violent extremism across the world, and identified elements within the Islamic world as being “the most significant factor causing the spread of religious extremism among Muslims” (Watson & Boykoff, 2016). In the same year, the Bangladesh Islamic Scholars issued a Fatwa on Terrorism. The 62-page document – accompanied by 30 volumes of books, and signed by a total of 1,01,524 people, including 9,320 Islamic scholars – declared militancy and terrorism as “haram” (illegal, immoral, unethical). Copies of the fatwa were sent to the President of Bangladesh, the Prime Minister, the OIC, and the United Nations (Asia News Network, 2016).

The Fight Against Terror. The Singapore National Security Strategy states: “In order to deny militants any ideological space, Muslims must speak out and denounce those who distort Islam. They have to engage the extremists, from the media to the mosque to the madrasah, and assert mainstream Islamic values.”

In 2017, Islamic scholars from Indonesia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan denounced violent extremism, terrorism, and suicide attacks as activities that ran counter to

Islamic principles, in a declaration issued during a conference in Bogor, West Java. This Trilateral Ulema Conference was hosted by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) (Jakarta Globe, 2018). The declaration affirms the role of the ulama in interpreting the Qur'an and Hadith, thus playing a pivotal role in Muslim communities to uphold the true nature of Islam. It recognizes their obligations in promoting Islam's universal values of peace, tolerance, social justice, as well as encourages the adoption of these as guiding principles for the faithful.

The OIC acted on its principled position against extremism and terrorism, among others, by establishing the Center for Dialogue, Peace and Understanding (CDPU) with Sawt Al-Hikma (Voice of Wisdom) (<http://www.oic-cdpu.org>) as its operational arm, conducting workshops on countering violent extremism. An example of this is the Joint Workshop on Countering Violent Extremism, conducted in July 2018 with the International Centre of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism (GCTF, or Hedayah). The OIC also signed a memorandum of agreement with Hedayah to undertake joint activities in countering extremist ideologies on the one hand, and promoting balance and moderation on the other hand. The MOA also calls for exchange of information and expertise.

Participation in Governance. The participation of the religious sector in local decision making is crucial, together with education and development, as it is "the basis from which peaceful development will emerge" (The Asia Foundation, no date). In the Philippines, the ulama's participation in governance came with their appointment to government positions and participation in the elections. These ulama are either teachers or managers of madaris in their locality. Ompia is a political party mainly composed of ulama from the Lanao provinces and had successfully participated in both local and regional elections. The National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF) has seen the appointment of two ulama from Maguindanao and Tawi-Tawi. In Lanao del Sur, ulama have occupied high positions in provincial and municipal governments. Vice Governor Yusoph Alano of Basilan is a young Syrian-educated scholar and member of the Basilan Ulama Supreme Council (BUSC). In the ARMM, the administration of Governor Mujiv Hataman established the Regional Darul-Ifta' RDI in 2015, a regional jurisconsult agency composed of provincial and deputy muftun from the region's five provinces.

The Marawi Siege, from May to October 2017 (ABS-CBN, 2017) was considered the longest urban warfare in modern Philippine history (Agence France-Presse, 2017). Given that the two Maute brothers were trained as religious leaders overseas, media and security spotlight were also focused on the local ulama and the traditional madaris, including the toril, the indigenous religious boarding schools in the locality, and jama'ah tabligh group. There was also a sense of encroaching danger of collective guilt upon Muslims in general and religious sector in particular. Sheikh Abu Huraira Abdulrahman Udasan, the grand mufti of Darul-Ifta' Bangsamoro, issued a religious edict (fatwa), saying, Islam is a religion of inclusivity, not exclusivity; preaching association, not isolation; and religious tolerance, not persecution (Philippine Star, October 20, 2017), and warned against the entry and spread of violent

radicalism or extremism in Bangsamoro (<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net>).

The ARMM Regional Darul-Ifta' (RDI) also issued a statement after the liberation of Marawi City, saying, "It is haram (forbidden and unlawful) to use Islam to justify or legitimize violent extremism and terrorism; it is incumbent upon us all to reeducate our constituents in rediscovering our Islamic faith, which is full of justice, compassion, harmony, and peace; and, imperative upon all [the ARMM constituents] to cooperate and collaborate with stakeholders in preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism in its many forms and manifestations" (<http://www.rdi.armm.gov.ph>).

In fact, in 2015, roughly two years prior to the Marawi Siege, the ARMM RDI had issued a fatwa against terrorism, saying, "Terrorism and mischief cannot be accepted as synonyms for jihad because Islam commands its adherents to be compassionate to all beings in the land; and that the basic purposes of shari'ah include preserving religion, person, mind, property, and dignity of all humans."

Another fact was that ARMM RDI conducted a Regional Ulama Anti-Terror Summit days before the Marawi Siege. It was attended by hundreds of clerics coming from the provinces where there was a strong presence of Abu Sayyaf, Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, and Maute terror groups. The summit aimed at generating consensus among Muslim missionaries in ARMM, who were graduates of Islamic schools in the Middle East and in North Africa, on how they could help, through their best efforts, in the government's anti-terrorism campaign (<https://philstar.com>).

Another pre-Marawi Siege institutional effort towards combatting extremism was undertaken by the Bureau of Madrasah Education, another ARMM agency, by developing the "Unified Standard Curriculum for the Traditional Weekend Madrasah." This curriculum was later on endorsed by ARMM Regional Peace and Order Council (RPOC) through a resolution calling on local government units to have a regular allocation for traditional madaris, provided the latter would use the BME-developed curriculum (<https://pia.gov.ph>). BME is now scouting for donor partners to help them roll out this curriculum among traditional madaris, which have expressed the desire to implement it.

Internally, Bangsamoro has to confront peace and security challenges posed by its pervasive culture of vendetta called "rido" in Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao and "pagbanta" in Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi. It is characterized by sporadic outbursts of retaliatory violence between families and kinship groups, as well as between communities (Torres, 2007; Alaya-Ay, Jr. et al, 2013). Some criticize its pervasiveness as a reflection of weak governance and strong tradition (Adam & Vanden Boer, 2015), as it often occurs in areas where government or a central authority is weak, and in areas where there is a perceived lack of justice and security (Torres, 2007). While Adam and Boer's empirical findings do not support this, the same study found out that "traditional authority solely obtains relevance when this is combined with the coercive and financial resources associated with formal statehood."

Adam and Vanden Boer (2015) added, while traditional authorities, like the sultans and ulama, without a connection to the local executive only play a secondary role at best, as pointed out in the same study, their presence adds value and relevance to the whole conflict resolution process as being in tune with the Islamic prescriptions. One of the manifest influences is the swearing of oath of parties to the conflict before the Qur'an. This serves as a testament to their commitment to the agreement, and that their acceptance of the resolution is strongly aligned and justified in theological terms.

Alaya-ay, et al. (2013) recommended targeting the youth, the next generation, in efforts to increase awareness of the practice and its lasting negative effects on the community. They also cited the return to Islam, to internalize its teachings in the Qur'an and Hadith. Here lies the transformative role of the madrasah – to inculcate the values in students so they would break away from the cyclical, devastating impact of the culture of retaliation. The madrasah is expected to build the foundation for alternative conflict resolution consistent with Islamic precepts, which are very relevant to the Moro context instead of what feels like distant secular approaches that do not resonate in the communities' cultural consciousness and practice.

Another area of conflict resolution where the madrasah and ulama play an important role is in the implementation of Presidential Decree 1083 (Pigkaulan, 2013)²⁶ or A Decree to Ordain and Promulgate a Code Recognizing the System of Filipino Muslim Laws, Codifying Muslim Personal Laws, and providing for its Administration, signed by President Ferdinand Marcos in 1977. It recognizes aspects of Islamic shari'ah as part of the law of the land. This includes civil personality (shakhsiyah madaniya); marriage and divorce (talaq); paternity and filiation; support (nafaqah); parental authority; civil registry of marriage, divorce, and conversion; succession, from wills to shares, from heirs to estate settlement and partition; and the structure and administration of the shari'ah court system.

Local ulama complain about the qualifications required under the decree because they tend to favor Muslim professionals with minimal shari'ah background, as opposed to them who have strong shari'ah credential. Indeed, there is an urgent need to bridge the Philippine shari'ah system with the madrasah sector in order to generate genuine acceptance and relevance within the Muslim community. While aspects of Islamic shari'ah have been recognized as part of the laws of the country, the qualified practitioners from the madrasah sector are not tapped to be part of the shari'ah practice therein.

Either through the indigenous conflict resolution or through the shari'ah court system, there is a strong belief among Moros that "unlike the western win-lose crime punishment approach, the traditional system erases crime, cleanses the violator, and

²⁶Pigkaulan, Parido Rahman. (2013). "Islamic Conflict Resolution Methods and the Contribution of Shari'ah Courts to Dispute Resolution in Mindanao". In *Resolving Conflicts in Muslim Mindanao: Showcasing Four Traditional Methods*. Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPCS) and Institute for Bangsamoro Studies. 2013. Pages 23 to 46 - <http://www.centre-peaceconflictstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/Resolving-Conflict-in-Muslim-Mindanao.pdf>

restores harmony once reparation is met. As such, it is a more positive approach to creating a 'win-win' situation. Moreover, the traditional method of resolving conflicts responds to the demand for cultural solidarity premised on the recognition and respect for the culture and religion of the Moro people" (Durante, 2005)²⁷.

In summary, the term madrasah has its etymological roots in Arabic language, but its contextual root are grounded in communities where Islam has taken hold, with distinction as to how it evolved in Arabic-speaking and non-Arabic speaking communities. In non-Arabic Muslim communities, Islamic learning emerged out of informal small learning circles or halaqah and transformed into indigenous boarding schools, such as pondok in Malaysia, dayah and pesantren in Indonesia, ponok in Thailand, and toril in the Philippines.

On the one hand, the madrasah as is known today is a result of the internal modernist effort in redressing issues associated with the limits of indigenous boarding schools that continue to operate independent of government, pursuing its age-old roles of values formation among young Muslims and establishing the succession of religious leaders and vanguard of Islamic beliefs and practices. On the other hand, while the government has made inroads in influencing a number of madaris to be part of the sectarian sector of the national education system, the long-standing imperative is driven towards integration, adding academic subjects with technical training to ensure madrasah graduates are equipped with employable and entrepreneurial skills. Still, the number is very small.

Recent challenges posed by the emergence of violent extremism put government and media spotlight on the madrasah and its managers, teachers, and graduates. In spite of the growing number of religious leaders and organizations all over the Muslim world denouncing violence, the madrasah sector has not been fully appreciated for its capacity to provide counter-narrative through its own organic strength – theological and juristic tools – powerful enough to counter the push factors that have been identified in previous researches. The Marawi Siege in Lanao del Sur, the BIFF rampage in Maguindanao, and the sturdiness of ASF in Basilan and Sulu are enough reason to protect and promote the madrasah sector, which serves a noble and altruistic goal of keeping the identity and heritage of 13 diverse ethno-linguistic groups together under their shared Islamic heritage.

If Muslim minority should have a place in a multicultural and multireligious national society, their vulnerability should be identified and mitigation put in place. Long-term positive engagement and affirmative initiatives should be pursued. This journey begins with understanding the madrasah sector based on its own merits and the expressed concerns and aspirations of its actors.

²⁷Durante, Ofelia. (2005). "A Lesson on Clan Conflict Resolution in the Philippines". Presented at the 2005 International Symposium: Educating For A Culture Of Peace Through Values, Virtues And Spirituality of Diverse Cultures, Faiths And Civilizations, Multi-Faith Centre, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia, August 10 to 13, 2005. - <http://cpcbrisbane.org/Kasama/2005/V19n3/OfeliaDurante.htm>

CHAPTER 3 STATE OF MADRASAH AND CURRENT DIRECTIONS

This chapter presents the state and current directions of the traditional madaris in the ARMM and adjacent regions. The data are sourced from the survey of 169 madaris, focus group discussions (FGDs), and key informant interviews.

State of Madrasah

A MADRASAH is described as the traditional school for Muslims, a place where they learn Arabic – the language of Qur’an – and understand their faith. In the Philippines, a madrasah is usually set up by private individuals or groups to provide Islamic education to the children in the community. A madrasah is likened to a factory that produces knowledge about Islam as a religion. According to madrasah stakeholders during the FGDs, a community without a madrasah is like a body without a head because it does not have a place where the people can seek knowledge about Islam. This institution of learning is described as unregulated and unrecognized by the government. Consequently, it relies mostly on volunteerism and donations.

While the number of madaris has increased over the years, the available information about them is insufficient. While these institutions have been existing for decades, their development has been relatively slow. This observation is affirmed by Latif (2014) as he concluded that Islamic education in the Philippines has remained stagnant and backwards.

One key informant described the state of madaris this way: “Everyone is swimming for each one’s survival.” Since traditional madaris are not under the supervision of the government, they do not receive direct and regular funding or subsidy from it. Thus, each madrasah has to look after itself, especially when operating in remote areas. Despite this current condition, the madrasah is considered as a very vital institution among Muslims.

School Types

Among the madaris surveyed, 52.7% are classified as Madaris Ibtida-i and Idadi, 24.2% are Ma’ahid, and 23.1% are Kulliyat.

Programs Offered (Per School Type)

There is a wide range of programs offered by traditional madaris. Normally, a madrasah idadi offers both tahderiyyah and ibtida-i. A ma’had offers an additional

TABLE 2. SCHOOL TYPES OF TRADITIONAL MADARIS

SCHOOL TYPE	N	%
MADARIS IBTIDA-I AND IDADI	89	52.7
MA’AHID	41	24.2
KULLIYAT	39	23.1
TOTAL	169	100.0

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thanawi program aside from the idadi program. A kulliyah offers collegiate programs as well as basic education programs.

Based on the survey, 89 madaris offer ibtida-i and idadi programs only; 39 of the 41 ma’ahid, aside from offering thanawi program, also offer idadi program; and 33 of the 39 kulliyat offer idadi and 31 offer thanawi aside from the kulliyah program.

TABLE 3. PROGRAMS OFFERED BY TRADITIONAL MADARIS (PER SCHOOL TYPE)

SCHOOL TYPE	PROGRAM OFFERING		
	IBTIDA-I AND IDADI	THANAWI	KULLIYAH
MADARIS IBTIDA-I AND IDADI (N = 89)	89	0	0
MA’AHID (N = 41)	39	41	0
KULLIYAT (N = 39)	33	31	39

Madrasah Ownership

Traditional madaris may be owned by a family, an organization, an individual, or a community. Many of them(43%) are owned by families, a little over a quarter (28%) are owned by organizations, and 16% are owned by individuals. These include those which are owned by ulama who studied abroad and decided to establish their own madrasah when they returned to the Philippines. Only 13% are community-owned. The owners of community-run madaris are difficult to identify as ownership is just handed down from one madrasah leader to the other.

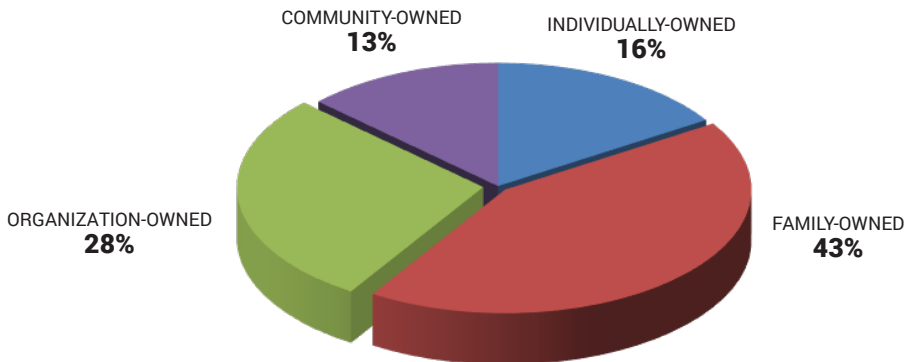


FIGURE 3. TYPES OF OWNERSHIP (IN PERCENT, N=169)

Among different types of traditional madaris, madaris ibtida-i and idadi, and ma’ahid are mostly owned by families, while kulliyat are mostly owned by organizations. Particularly, 43 (or 48.3%) of madaris ibtida-i and idadi, and 15 (36.6%) of ma’ahid are family-owned, while 17 (43.6%) of the 39 kulliyat are organization-owned.

STATE OF MADRASAH AND CURRENT DIRECTIONS

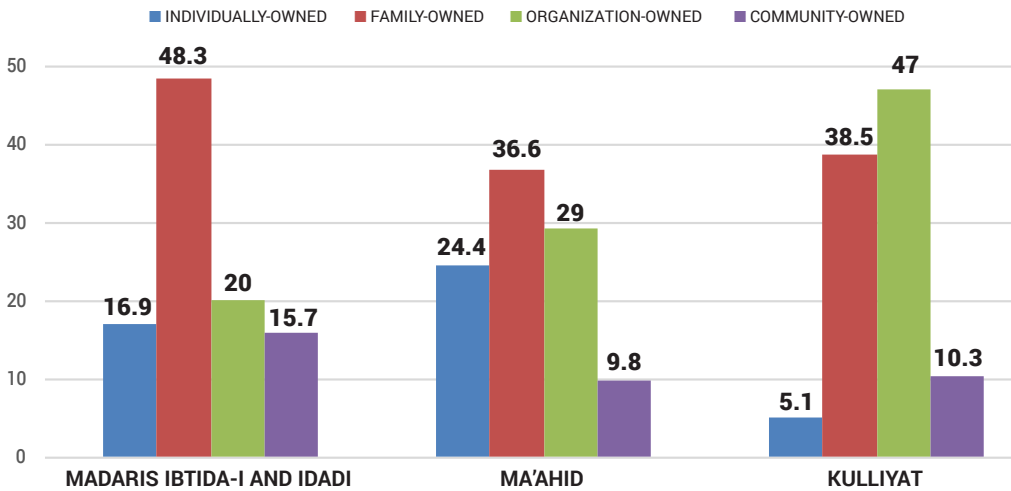


FIGURE 4. OWNERSHIP BY SCHOOL TYPES OF TRADITIONAL MADARIS (IN PERCENT)

Attendance of Madrasah Students in Secular Schools

A very high percentage of madaris have students who are enrolled in secular schools: 100% of madaris offering ibtida-i and idadi programs, 95.8% of those offering thanawi, and 79.5% of those offering kulliyah program. These data explain the earlier findings of the census that most of the madaris, especially those offering ibtida-i, idadi and thanawi hold their classes during weekends as their students are attending secular schools during weekdays.

The scenario where students attend both secular schools during weekdays, and madaris during weekends, reflects the parents' intention for their children to acquire not only employable skills through their attendance in secular schools, but also to learn more about Islam and Islamic values through the traditional madaris. In Islam, seeking education is obligatory, and that knowledge is considered to be the path towards greater closeness to Allah (Khan, 2015). Knowledge can be broadly categorized into two types: knowledge of religion and the knowledge required by the community. It is regarded as the parents' duty to educate their children with the proper knowledge of both types. Knowledge of religion in this case can be acquired through the traditional madaris.

TABLE 4. MADARIS WITH STUDENTS ATTENDING SECULAR SCHOOL BY PROGRAM OFFERINGS

PROGRAM OFFERING	MADARIS WITH STUDENTS ATTENDING SECULAR SCHOOL	
	N	%
IBTIDA-I AND IDADI	161	100
THANAWI	69	95.8
KULLIYAH	31	79.5

Majority of madaris ibtida-i and idadi (81.9%) and ma'ahid (59.4%) reported that at least 76% of their students attend secular schools. Among the kulliyat, however, almost half (45%) reported to have a lesser percentage (25% or less) of students attending secular schools.

RESEARCH ON TRADITIONAL MADARIS IN ARMM AND ADJACENT REGIONS

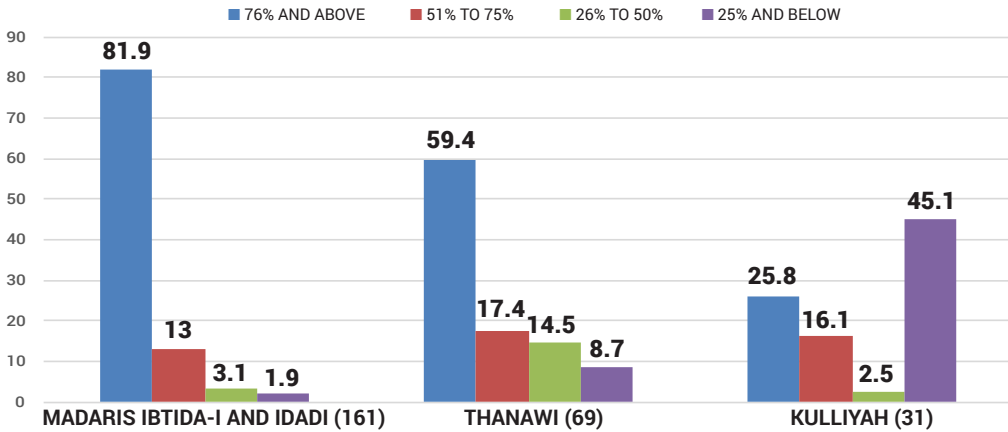


FIGURE 5. PERCENTAGE OF ATTENDANCE IN SECULAR SCHOOL BY PROGRAM OFFERING (IN PERCENT)

Degree Programs Among Kulliyah

There are four degree programs commonly offered by kulliyat: tarbiyyah (education), shari’ah (law), da’wah (Islamic propagation), and usuluddin (fundamentals of religion). Among the 39 kulliyat, 22 (56.4%) offer tarbiyyah while 17 (43.6%) offer shari’ah. There are 15 (38.5%) kulliyat that offer da’wah, while only 5 (12.8%) kulliyat offer usuluddin.

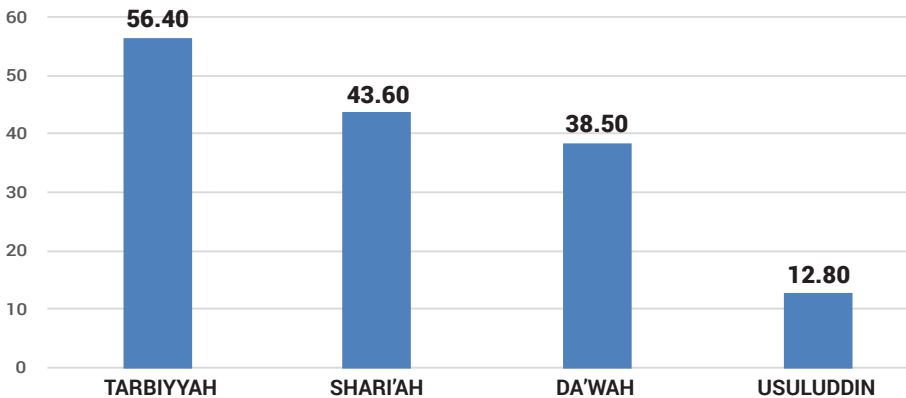


FIGURE 6. DEGREE PROGRAMS OFFERED BY KULLIYAT (IN PERCENT)

The various degrees being offered by kulliyat reflect its goal to develop and produce future religious leaders. Presently, more kulliyat are offering tarbiyyah compared to shari’ah. This eventually translates to more graduates with degrees in education, which can further help improve the teaching and learning process in the madrasah as they become madrasah teachers in the future. This is a significant improvement from the situation before wherein many of those teaching in the madrasah were graduates of shari’ah.

STATE OF MADRASAH AND CURRENT DIRECTIONS

Available Madrasah Facilities

Facilities in any given learning institution are important as these support the overall learning process of the students. As opposed to the common misconception that traditional madaris have classrooms only, other structures and facilities – such as masjid, musallah, maktabah, wudhu, and maktab among others – can also be found.

Masjid and musallah are practicum facilities in the proper observance of daily prayers, congregational prayers, and delivering khutbah (sermon). The ablution area is essential in the performance of physical cleansing prior to any salah or ritual prayer. The management office or maktab provides a safe place for private consultation and counseling between madrasah head and staff, students, and parents. The library or maktabah is an important depository of essential Islamic references, which are often in limited supply. Ghufurat al tadrīs or faculty room is a place for teacher interaction, mutual consultation, and preparation of lessons. The muqsat or canteen is a place where halal food is sold.

Based on the survey, almost all of the traditional madaris have classrooms. The data in Figure 7 show dominant available facilities aside from classrooms for teaching-learning interaction, such as full-fledged masjid or mosque, temporary musallah (prayer nook), and wudhu or ablution area. Also available in limited number are maktab or management office, maktabah or library, ghufurat al tadrīs (faculty room), and muqsat (canteen).

Common facilities among madaris ibtida-i and idadi, ma’ahid, and kulliyat include classrooms, mosques, and ablution areas. However, it is observed that more facilities are available among kulliyat.

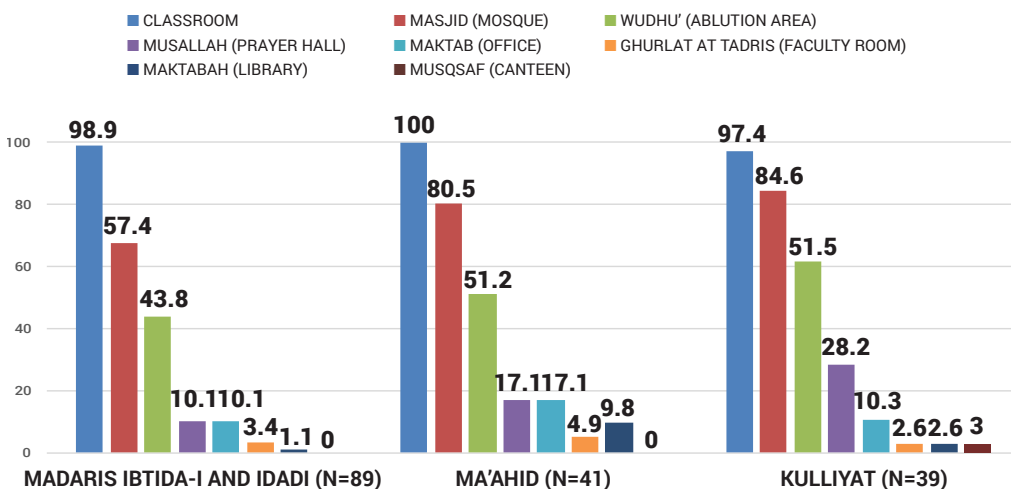


FIGURE 7. AVAILABLE MADRASAH FACILITIES (IN PERCENT)

Madrasah Curriculum Models

A significant number of traditional madaris (65.7%) use local or traditional curricula. These include those that were developed within the Philippines and handed down from one madrasah teacher to the next. This curricula can be described to have already evolved through the years as they are being used within the madrasah.

There are madaris that modeled their curricula overseas. Among them, 46.7% are using Saudi Arabian model, while 9.5% are using the Libyan model. It is worth noting that the curriculum used within a madrasah often follows the model of the country from which their teachers graduated. Results of the survey showed that most of the madaris which are using foreign models have teachers who are graduates from Saudi Arabia. Given this case, those who studied in Saudi were able to secure textbooks and teaching materials during their overseas schooling, and used these when they returned to their madrasah in the Philippines, or when they started their own madrasah.

The rest of the madaris which model their curriculum overseas do this based on the curriculum from other Middle East countries. There is also the use of Pakistani and Indonesian models.

The use of overseas models is largely due to the returning scholars setting up and managing their own madaris. Some studies have raised concerns over the use of these overseas curricula, which have different context, coupled with the absence of government accreditation and supervision. They make the local madaris vulnerable to conservative values and radical interpretation that is inconsistent with the moderate beliefs and practices of local community (Blanchard, 2007).

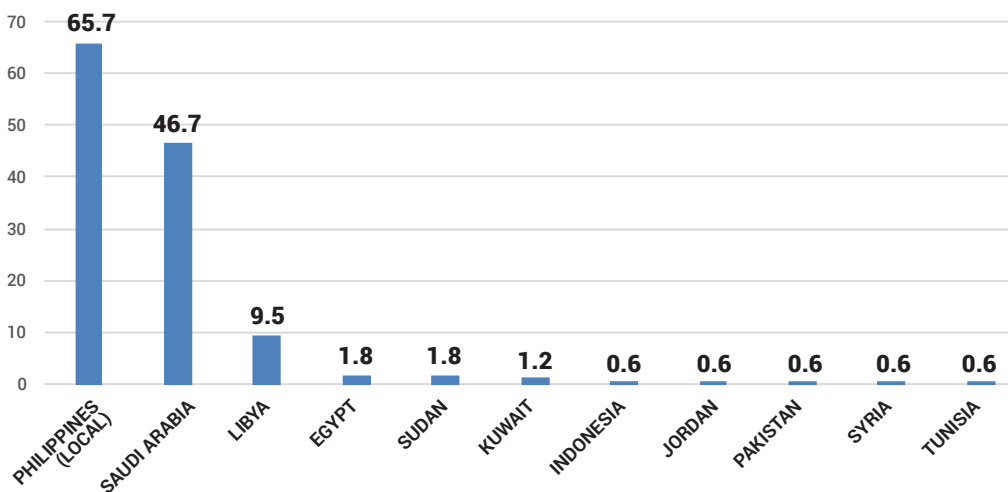


FIGURE 8. CURRICULUM MODELS OF TRADITIONAL MADARIS (IN PERCENT)

STATE OF MADRASAH AND CURRENT DIRECTIONS

Priority Expenditure in the Operation of Traditional Madaris

Standard expenditure in any school are:

- Personnel services (PS) – i.e., salaries, honoraria, and allowances
- Maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE) – i.e., utility bills, school supplies and minor repairs
- Capital outlay (CO) – i.e., school and facility building costs
- Professional development (PD) – i.e., training of managers and teachers
- Curriculum, pedagogy, assessment (CPA) – i.e.; curriculum guide, teacher’s references, and instructional materials

Table 5 shows the expenditure on personnel services is the top priority expenditure among most madaris. During the FGDs, stakeholders described this expenditure not as salary but as allowance and honorarium, emphasizing that these budget items are not regular in nature. If money is available for this purpose, then the teachers and staff receive some meager amount, but if funds are not enough, then they receive nothing.

The succeeding priority expenditure are on operating expenses and capital outlay. While still considered as important, their least priority expenditure are on professional development and on curriculum and instructional materials.

TABLE 5. PRIORITY EXPENDITURE IN THE OPERATION OF TRADITIONAL MADARIS

RANKING	PERSONNEL SERVICES(PS)	MAINTENANCE AND OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES (MOOE)	CAPITAL OUTLAY (CO)	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD)	CURRICULUM, PEDAGOGY, ASSESSMENT (CPA)
1 MOST PRIORITY	76.9	2.4	15.4	2.4	2.4
2	12.4	40.2	28.4	10.1	8.3
3	8.3	35.5	34.3	13	8.3
4	1.2	14.8	5.9	52.7	24.8
5 LEAST PRIORITY	0.6	6.5	15.4	21.3	54.4

Based on these results, the priority expenditure of the madaris can be characterized as being on the subsistence level – basic expenditure to sustain its operation. The pressing need to provide for teachers’ allowances becomes even more challenging as madaris operate through volunteerism, relying heavily on donations. If allowances for madaris teachers and staff are not regularly provided, the overall learning process of the students will certainly be jeopardized.

RESEARCH ON TRADITIONAL MADARIS IN ARMM AND ADJACENT REGIONS

Sources of Income

Faced with the enormous expenditure needed to sustain their operations, traditional madaris have to look for ways to fund them. As a rule, traditional madaris are able to cover their school expenditure through student tuition (56%), parents’ contribution (55%), and individual donations (48%). Except for student tuition, the two common sources of funds reflect volunteerism.

Another way of meeting the school expenditure requirements is through local government support, either from the barangay (32%) or municipal/city (28%).

Data also revealed that contribution from overseas countries and NGOs is very minimal. Stakeholders pointed out that, after the 911 incident, support coming from overseas had decreased drastically.

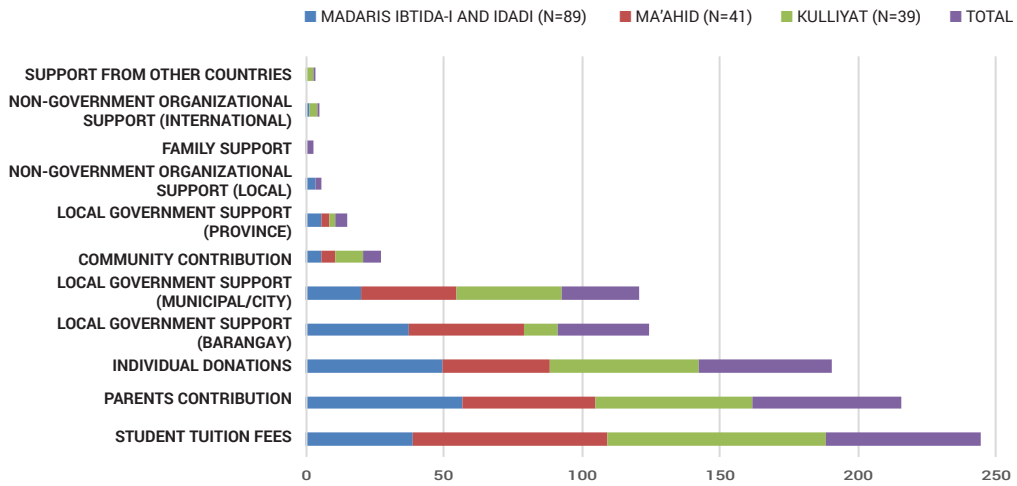


FIGURE 9. SOURCES OF MADRASAH INCOME (N = 169)

In terms of school type, the main sources of income to keep up with school expenditure among madaris ibtida-i and idadi are parents’ contribution (56.2%) and individual donations (49%). Again, it is worth mentioning that these sources are voluntary in nature.

Among the ma’ahid and kulliyat, tuition fees comprise the main source of income – 71% and 80%, respectively – followed by parents’ contribution, which is at 49% among ma’ahid and 56% among kulliyat.

With respect to the support provided by the government, barangay contribution is higher among the madaris ibtida-i, idadi, and ma’ahid, while the contribution from the provincial government is higher among the kulliyat. It can be said that the level of support provided to these traditional madaris is determined by their proximity to where the local government is.

STATE OF MADRASAH AND CURRENT DIRECTIONS

Madaris ibtida-i, idadi, and ma'ahid are often located within the barangays; thus, contribution from the barangay local government is more accessible. Kulliyat are often situated within the central area of the province, making them more proximate to the provincial government. There is no known support from the national government.

Although minimal, community contribution was also reported. This includes collection from the community through an envelope being passed around. In this instance, names of individual donors are not anymore identified.

Membership in Madrasah Network, Federation, or Association

Of the 169 traditional madaris, 111 (65.7%) are members of a network, a federation, or an association. Membership is very evident among kulliyat (82.1%), followed by ma'ahid (73.2%).

TABLE 6. MADRASAH MEMBERSHIP TO A NETWORK, FEDERATION, OR ASSOCIATION (IN PERCENT)

RESPONSE	MADARIS IBTIDA-I AND IDADI (N=89)	MA'AHID (N=41)	KULLIYAT (N=39)	TOTAL (N=169)
YES	55.1	73.2	82.1	65.7
NO	44.9	26.8	17.9	34.3
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Among those who reported membership, a very high percentage (82%) belong to Ittihadul Madaris Bil Philippines Inc., which is based in Cotabato City. This network covers the madaris that are members of the tarbiyyah committee of the MILF and partnered with UNICEF in implementing the Tahderiyyah program. This program has understandably encouraged these madaris to be part of this network.

There are only very few madaris that reported membership to other networks, such as the National Association of Bangsamoro Education Inc. (NABEI) (2.7%) and the Federation of Private Madaris in the Philippines (2.7%) based in Marawi City.

TABLE 7. NETWORK, FEDERATION, OR ASSOCIATION AFFILIATION (IN PERCENT)

NETWORK	MADRASAH IBTIDA-I AND IDADI	MA'AHID	KULLIYAT	TOTAL
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF (NABEI) BANGSAMORO EDUCATION INC.	4.1	0	3.1	2.7
FEDERATION OF PRIVATE MADARIS IN THE PHILIPPINES	0	3.3	6.3	2.7
ITTIHADUL MADARIS BIL PHILIPPINES INC.	89.8	70	81.3	82
LAMITAN MADRASAH ASSOCIATION	4.1	3.3	0	2.7
UNSPECIFIED	2	23.3	12.6	10.8

School Calendar Used by the Madaris

Majority of the traditional madaris, 99 (59%), use the Hijrah calendar, while 66 madaris (39%) use a combination of Hijrah and Gregorian calendars in their school operation.

Undertakings After Thanawi/Kulliyah Graduation

Among the 67 traditional madaris that offer thanawi/kulliyah, 51% reported that most of their graduates go for employment, while 48% said their graduates pursue further studies. Entrepreneurship as an option is seldom pursued after graduation.

TABLE 8. UNDERTAKINGS AFTER THANAWI/KULLIYAH GRADUATION (N = 67)

ACTIVITY	%
FURTHER STUDIES	47.8
EMPLOYMENT	50.8
ENTREPRENEURSHIP	1.4

Locale of Higher Studies of Thanawi/Kulliyah Graduates. Thirty-two madaris reported that most of their graduates pursue further studies. Out of this number, 62% stated that their graduates pursue it locally (within the Philippines), while 38% go overseas (Saudi Arabia).

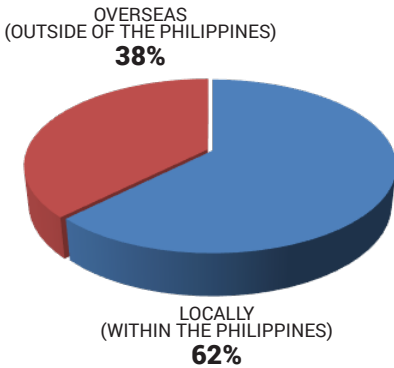


FIGURE 10. LOCALE OF HIGHER STUDIES FOR THANAWI/KULLIYAH GRADUATES (N=32)

Among madaris graduates who studied locally, 55% went to Cotabato City, 15% went to Marawi City, and 10% in Baguio City. They may have preferred these cities because of the presence of higher institutions offering specialized programs – for instance, the Jami’at Cotabato in Cotabato City, Jami’at al Waqf in Marawi City, and Al-Ma’rif Institute in Baguio City.

All of the 12 madaris that reported to have graduates mostly going overseas mentioned that they went to Saudi Arabia to study. This reflects the assertion made in previous findings about petro-dollar largesse from the Middle East to include scholarships (Noorhaidi 2008; Dhume 2008, Warnk 2009).

Thanawi/Kulliyah Graduates Seeking Employment. Thirty-four traditional madaris mentioned that most of their graduates seek employment. Of the 34, 88% reported that most of their graduates are employed in traditional madaris, while only 6% in integrated madaris. This data implies that traditional madaris are still the employment destination of their graduates. As they are trained by the madaris, it is also in madaris where their qualifications are applied. This further indicates that employment opportunities among the graduates are limited only to teaching Islamic or Arabic subjects in madaris. This finding validates the general observation made by the madrasah leaders during the FGD in the Lanao provinces that “madrasah graduates have limited economic opportunities after graduation.”

STATE OF MADRASAH AND CURRENT DIRECTIONS

Only a very small percentage (3%) reported their graduates to be employed as ALIVE teachers at DepEd, while another 3% had graduates being employed in local governments.

The limited employment opportunities available to the graduates of traditional madaris can be explained in the way the educational system among the Bangsamoro-dominated areas in Mindanao is exclusively dichotomized into spiritual and secular. According to Kulidtod (2017), the former is learned in the madrasah while the latter in the Philippine public educational institutions. Those who studied in the madrasah are well-versed on the Arabic language but are experiencing difficulty understanding and speaking the English language, which is the medium of instruction in secular schools. Because these two educational systems are practiced exclusively, graduates of the secular system have better employment opportunities, while those from the madrasah are mostly either jobless or underpaid on account of their being employed only in small privately-run madaris.

Guleng (2016) asserted that the vast majority of madaris focused almost exclusively on religious instruction, thus students who attended them did not receive instruction in subjects that would enable them to attend universities or compete for positions in the larger society. Thus, madaris graduates, some of whom obtained an advanced Islamic education in the Middle East, are employable only as poorly paid teachers in Islamic schools.

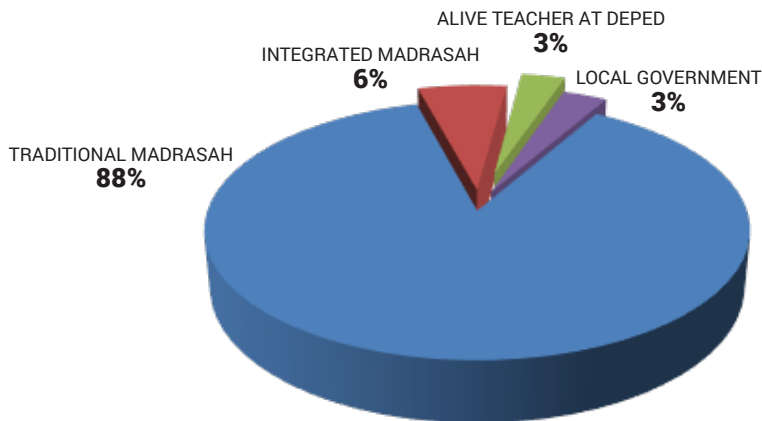


FIGURE 11. NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT (N=34)

Current Directions

The current directions that traditional madaris are taking can be identified based on how they operate at present. These are: for the preservation and transmission of Islamic faith and identity; as symbol and guardian of Islamic tradition and practices; and as center for Islamic values and leadership formation.

Preservation and Transmission of Islamic Faith and Identity

The madrasah is a vital institution in the preservation and transmission of Islamic faith and identity. Madaris are the oldest educational institution in Mindanao and are considered to be the single most important factor in the preservation of the Islamic faith and culture in the Philippines (Kulidtod, 2017).

As articulated during the FGD and KII, the presence of madrasah preserves Islam because it is where Muslims seek knowledge on the true teachings of Islam. It is where young children develop and understand their Islamic faith and identity as Muslims. Over and above providing knowledge of Islam, the madrasah is also instrumental in molding students to become practicing Muslims and in forming Islamic values.

This important role of the madrasah is further highlighted in a country whose population is predominantly non-Muslim. By equipping students with the real teachings of Islam, the madrasah is able to produce graduates who are good examples in the community.

Symbol and Guardian of Islamic Tradition and Practices

Beyond being a school for learning, the madrasah is also a symbol of Islam (Rodriguez, 1993). It provides students with an avenue to carry out and practice Islam. Stakeholders regard the madrasah as a place where cultural heritage is passed on to the next generation.

One of the ways of professing one's faith is by celebrating religious holidays. The survey conducted has identified two religious holidays which are commonly celebrated by most of the traditional madaris: the Eid ul Adha (Feast of Sacrifice) and Eid ul Fitr (feast upon breaking of the fast), as celebrated by 96% and 88%, respectively. While other religious holidays are also being celebrated, these two mentioned are those considered as basic and essential.

Other holidays, such as the Amun Jadid (new year) and Mawlut an-Nabi (Prophet Muhammad's birthday), are observed by 18% and 8% of the madaris, respectively.

STATE OF MADRASAH AND CURRENT DIRECTIONS

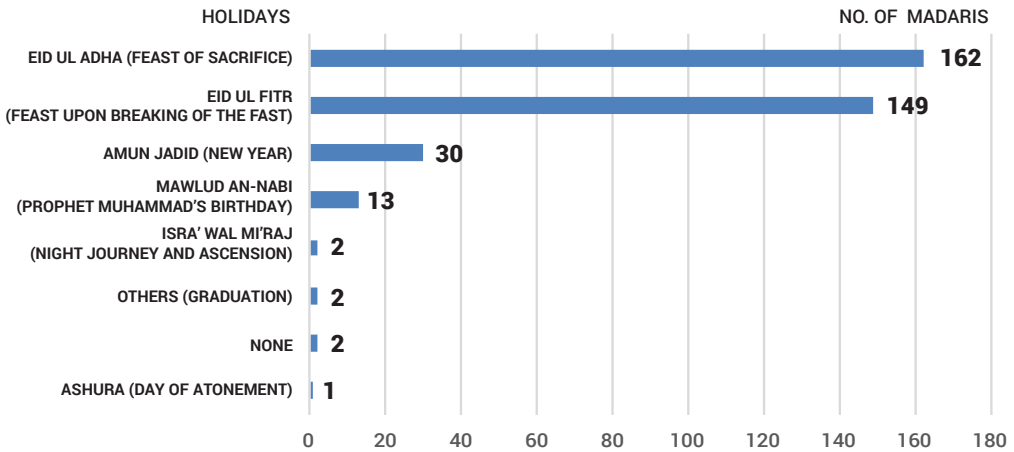


FIGURE 12. RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS CELEBRATED BY THE MADRASAH (IN FREQUENCY, WHERE N=169)

This high observance of religious celebrations among the traditional madaris reflects the degree of their deep sense of meaning and transcendence in the Islamic faith, which can be passed on to students.

When celebrating religious holidays, the madrasah conducts various activities. Based on the survey, the most common activity done (57%) is community buffet (kanduli/pagjambu-jamu). Other commonly-conducted activities include Qur'an recitation (Tilawatil Qur'an) - 41%, Congregational prayer (Salatul Jama'ah) - 38%, and quiz bee - 37%.

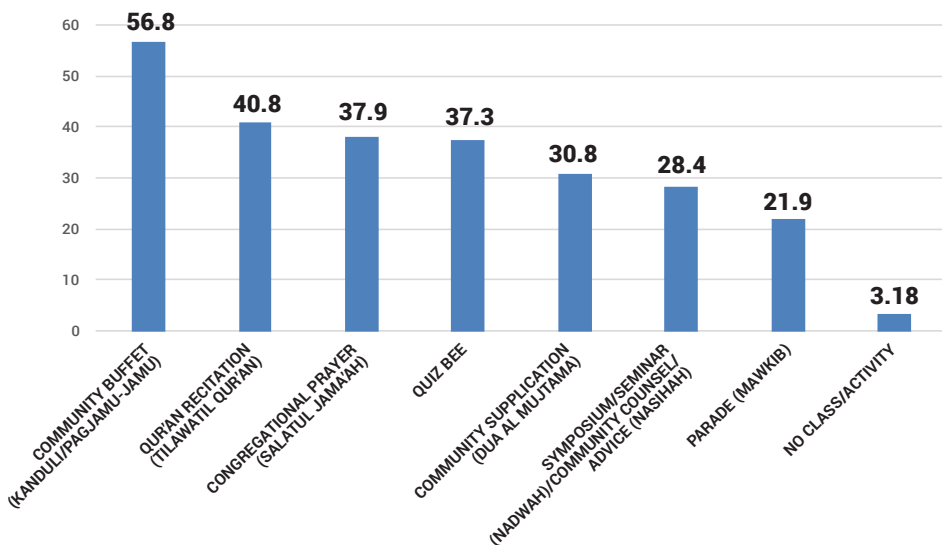


FIGURE 13. ACTIVITIES BEING CONDUCTED WHEN CELEBRATING HOLIDAYS (N=169)

Celebrating religious holidays and conducting the aforementioned activities as part of the celebration significantly provide the madrasah students with opportunities not just to practice their faith but also to further strengthen it.

Key informants and FGD participants regarded the madrasah to have a big contribution in preserving Islamic culture through teaching and practice. The madrasah becomes the venue where students learn to pray, and how to dress appropriately, such as wearing the hijab. Students are taught to clean their hearts and minds by praying, reciting, and remembering Allah. The set of rituals in the madrasah is a menu on how to be a pious man or woman, not only for the individual but for society as well (Bustamam-Ahmad, 2014).

Students in a madrasah are also taught to distinguish what practices are considered halal or legal, and those that are considered haram or illegal in the context of Islamic law. This is important as it provides guidance to students in their day-to-day living as Muslims.

As shared by stakeholders, students also learn about Prophet Muhammad as a role model – his attitudes, ways in dealing with self, family, and society.

The following are additional comments provided by the stakeholders:

- Moro identity is further imbibed in the madrasah as they consider Islam to have predated colonial history.
- The madrasah provides an education that teaches students to appreciate history, culture, and identity of the region.
- The madrasah has a big contribution in preserving Muslim culture and Islam religion. It is the main institution for teaching culture and Islamic tradition since it is a continuing platform of learning where young people get to know their identity.

The stakeholders also believe that the madrasah serves as a good venue for clarifying current indigenous practices of the Moro community which are consistent and inconsistent with Islamic teachings or those which are not Islamic but form part of the Moro culture:

- The madrasah can clarify which ones are consistent with Islamic law (shari'ah) and which one is customary (adat).
- The madrasah helps students understand the difference between Moro's ethnic identity and Muslim identity. There are Moro practices that are inconsistent with the Islamic faith. These should be studied and changed, especially those that can do more harm than good to the community.

Center for Islamic Values and Leadership Formation

Values formation. As an institution providing Islamic education, the madrasah is instrumental in producing graduates equipped with Islamic values. These values are important in the holistic development of every Muslim.

Below are the statements mentioned by various stakeholders on the role of the madrasah in values formation:

- The madrasah develops positive values, such as taqwa (piety), iman (faith), ibadah (worship), and amal saleeh (righteous deeds).
- The madrasah teaches students to have and practice adab (good manners and right conduct).
- It inculcates in the students the use of maratabat/martabbat (sense of honor) in a positive way.

Leadership and governance. Islam encourages the acquisition of knowledge and its use for the benefit of humanity (Kahn, 2015). While knowledge is needed to fulfill religious and spiritual responsibilities, it is also very important for achieving social and economic development for the wellbeing of the community, and for ensuring social harmony, freedom, and human rights. The knowledge acquired in the traditional madrasah can serve as a solid foundation when students later take on leadership and governance responsibilities in society. Kulidtod (2017) emphasized the need for Muslims to have a strong foundation in religious upbringing and spiritual discipline so that when they step into the world of service they can be models of utmost honesty and commitment to public service.

The FGD participants also mentioned the significant role played by the madrasah in the aspect of leadership and governance:

- As an institution of education, the madrasah is really envisioned to develop and produce future leaders with character and faith.
- It produces leaders with a well-balanced education (graduates of secular and madrasah education).
- It helps in developing leaders with clear goals, honest, caring, God-fearing, and with a strong sense of amanah (stewardship).
- The madrasah teaches students the rights and responsibilities of leaders and constituents; consequently, they help in developing and producing good citizens.

While the participation of madrasah graduates in local governance has just started becoming visible, the madrasah's role as an educational institution that produces honest and responsible leaders cannot be underestimated. By producing leaders of character and faith, the madrasah's existence in the community has become even more relevant.

Development of Religious Leaders

The madrasah as an institution of learning also produces graduates who become religious leaders. Based on the survey, kulliyat are now offering four degrees: tarbiyyah (education), shari'ah (law), da'wah (Islamic propagation), and usuluddin (fundamentals of religion). These degrees prepare graduates to take on these important responsibilities in their communities. Stakeholders mentioned the following statements regarding this preparation for future religious leaders:

- The graduates of traditional madrasah go for higher studies to become aleem to be able to lead the Muslim communities.
- The madrasah helps prepare its students for further studies overseas to become aleem (scholars, religious professionals).

CHAPTER 4 ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

IN RECENT years, the weaknesses of the traditional madaris have become a major concern, especially of the national, regional, and local government, the community, and of the madaris themselves. These madaris have been operating on a meager budget, relying mostly on local and limited foreign donations. This translates to low remuneration for teachers, lack of basic facilities and instructional materials, and the problems of competence and adequacy of the curriculum used in most madaris. These problems have been exacerbated by the allegations leveled against them of their link to violent extremism and terrorism. Another challenge confronting traditional madaris is their need to obtain government recognition in order for them to get support to be able to offer quality education and to ensure their continuing academic growth.

Most Pressing Problems

The traditional madaris have been operating for many years now and have encountered major problems. Since this study elicited information on major problems affecting the operation of the traditional madrasah, the madrasah leader-respondents were asked to rank the five areas that may obstruct the delivery of quality education among traditional madaris. These are:

- (a) personnel services
- (b) maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE)
- (c) capital outlay
- (d) professional development
- (e) curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment

The ranking of items ranges from 1 as the most pressing problem and 5 as the least pressing problem, while the numbers in between indicate varying degrees of the extent of the problem as perceived by them. The results are presented by type of madrasah. It is noted that the problems confronting the operation of madrasah vary according to the level of programs offered.

Pressing Problems Among Madaris Ibtida-i and Idadi

This type offers the following education programs: primary (ibtida-i) and intermediate (idadi). Among the five items, the most pressing problem affecting the operation of the majority (58.4%) of traditional madaris pertains to personnel services, specifically the inability to pay adequately the salaries of teachers and staff. As mentioned by a number of respondents, many of the teachers are given only an honorarium, and not a salary. This implies a lower pay than what is required by law and most often not on a regular basis.

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A big majority of them consider capital outlay the second and third pressing problem with 34% and 36%, respectively. This shows that many of the respondents are unable to find funds to improve their current facilities and construct new classrooms and other facilities, like library, office, or faculty room. In this survey, the available facilities of the majority of traditional madaris offering ibtida-i and idadi are classrooms and musallah (prayer hall).

The problem of MOOE is ranked third by 44.9% of the madaris, while the problem of professional development, which is the need to train managers and teachers, is ranked fourth by close to 50% of the respondents.

The least pressing problem (ranked fifth) considered by the majority (51.7%) is the need for a written curriculum, reference materials, teaching strategies, and grading standards. Curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment are the fundamentals of basic education. The results reveal that this is an inconsequential issue in the traditional madaris offering ibtida-i and idadi. This may be due to the nature of the subjects offered. In teaching Arabic language and in Qur'an reading in most of these traditional madaris, the teachers use materials they obtained in the school where they graduated.

TABLE 9. RANKING OF PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE OPERATION AMONG MADARIS IBTIDA-I AND IDADI (IN PERCENT, WHERE N=89)

ISSUES	1	2	3	4	5
Personnel services (PS), i.e., Inability to pay staff adequately and on time	58.4	27.0	10.1	2.2	4.5
Maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE), i.e., inability to pay utility bills, school supplies, and minor repairs	4.5	31.5	44.9	6.7	12.4
Capital Outlay, i.e., inability to construct new classrooms and facilities	34.1	36.4	13.6	13.6	2.3
Professional development, i.e., need to capacitate and train managers and teachers	1.1	5.6	16.9	46.1	28.1
Curriculum, pedagogy and assessment, i.e., need for written curriculum, reference materials, teaching and grading standards	2.2	0.0	14.6	31.5	51.7

Pressing Problems Among Ma'ahid

This generally offers program on thanawi (secondary) education, which include the offering of subjects, like science, mathematics, etc., using Arabic language as the medium of instruction. The teaching of these subjects in ma'ahid requires specialized teachers who demand a high pay for personnel services. The results show that seven of 10 respondents cited paying personnel services as the most pressing problem among the five major problems listed, while only close to 5% ranked this as the least pressing problem.

The problem of MOOE has been ranked differently by a good number of respondents. About 39% ranked this second while 31.7% ranked it third.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The problem of capital outlay was ranked second and third by 39% and 34.1%, respectively. Ranked fourth by 48.8% of the respondents was the problem of professional development of teachers and managers.

A little higher than 50% of the respondents ranked curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment as the least pressing problem, while close to 40% ranked it as fourth pressing problem. It is noted that majority of those teaching in ma'ahid use the curriculum that is locally or traditionally available or that from Saudi Arabia, where the teacher graduated.

TABLE 10. RANKING OF PROBLEMS IN THE OPERATION AMONG MA'AHID (IN PERCENT, WHERE N=41)

ISSUES	1	2	3	4	5
Personnel services (PS), i.e., Inability to pay staff adequately and on time	73.2	14.6	4.9	2.4	4.9
Maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE), i.e., inability to pay utility bills, school supplies, and minor repairs	7.3	39.0	31.7	7.3	14.6
Capital Outlay, i.e., inability to construct new classrooms and facilities	17.1	39.0	34.1	4.9	4.9
Professional development, i.e., need to capacitate and train managers and teachers	2.4	4.9	22.0	48.8	22.0
Curriculum, pedagogy and assessment, i.e., need for written curriculum, reference materials, teaching and grading standards	0.0	2.4	7.3	36.6	53.7

Pressing Problems Among Kulliyat

It is a madrasah that offers a four-year program such as tarbiyyah, shari'ah, da'wah, and usuluddin, and other subjects. The subjects are taught in Arabic language. A big number of them (71.8%) cited the payment of salaries for personnel services of teachers and staff as the most pressing problem. Teachers who are qualified to teach these specialized subjects demand higher pay. This may explain why paying the salary of teachers is a problem. The study has found out that majority of the kulliyat rely on the tuition fees of students, parents' contribution, or individual donations, which are insufficient to cover the operation of the schools.

Other problems as ranked by the majority are as follows:

- (a) Maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE) – ranked second by 43.6%
- (b) Capital outlay – ranked second by 30.8% and third by 28.2%
- (c) Professional development – ranked fourth by 43.6%
- (d) Curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment – ranked fourth by 35.9% and fifth by 43%.

Majority of the teachers in kulliyat use a curriculum that is locally or traditionally available, or from Saudi Arabia, where some of them graduated.

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TABLE 11. RANKING OF PROBLEMS IN THE OPERATION AMONG KULLIYAT (IN PERCENT; WHERE N=39)

ISSUES	1	2	3	4	5
Personnel services (PS), i.e., Inability to pay staff adequately and on time	71.8	15.4	7.7	0.0	5.1
Maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE), i.e., inability to pay utility bills, school supplies, and minor repairs	7.7	43.6	15.4	12.8	20.5
Capital Outlay, i.e., inability to construct new classrooms and facilities	20.5	30.8	28.2	7.7	12.8
Professional development, i.e., need to capacitate and train managers and teachers	0.0	10.3	28.2	43.6	17.9
Curriculum, pedagogy and assessment, i.e., need for written curriculum, reference materials, teaching and grading standards	0.0	0.0	20.5	35.9	43.6

In summary, the personnel service (payment of salaries of teachers and staff) is considered the most pressing problem by the majority of the respondents from traditional madaris (58.4%), ma'ahid (73.2%), and kulliyat (71.8%). Ma'ahid and kulliyat groups have a bigger number of respondents who identified paying personnel services as the most pressing problem of their schools compared to madaris ibtida-i and idadi offering basic education. This is because these two groups of traditional madaris offer subjects that require full-time and specialized teachers. It is also observed that their primary source of income comes from the tuition fees of students which are somewhat minimal.

Hadji Latif (June, 2014) noted that “madrasah [are] usually run under the communities and support of communities or local leaders. The Philippine government is not responsible for providing necessary funds for Islamic education due to its secular principle, which constitutionally prohibits it from intervening in religious affairs of the civil sector.” He also added that madaris in the Philippines are considered religious institutions only serving the spiritual and moral needs of the Muslims; hence, no subsidies from the government are given.

A good number of traditional leaders consider capital outlay as one of their major problems because of lack of funds to improve the facilities. Latif (2014) also cited in his study that “Islamic institutions in the Philippines have been challenged with poor educational facilities and buildings. Limited classrooms have been built just to accommodate very few students. The classrooms are not conducive for learning. The buildings are not equipped with basic facilities for teaching and learning.” These are also the findings of this study, where most of the madrasah buildings are made of mixed materials (wood and indigenous materials).

The problem on curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment is the least pressing problem in the operation of the school regardless of the level of program offered. Percentage-wise, ma'ahid and kulliyat groups have a bigger number of respondents who identified payment of personnel services as the most pressing problem of their schools compared to those of madaris ibtida-i and Idadi. For the traditional madrasah managers, the teaching of Arabic language and Islamic studies does not

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need a curriculum since everything is all in the Qur'an. Understanding the Qur'an is the first and foremost knowledge to be imparted to their students. This may explain the absence of a standard curriculum in the traditional madaris. In addition, the curriculum used in the traditional madrasah is taken from locally available sources or from other foreign Islamic countries, where the teachers graduated.

These findings on the problems affecting the operation of the madaris ibtida-i and idadi, ma'ahid, and kulliyat were also identified by the participants of FGD, KII, and stakeholders.

- On personnel services: Most madrasah cannot pay their teachers' salaries on a regular basis. Madrasah leaders stressed that what teachers receive is more of a sadaqah (charity), allowance, or honorarium, and is often given irregularly. Madrasah operations survive on volunteerism and are anchored on the belief that good deeds are rewarded in the hereafter. This was also expressed by stakeholders. Because of the irregularity of allowances, teacher attendance in their classes is often hampered, resulting in irregular conduct of classes and poor student learning.
- On capital outlay: Problems about poor infrastructure were expressed by key informants and madrasah stakeholders. In the remotest areas, there are generally substandard educational facilities and buildings. The community in general is too poor to provide financial support for the improvement of the facilities.
- On curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment: Stakeholders observed that since there is no standard curriculum, there may be opportunities for wrong beliefs to creep in. Key informants added that teaching content is very important, and extreme perspectives might influence the young students. The use of different curriculums, local or foreign, may also affect their learning.
- On professional development: They also observed that limited trainings or seminars are given to teachers. Generally, students of traditional madaris who completed thanawi or kulliyat are the ones who become teachers of their own schools. This leads to the practice of "in-breeding" – that is, what they learned from their madrasah is also used in teaching. This is shown in the findings of this study related to employment of graduates of traditional madaris.

There are other problems that need to be looked into.

Madaris are often deprived of students due to make-up classes conducted by secular schools. Most students of madaris offering tahderiyyah, ibtida-i, idadi, and thanawi are also enrolled in public and private secular schools on weekdays, which affect the attendance of students in the madaris during weekends. The madaris teachers claimed that usually these secular schools encroach on weekend classes by conducting class activities during these days, which are supposed to be devoted to classes in the madaris.

Employability of madaris graduates is a problem since they do not possess skills required by the government or private business establishments. The courses offered mostly by kulliyah are limited to degree programs, like tarbiyyah, shari'ah, da'wah, and usuluddin, which can only be applied to teaching in madaris. This study found out that most graduates of thanawi and kulliyah have ended up teaching in madaris and in the DepEd ALIVE program, whose slots are insufficient to absorb them.

The Madrasah leaders, stakeholders, and key informants also raised issues that developed as the consequence of the Marawi Siege in 2017. One of these is the general perception of the public and the parents of the students themselves that the madaris are "producing graduates joining extremist groups or terrorists." This perception has negatively affected the image of madaris. Some of their observations are:

- Madrasah leaders in Lanao del Sur raised the issue of wrong perception that madrasah graduates and teachers are terrorists. Particularly after the Marawi Siege, the madaris have been dubbed as hubs of recruitment for terrorists. This has resulted in fewer enrollment. Moreover, some asatidz who graduated from foreign countries have also been suspected to have links with radical or terrorist groups in the Middle East. Madrasah stakeholders in the same area said that since the traditional madaris are largely unregulated, they are perceived to be vulnerable to having ties with terrorist groups.
- Madrasah leaders in Maguindanao also observed they are being suspected of wrongdoings. This is why they now refrain from using the word "Islamic," to avoid becoming targets of suspicion. Misperception about madaris has affected their enrollment because the parents and students are scared. Madrasah leaders in ZamBaSulta (Zamboanga, Basilan, Sultan Kudarat) have a similar observation as their counterparts in Maguindanao. They said that it is now difficult to study in madaris because of the allegation that "terrorists come from them."
- Key informants believe that most traditional madaris are vulnerable to extremism because of the absence of the government system regulations and their dependence on third-party funding (sponsors from other Islamic countries). The latter has led to the perception that madrasah education is the breeding ground of extremism.

The alleged suspicion that the traditional madrasah is a venue for recruitment for violent extremist activities has long been leveled against madrasah leaders. Since the September 11, 2001, attacks in the United States, the claim that the madrasah education system fosters extremism has been an issue confronting the madaris in Asia. As a direct response, an International Ulama Forum was conducted at Dusit Hotel, Makati City, in 2004 to emphasize that "Islam is in fact a religion of peace, tolerance, and moderation" (Bustamante-Ahmad & Jory, 2011).

This is a problem as well of madaris in Southern Philippines. Lanao del Sur Governor Mamintal Adiong Jr. commented that "some madaris in Lanao del Sur have virtually

become ‘breeding grounds’ for radicalization because parts of their curricula allegedly included teachings of ‘kital,’ an orthodox Arabian belief that justifies the killing or subjugation of people opposed to caliphate Islamic state” (<https://nwsmb.com/2016/adiong-says-radicalism-being-taught-in-madaris-schools>).

A similar observation was made by Undersecretary Alzad Sattar of BME-ARMM. He said: “Madrasah learning centers are indeed vulnerable to being penetrated by ill-intentioned individuals, especially since entire communities remain vulnerable to extremism. What needs to be done is for a law to strengthen madrasah education for it to hand down the true teachings of Islam” (<http://www.rappler.com/national/201158/-madrasah-no-breeding-ground-extremism/>).

Government Recognition of Traditional Madrasah

Generally, all private institutions offering basic education aspire for recognition from the government. The permit to operate – a basic requirement before any school can start its operations – is sought from the Department of Education of the Philippines. Achieving this recognition from the government requires a “rigorous process by which a private school is audited and must adhere to certain requirements on governance best practices, financial transparency, curriculum quality, student safety, and staffing” (<http://www.google.com.ph/depedschoolaccreditation>). Government recognition is needed for a madrasah to get support to be able to offer quality education and continuing academic growth.

Traditional madaris are the most important educational institutions in Muslim Mindanao since they are looked up to not only as schools of learning but also as symbols of Islam. For the Moro people, they are the proper place to learn Islamic teachings and study Arabic language. However, many of them have no permit to operate (POT) and lack recognition of the government or any accrediting body in the Philippines.

In this study, the madrasah managers were asked if they were interested in applying for government recognition. Close to 90% of them responded in the affirmative. By type, the madaris ibtida-i and idadi have the highest percentage with 92.1%, compared to those offering thanawi (ma’ahid) and collegiate (kulliyat) levels with 87.8% and 87.2%, respectively. Overall, very few (1.8%) are not interested in applying for the government recognition. Eight percent (8.3%) are currently not sure if they will apply for it.

TABLE 12. MADRASAH'S INTEREST IN OBTAINING GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

RESPONSE	MADRAS IBTIDA-I AND IDADI		MA'AHID		KULLIYAT		TOTAL	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	N	%
YES	82	92.1	36	87.8	34	87.2	152	89.9
NO	2	2.2	1	2.4			3	1.8
NOT SURE	5	5.6	4	9.8	5	12.8	14	8.3
TOTAL	89	100.0	41	100.0	39	100.0	169	100.0

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This concern for recognition among traditional madaris was also raised by the madrasah leaders in the FGD. The Maguindanaon leaders reiterated the “need for government recognition because it is the only way to reduce vulnerability to security threat as they will be secured by the government similar to public schools.” The Lanao group said, “It is the way to make the existence of madaris legal through accreditation and grow from its current status.” The madrasah leaders from ZamBaSuLTa also stressed that the “recognition of the madaris will [help them] gain financial support from the national or local government.”

There are different bodies that may provide recognition for traditional madaris in the Philippines. These are the:

- (a) National Council for Muslim Filipinos (NCMF)
- (b) Bureau of Muslim Education (BME) in ARMM and DepEd, as integrated madrasah
- (c) Bureau of Muslim Education (BME)
- (d) Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) for the vocational and technical courses
- (e) Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for collegiate courses

The “integrated madrasah” under BME in ARMM and under DepEd in non-ARMM areas is based on the DepEd’s “Revised Standard Madrasah Curriculum,” which integrates K to 12 programs with Islamic Studies and Arabic Language. The medium of instruction includes mother tongue, English, Filipino, and Arabic.

Recognition from the BME means using another set of curriculum and materials for traditional madaris. Aside from religious subjects and Arabic language, the curriculum integrates subjects like science (uloom), mathematics (hisab), and history (tarikh) taught in Arabic.

NCMF recognizes traditional madaris under its list of Traditional Madaris and may also apply with TESDA as technical vocational institute and with CHED as private collegiate institutions. Unlike DepEd, TESDA and CHED do not prescribe Islamic studies and Arabic language curriculum. The development and offering are left to the discretion of the sectarian school.

Overall, of those interested in government recognition, about half (50%) of those offering basic education prefer to be integrated madrasah under the BME through DepEd-ARMM; 27% desire recognition as traditional madrasah with NCMF, while 23% want recognition as traditional madrasah by BME-ARMM.

The ma’ahid and kulliyat offering thanawi are interested in having recognition under TESDA for the vocational and technical courses (27.8% and 2.9% respectively). About 23.5% of the Kulliyat offering college courses have expressed interest in being recognized by CHED.

The interest for government recognition is expected from the traditional madaris because of the technical or financial support they can get from it. This is for the

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TABLE 13. TYPES OF RECOGNITION MADRASAH LEADERS ARE INTERESTED IN

BASIC EDUCATION RECOGNITION	MADARIS IBTIDA-I AND IDADI (N=82)	MA'AHID (N=36)	KULLIYAT (N=34)	TOTAL (N=152)
	%	%	%	%
Integrated Madrasah with DepEd under BME ARMM	46.4	53.3	50.0	50.0
Traditional Madrasah with NCMF	24.4	25.5	29.4	27.0
Traditional madrasah with BME in ARMM	26.8	16.7	20.6	23.0
TECHVOC RECOGNITION		MA'AHID (N=36)	KULLIYAT (N=34)	TOTAL (N=70)
TESDA Technical-Vocational School Sectarian/Integrated		27.8	2.9	15.7
COLLEGE RECOGNITION				TOTAL (N=34)
CHED Sectarian/Integrated			23.5	23.5

purpose of sustainability and for the improvement of the quality of education comparable to other secular schools in the Philippines.

In Muslim-dominated countries, the madrasah has become an integral part of the national educational system, but in the Philippines, it is not, unless traditional madaris apply for recognition. According to Mercado (2009), for years policy makers in the education sector have been seeking ways to integrate madrasah education into mainstream Philippine system. It is a continuing concern. Latif (2014) also observed that most of the madaris in the Philippines have no government accreditation. Islamic schools have been running under the supervision of the Muslim communities or local leaders. The absence of national accreditation in all madrasah education in the Philippines is an obstacle to offering higher degree since the government cannot grant accreditation to educational institutions that do not meet government requirements.

Mercado (2009) expressed some reservations on the “integration” of madrasah into the educational system of the Philippines: “From the very beginning the Madaris system is intimately connected to the Mosque. In fact, even before the introduction of madaris, the mosques had served as schools. During the time of the Umayyads, there were rooms attached to the mosques for lectures on the fiqh and hadiths. When a particular room was set apart for teaching purposes in a mosque, this was called a madrasa. The madaris were also built close beside the big mosques, so that they practically belonged to them. In the beginning, the principal subjects in the madaris were the Qur’an and the Hadith, to which was added the study of the Arabic language.” He further argued that it is vital “to preserve and develop the madaris as a unique and specific educational system of our Muslim brothers and sisters.”

Government recognition is indeed an issue that needs to be addressed by reviewing existing relevant policies or creating a new law that will help the traditional madrasah to grow and develop as an educational system suited to the needs of the Moro and Muslims in the Philippines.

CHAPTER 5

WAYS FORWARD

THE vision the Bureau of Madaris Education is to produce a new generation of Muslims with a new mindset equipped with the fear of Allah (SWT) and Islamic values, not only in theory but in practice, and who will become future leaders of the country. Its mission statement stipulates: (#2) provide an Islamic education to build moral standards and be assets of communities; and (#7) produce a Bangsamoro generation who are bearers of Islamic morality; catalysts of development, leadership, and justice; and learned in Bangsamoro history, cultural diversity, aspirations, and self-determination (Madaris Citizen's Charter, Bureau of Madaris Education, 2015).

With this vision and mission clearly articulated, the study wanted to find out how the traditional madaris view themselves against the measures implied in this statement. A survey and focus group discussions with madrasah leaders and stakeholders, together with key informant interviews, were conducted to ascertain their opinions on these specific indicators.

Perceptions of the Role of the Madaris

The survey asked the madrasah leaders their perceptions of the role of the madrasah and its commitment to socio-cultural, economic, political, and peace and security.

For the Lanao madrasah leaders and stakeholders, a madrasah is a center of learning. Serving as one of the old educational systems in Mindanao, it is where Muslim children learn about Islam, its basics and essentials. The madrasah teaches students about the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the way of life, and is not just focused on western education.

The Maguindanao leaders and stakeholders contend that the madrasah is where students know where they came from and where their destination is: to know that Allah is one God (Tawheed). It is where students learn Islam, which will guide them on how to live their lives and prepare for the hereafter. This is where the students learn God's commandments. It is also in the madrasah where students learn Arabic, the language of the Qur'an.

For the ZamBaSulTa leaders, the madrasah is where the students seek knowledge, the true teachings of Islam, and study the Islamic religion. The madrasah teaches Arabic language, fiqh (jurisprudence), tawheed (monotheism), seerah (history), and usuluddin (fundamentals of faith). It is in the madrasah where they learn Islam as a way of life.

The study also asked the madrasah leaders and stakeholders about the role of the madrasah in the lives of Muslims and the benefits derived by the students in attending this school. The responses are summarized in Table 14.

TABLE 14. THE ROLES OF THE MADRASAH IN THE LIVES OF MUSLIM STUDENTS

LANAO DEL SUR	MAGUINDANAO	ZAMBASULTA
An important institution to preserve Islamic faith and culture, especially in a predominantly Christian country	In madrasah, a child learns his religion. Without this foundational knowledge, he can have a problem in the future.	The madrasah provides the children the foundational knowledge of good manners and right conduct.
A place where cultural heritage is passed on to the next generation	The present generation of the youth, without madrasah background, cannot become better Muslims.	It is a venue for guidance.
		The madrasah develops in the children a sense of positive values, to be contented and happy.
The madrasah molds students to become good Muslims. It is where they learn the tenets of Islam and dispel ignorance about violent extremism and other misconceptions.	Prepared to avoid temptation of the flesh and become vulnerable to "zina"; will have less respect for parents, as influenced by what they watch on TV.	The guru teaches children how to read and write, make du'a (supplication), and seek to know God.
Where students learn to be good Muslims, prime mover of peace, and model of good values.	The madrasah reminds us of the importance of education, as cited in the sunnah.	
Trains students to be role models in society, to encourage fellow Muslims to model "adat" (Arabic term for describing a variety of local customary practices and tradition) and to inspire others.	Islam is the foundation of the madrasah.	
The madrasah teaches students about proper attitude and behavior associated with Islam.	A Muslim's first teacher is the mother, and this is continued in the madrasah.	
The madrasah helps students understand the difference between a Meranaw and a Muslim.	The madrasah trains Muslims while they are young to say "salam," to pray, and to dress accordingly.	

The madrasah, thus presented, is an institution where Muslim children and youth learn to be good Muslims by knowing the fundamentals of Islam; the foundational knowledge of good manners and right conduct; and to be role models in society.

The madrasah is a place where the following are emphasized: Islam is "peace," need for daily prayer and worship, reading the Qur'an and meditating on its content, and respect for parents.

In many of the narratives of the respondents, it is emphasized that the madrasah is where Muslims learn that Islam is a way of life. It means that "Islam provides

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specific guidelines for all people to follow in their daily lives. Its guidance is comprehensive and includes the social, economic, political, moral, and spiritual aspects of life.... By saying that it is a complete way of life, we mean that it caters to all the fields of human existence.”

This provides a challenge to the madrasah in the Philippines to teach Islam as a way of life encompassing a learner’s total development – i.e., social, economic, political, moral, and spiritual aspects of life.

In this study, the madrasah leaders were also asked about their perceptions on the role of the madrasah in two categories: (a) socio-economic and cultural development; and (b) governance, peace, and security. Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 indicates Strongly Disagree and 5 Strongly Agree, they were asked to rate their perceptions on 11 statements related to these categories.

Madrasah’s Role in Socio-Economic and Cultural Development

Data in Table 15 reveal that the respondents overwhelmingly support the madrasah’s role in promoting social cohesion and respect for diversity (mean = 4.68), uphold moderation and tolerance (mean = 4.62), disseminate Bangsamoro culture and heritage (mean = 4.57), and providing training for employability skills and teaching love of country (mean = 4.77).

TABLE 15. PERCEPTION ON MADRASAH’S ROLE IN GOVERNANCE, PEACE, AND SECURITY

PERCEPTION STATEMENTS	SD (1)	D (2)	U (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	MEAN (X)
The madrasah should promote social cohesion and respect for diversity	0	0	1	52	116	4.68
The madrasah should promote moderation (wasatiyyah) and tolerance (tafawut)	0	2	3	51	113	4.62
The madrasah should provide technical-vocational skills training for its students	0	3	47	46	73	4.11
The madrasah should ensure that its graduates are employable, locally or overseas	0	2	22	50	95	4.40
The madrasah should promote Bangsamoro culture and heritage	0	1	11	47	110	4.57
The madrasah should teach love of country	0	0	1	36	131	4.77

LEGEND: SD - STRONGLY DISAGREE; D - DISAGREE; U - UNDECIDED; A - AGREE; SA - STRONGLY AGREE

Perceptions on the economic security were given a relatively lower rating of 4.1 and 4.4. This shows that the madrasah leaders, though they approved that the madrasah should develop employability skills, are not as keen compared to the other socio-cultural statements of promoting social cohesion, moderation and tolerance, Bangsamoro culture and heritage, and teaching love of country.

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With the rapid increase in the number of madaris, as revealed in this study, it may be deduced that Muslim parents today prefer to send their children to them. The madrasah's impact on socio-economic and cultural development has begun to unfold. For example, madrasah graduates are becoming ALIVE teachers in public schools, and are engaged in the halal industry as heads of certifying agencies and as certifiers. The increasing expression of external religiosity, such as the wearing of hijab among women and wearing of beards among men, are traceable to teachings in the madrasah. The Bangsamoro Darul-Ifta' has issued fatwa on adolescent health, early marriage, and forced marriage.

Madrasah's Role in Governance, Peace, and Security

As to the political and security aspects, the madrasah leaders gave equally high ratings to all the statements. These include statements on community participation, leadership, conflict resolution, promoting values of free expression, and teaching the negative effects of violent extremism. The mean ratings of all the statements in this category range from 4.68 to 4.71, nearing the perfect score of 5. (Table 16)

They also greatly maintained the need for the madrasah to encourage its students and graduates to be involved in community development and good governance; to be advocates of peaceful resolution of conflicts (e.g. rido, pagbanta, pagbunu'); to promote the values of free expression and respect for others' opinions; and to teach their students the negative effects of violent extremism. (Table 16)

The madrasah's impact on governance, peace, and security, among others, is manifested in the ulama's participation in local elections; the madrasah graduates' becoming chaplains in the police and military forces; the ulama's appointment to government posts, such as NCMF commissioners; and the leadership of the Regional Darul-Ifta' in the ARMM, through its issuance of fatwa, especially the ones against terrorism and vote-buying.

TABLE 16. PERCEPTION ON THE MADRASAH'S ROLE IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

PERCEPTION STATEMENTS	SD (1)	D (2)	U (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	MEAN (X)
The madrasah should encourage its students and graduates to be involved in community development and governance	0	0	5	47	117	4.66
The madrasah should teach good governance	0	0	2	44	123	4.71
The madrasah graduates should be advocates of peaceful resolution of conflicts (e.g. rido, pabanta, pabunu')	0	1	5	38	125	4.69
The madrasah should promote the values of free expression and respect for others' opinions	0	0	5	44	120	4.68
The madrasah should teach students on the negative effects of violent extremism	2	0	7	31	128	4.68

LEGEND: SD - STRONGLY DISAGREE; D - DISAGREE; U - UNDECIDED; A - AGREE; SA - STRONGLY AGREE

Proposals to Make the Traditional Madrasah More Relevant

The development of any community depends on its educational system, and it is proven over a period of time that education is the key to the advancement of the people and social change. Education is one of the important factors for political, social, and economic development of the individual or community (<https://unbeatenknight.wordpress.com/2015/07/14/madarsas-their-importance-in-society/>).

Recognizing the contributions of the madrasah educational system in transforming Muslim communities, the madrasah stakeholders and key informants gave the following suggestions:

On Muslim-Moro Identity and Cultural Development

The respondents believe that the madrasah has a big contribution in preserving Muslim culture and Islam religion. It is the main institution to teach culture and Islamic tradition since it is a continuing platform for young people to know their identity – they are Muslims; they are Moro with distinct tradition and practices. Among the comments made were:

- The madrasah is very important because it is the foundational institution that can shape the minds of the youth. It is where young Muslims can really understand their Muslim identity. The madrasah should also promote the culture of the Moros. There might be a need to compromise – teach good Moro culture and Muslim culture.
- The term “moro” is still viewed by some negatively. This negative perception may be redressed by the Moro people equipping themselves with Islam and to live by its tenets both at home and in the community.
- The madrasah curriculum should be improved to include culture or social studies, nationalism, and history of Muslims in the Philippines to guide the younger generations to connect with their Moro and Muslim identities.
- Being a Muslim is an integral part of the Moro identity. Once you say you are a Moro, then you are a Muslim, a follower of Islam. There are Moro practices that are inconsistent with Islam. This should be studied and changed.
- The madrasah teaches that the distinction among Moros should not be based on ethnicity but on taqwa (piety), and the quality of being a Muslim. This should be emphasized.
- More than teaching what is in the Quran, madaris should emphasize the teaching of values because it defines identity. The madrasah can lead information campaign/dissemination of what Islam is. The community, including Christians, may be included in this activity to avoid discrimination. The madrasah should address discrimination, biases, and generalizations against Moros and Muslims with values, knowledge, and respect. Madrasah teachers should be role models.

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On Contributions to Socio-economic Development

The steps to be taken to make the madaris relevant to the socio-economic development of the communities range from accreditation, to actions through partnership, to strengthening intrinsic characteristics of the madrasah. The responses are varied. Some view the madaris from their very traditional role of simply teaching the Arabic language and values. Others espouse an outlook leaning towards making the madaris a complete and integrated institution responsive to the needs of their constituents.

A detailed expression of their sentiments is reflected below:

- The madrasah should be standardized just like “English” schools. Graduates should have more choices after graduation. These should offer training which are market-linked (for example, vocational).
- The madaris should be integrated in the Philippine educational system to enable the graduates to participate in the labor market.
- Since Islam is holistic, there is a need for integration to help the madaris expand their curriculum to include other subjects, e.g., those that teach livelihood skills.
- The madaris should teach Islamic economic principles and these should be taught well. The FGD participants emphasized zakat as an important tool to help and uplift indigents and other marginalized groups. They also expressed the need to organize and manage zakat properly.
- Madaris should be organized as institutions, to teach students about Islam – i.e., economic development based on Islamic precepts.

Most of the key informants see the need to expand the curriculum of the madaris to include subjects that would prepare them to qualify for jobs other than what they have now. This shows an important concern for the madrasah, especially for students who have no opportunity to go to secular schools.

It may be gleaned in the previous section that opportunities for employment of madrasah graduates are very limited, with majority of its graduates (87.5%) getting jobs in traditional madaris, where remuneration is low or oftentimes serving as volunteers.

The madrasah stakeholders, and especially the key informants, reveal this concern for the future of madrasah students who do not choose to become religious teachers and leaders. Yet, they lack the minimum academic qualifications to qualify for jobs available elsewhere.

The respondents in the survey, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews are one in supporting the idea of expanding the traditional madaris to include other subjects, which will prepare their students for jobs other than being religious teachers and leaders.

On Madrasah's Role in Influencing Improvement in Local Governance

Most of the respondents in this study significantly advocated the active participation of the madrasah in local governance. This participation may be done through collaborative community service, support in resolving conflict, or simply the ulama advocating community activities such as elections. They also firmly believe that simply developing "morits" with values to make them good leaders rebuking corruption is already a big step toward this direction.

- Alumni of madaris can be future leaders with clear goals. They can be good partners of government in promoting and supporting local government programs, like peace efforts and community organizing. One way of doing this is to include madrasah teachers in community meetings.
- The madrasah molds the values of students by instilling in them the importance of justice (adl, adalah) and honesty so essential in curbing corruption in all their dealings. Graduates of madaris are then provided with the values and attitudes they would need to become effective leaders and responsible citizens in their communities.
- Local government units should work in partnership with madaris to be more responsive to the needs of their constituency.
- Some key informants expressed concern about how the madrasah can produce students who will cooperate with the government and think that they are part of the Philippine citizenry. The madrasah leaders provided responses ranging from developing values in their students to preparing them to become good future leaders in the madrasah as an institution or through their ulama's participation in government affairs.
- One key informant had some reservations, though, especially with the issue on the separation of church and state in terms of the local government openly supporting the madrasah.
- Financing the operations of madaris is a major concern. Local government should provide subsidy to address this.

On Contribution to Local Peace and Security

Suspicion on the madrasah's involvement in violent extremism is a major challenge that the institution must overcome. Results of the focus group discussion in the Lanao provinces are a clear manifestation. As stated, "after the Marawi siege, there were fewer students enrolling in the madrasah. The traditional madrasah is

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adversely affected by allegations of being connected with violent extremism.” Most of the recommendations revolve around this issue. Some of these are:

- Steps should be taken by all concerned, including local governments, peace and security officers, and civil society organizations, and the madaris to disprove this allegation.
- Madaris can really serve as partners in upholding peace, particularly upholding rights of people to coexist. They should establish good rapport with the AFP and the intelligence community and conduct outreach programs in collaboration with the LGUs.
- True Islam (through curriculum and method) should be introduced. Once understood by the students, peace and security will be enhanced. Different interpretations of Islam resulted in the Marawi incident. There is a need then for madaris to promote Islamic moderation.
- Traditional madrasah teaches tolerance and co-existence reflective of the time of Prophet Muhammad in Madina. Taking a look at the Indonesian model can help address the emergence of radicalization and extremism.
- Discussions about “jihad” should be in its proper content and context, so as to counter misinterpretation.
- The madrasah sector should be vigilant. Madrasah managers and teachers should really know their students. Moreover, there is a need for a united voice in addressing peace and security issues.
- The madrasah needs to be efficient and effective in deepening values formation to reduce youth vulnerability to violent extremism.

“Rido” (clan conflict), which is a common problem in Muslim communities, was also mentioned. The Council of Elders can facilitate the resolution of this type of conflict at the community level. Since these councils of elders are owners of religious institutions themselves, they are very much effective in resolving rido.

The drug menace surfaced also as a peace and security issue. They recommended that madaris should teach good manners based on Islam. This will remind the youth not to engage in illegal drugs because these are prohibited in Islam.

Finally, the madrasah stakeholders suggest:

- Unity among the ulama, who should have a common voice in addressing community problems. They should deepen the teaching on “tawheed” (monotheism) and “taqwa” (God consciousness, fear and love of God).
- Unity of the ulama with political leaders. The madrasah leaders should also unite with other local leaders to model “servant-leadership.”

Vision for the Traditional Madaris

The madrasah leaders were also asked about their vision for the traditional madaris. The madrasah leaders overwhelmingly favor the traditional madaris’ offering both secular and Islamic curriculum supported by government subsidy (84.6%). Only 14% subscribe to the idea that the traditional madaris operate and regulate by themselves (Figure 14). This is the current condition of traditional madaris. The results show that the madrasah leaders long for change. The government should respond to this.

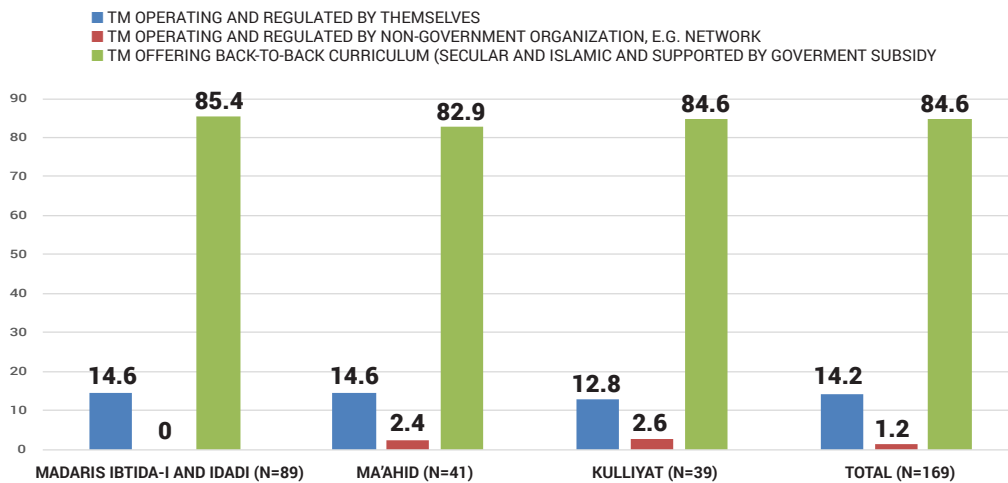


FIGURE 14. VISION FOR TRADITIONAL MADARIS (IN PERCENT)

Vision for Education in Bangsamoro

Seventy-one percent advocate the madaris and public schools operating as an integrated system. This is exactly the goal of the Bureau of Madaris Education, as reflected in the #3 mission statement: “provide information and extending linkages for traditional madrasah to take part and be integrated to the mainstream of the Philippine educational system” (Madaris Citizen’s Charter, Bureau of Madaris Education, 2015).

TABLE 17. VISION FOR BANGSAMORO EDUCATION

EDUCATIONAL VISION	MADRASAH IBTIDA-I AND IDADI (N=89)	MA'AHID (N=41)	KULLIYAT (N=39)	TOTAL (N=169)
The madaris and public schools operate as an integrated system	71.9	61	79.5	71
The madaris and public school operate as separate systems	28.1	39	20.5	29

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The Madaris and Public Schools Operate as an Integrated System

Article IX, Section 16, of the Bangsamoro Organic Law provides, “It shall be a top priority of the Bangsamoro Government to establish, maintain, and support a complete and integrated system of quality education, which shall be a subsystem of the national education system. The vision of the Bureau of Madaris Education is to produce a new generation with a new mindset equipped with fear of Allah (SWT) and Islamic values, not only in theory but more so in practice, and who will become future leaders of the country.

The vision favored by the madrasah stakeholders converges with this intent of the Bangsamoro Organic Law and the current vision of the Bureau of Madaris Education. The stakeholders uphold to include the following elements in its aspiration:

- The traditional madaris should be recognized as a subsector within the Bangsamoro education system with accreditation and standard curriculum. Traditional institutions will gradually adopt balanced education to produce well-rounded graduates (English and Arabic). It should produce lawyers who have taqwa (piety) in their hearts, teachers who are conversant, and disciplined engineers who are trusted.
- The foundation of education should be the traditional madrasah system, even while combining it with mainstream education.
- Education should be pluralistic/democratic. It should teach how the Prophet (SAW) lived throughout his life. He did not only interact with Muslims, he also interacted with people from other religions.
- The ALIVE Program should be strengthened and Islamic values aligned with the general values education or Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao (ESP).
- Traditional institutions will gradually adopt balanced education. There will be united education with unified and balanced curriculum to produce well-rounded graduates (English and Arabic). It should produce lawyers who have laqwa in their hearts, teachers who are conversant, and disciplined engineers who are trusted.
- There should be quality education in the right direction, molding students to become competitive and true Muslims. This will start from leaders who are caring, highly intellectual, and God-fearing.

The Madaris and Public Schools Operate as Separate Systems

- Government should not control the madrasah, but there will just be some degree of supervision.
- The traditional madaris should be recognized as a subsector of the Bangsamoro education system.

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- Education should teach soft skills, such as reflection and discernment.
- The traditional madaris should subscribe to government policies so that they may not be left behind.
- The traditional madrasah should be considered in the light of the Bangsamoro law. It should get subsidy and financial assistance from the government.
- There should be a responsible institution that will review and find the gaps in our current educational institutions, including the traditional madaris (i.e. curriculum, pedagogy, etc.).
- The madrasah should resolve how it wants to operate: as holistic Muslim institution or as religious institution?
- Traditional madaris should be recognized without bias in their operation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

BECAUSE Muslim parents want their children to obtain employability skills as well as Islamic values and culture, children attend secular school Monday to Friday and go to madrasah Saturdays and Sundays. The traditional madaris provide these services.

Despite the odds against it, traditional madrasah will continue to serve the Muslim community as the nucleus of religious knowledge, model of Islamic values and etiquette, and for the formation of succession of religious professionals in the ARMM and the adjacent regions. Meanwhile, the madrasah leaders are one in their views on their institutional role in promoting social cohesion for the greater good of the Moro communities.

To continue serving, the traditional madrasah has to contend with both internal and external challenges:

- Limited resources, largely dependent on parent donations and community support
- Deprivation of weekend schedule due to the make-up classes and other activities conducted by secular schools
- Low employability skills with more than three-fourths getting to be madrasah teachers or leaders
- Difficulty in complying with accreditation requirements, despite their interest in obtaining government recognition
- Lingering allegation of links to terrorism, especially since the Marawi Siege.

Recommendations

To Address Internal Challenges Among Traditional Madaris:

1. For traditional madaris open to integration and recognition by government agencies, the Department of Education (DepEd), the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) should explore keeping to the minimum their requirements for recognition/accreditation. They should be proactive in facilitating this process through a “developmental approach,” which has been demonstrated by the AusAID-funded BEAM (Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao) Project among its pilot madaris.
2. In addition to assisting these schools throughout the recognition process, the government, through these concerned agencies, should also help them come up with strategies to generate sustainable and additional sources of income.

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In turn, these can be used to pay for personnel services – from honorarium or allowances to fixed salaries of teachers and staff, maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE), capital outlay, and professional development of teachers and staff of madrasah.

3. For traditional madaris opting for the status quo, the most pressing problem – personnel services – can be addressed following the “Davao City model,” which has been going on for about two decades now. The unified standard curriculum developed by the Bureau of Madaris Education (BME) can become the common curricular standard, as this was developed with the need for intra- and inter-community peace building, peaceful resolution of conflict, and counter-narrative against extremism in mind. It covers kindergarten to senior high school level, with standard textbooks and curriculum guides developed to include both religious and academic subjects. This curriculum has been endorsed by the ARMM Regional Peace and Order Council (RPOC), which called on local governments to have regular allocation for traditional madaris to implement it. The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) should ensure that supporting the madrasah sector is an integral performance indicator when assessing for the seal of good local governance.
4. The Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, together with local government units, the Social Security System, the Philippine Health Insurance, and Pag-IBIG Fund should find ways to assist indigent families of retirees, managers, teachers, and students of traditional madrasah and subsidize their access to the government social insurance system. The regional government should also work with the Department of Social Welfare and Development to ensure that these indigent families are enrolled in the 4Ps and other social service programs.
5. Government agencies like TESDA, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) should work with the traditional madrasah sector in creating employment and enterprise training, employment referral, and enterprise startup for students before graduation.
6. An accreditation body among integrated and traditional madaris should be organized to ensure that common curriculum and minimum performance standards are observed. This will also motivate them to level up performance both in religious and academic competencies.
7. Support from the donor community and non-governmental organizations should be mobilized for traditional and integrated madaris that are ready to engage in partnership for long-term goals.

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8. Local governments should engage the community at large and parents and alumni in particular to institutionalize the practices of zakat (charity) and awqaf (endowment) for the support of traditional madaris. This is to lessen the schools' dependence on government and foreign donors, and to promote communal self-help and assistance. Madrasah federations should be the institutional zakat and waqf manager under their wing. The "Waqf Ilmi" model of the Majelis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS) and the Al Amanah Islamic Investment Bank of the Philippines as waqf investment manager should be explored, as the latter is the sole government bank with the mandate of shari'ah-compliant banking.
9. While there is an existing Madrasah Education Program (MEP) in DepEd, there is now a leadership vacuum since the last undersecretary for Muslim affairs was appointed during the time of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The absence of this appointment in succeeding administrations means no one is taking strategic decision. Thus, policy and program development and implementation have slowed down greatly, and the budget has not expanded again since it shrunk by 60% from the original allocation and program coverage. This is despite demands from the Muslim communities throughout the country and the emergent security concerns brought about by the Marawi Siege. This office is supposedly charged with critical roles of continuing engagement with traditional madaris and ulama.
10. There is a need for an inter-agency coordination and strategic collective leadership to look into the concerns of the traditional madrasah. Given the multidimensionality of madrasah concerns, as have been explained in the first eight items, the Office of the President should create an inter-agency coordination board for madrasah education. The purpose of this is to provide strategic policy and programming leadership, mobilize government resources and similar support, and serve as a platform for effective and efficient coordination. Upon its creation, the coordination board may have the function of reviewing government policy and donor-funded projects, and influence them to commence exploratory and trust-building activities. In the medium-term, a demand-driven grant facility can provide support ranging from professional development on developmentally-appropriate pedagogies to management and supervision and code of ethical conduct to madrasah leaders and teachers; from infrastructure to instructional materials development and upgrading; from student development to school-community building. Previous donor-funded models include the Expanded Support to Muslim Education (ESME) under the BEAM Project and the Learning Assistance Project for Islamic Schools (LAPIS) in Indonesia. Both were AusAID-funded projects which focus on integration and support to madrasah education. A similar component can be lodged under the current DFAT-funded Pathways Project in Mindanao.

External Challenges

The negative perception on the traditional madaris may be averted by involving ulama groups in countering this problem – for example, assess, partner with, and support religious sectors, and involve madaris in local actions, such as leaders' exchange. This can be done through:

1. The government, through the NCMF, should assess the needs of religious sectors (ulama, aleemat, asatidz[a], duat, huffaz, tabligh, shabab, etc.) in the Muslim community, and then partner with, mobilize, and support them in taking proactive and leadership roles in their spheres of influence. They are in the best position to put forward a counter-narrative against violent extremism and to institutionalize learning programs for ordinary Muslims. They can be proactive in promoting Islam as faith and a way of life guided by the principles of moderation, tolerance, and clemency, and in awakening the faithful that tatarruf (extremism), ghuluww (excessiveness), tanattu' (harshness), and tashaddud (severity) in all its forms are shunned and are immoral in Islam.
2. The incoming Bangsamoro government in the region and the national DILG and Department of Justice should strategize on how to involve the madaris and religious sector in local governance and development, socio-economic and cultural development, and peace and security, especially at the municipal and barangay levels. Particularly, the sector can help in resolving issues related to community-based violent extremism and terrorism (VET), drugs, and rido. The DOJ and the DILG can work with senior ulama to mobilize and train graduates of madrasah as counselors, arbitrators, or conciliators in the alternative dispute resolution at the local levels.
3. The Office of the President and Department of Foreign Affairs can promote and facilitate exchange of local Muslim religious leaders and experiences among Moro communities in the country as well as across ASEAN and the international community, with special focus on human rights-based redress of VET, drugs, and rido. This exchange should lead to the creation of a more permanent ASEAN platform for religious leaders and another on Madrasah Education. The Office of the Assistant Secretary for ASEAN Affairs in the DFA can initially serve as the platform secretariat. One concrete example is the Muslim Education Exchange Program financed by the AusAID-funded BEAM Project, which allowed Thai, Indonesian, and Philippine Muslim education officials to share experiences and build on the best practices from the three countries. Another is the Indonesia-Philippine Islamic Education Conference conducted in Jakarta in 2017 and initiated by the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD), where participants agreed on a roadmap of cooperation and people-to-people compact. It will focus on a multi-track exchange and on strengthening the traditional madrasah.

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4. The government should encourage the community of religious leaders to organize themselves as a common body to work with the former – for example, media advocacy, people-to-people contact, Philippine Congress' passage of bills addressing Muslim concerns, and the support of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority and, eventually by the Bangsamoro Parliament, for the policy and program initiatives of the madrasah and ulama sectors. Encouraging and supporting senior ulama to organize themselves and their sectors have been done during the time of President Fidel Ramos. This might be worth revisiting as government officials who were involved then are still around. Overseas, the Australian National Imam Council (ANIC) and the Indonesian Ulema Council (IUC) are models worth revisiting as well.
5. In the short-term, the government media agencies, such as Philippine News Agency and Philippine Broadcasting Service, can develop documentaries and media plugs to raise positive consciousness about Muslim/Moro identity, heritage, and contribution to nation-building. In the long-term, the presence of radio and television network where there is a balance between national and community concerns in content and programming would be a good start.
6. The DFA, NCMF, and BARMM, in partnership with senior ulama and ulama organizations, should agree on protocols for Muslim Filipinos availing overseas scholarship. These should include: a) ensuring that degrees are pursued with employable opportunities upon return in mind; b) degrees are pursued where no or limited local practitioners are at hand; c) qualifiers are assisted in the application process and are properly briefed; d) linkage with sending and accepting universities; e) Philippine consulates liaising and following through student welfare while on study; and f) returning scholars are properly debriefed and assisted with post-scholarship plan.
7. The National Youth Commission (NYC), the National Commission on Women (NCW), and similar sectoral government agencies should develop opportunities for people-to-people contact to address long-standing and emergent stereotypes and prejudices in the spirit of multiculturalism and inclusive nation-building. We have the example of the women's exchange and youth leadership program of the Bishop-Ulama Conference. This should target more grassroots people, especially in the areas affected by protracted conflicts.
8. Philippine Congress should prioritize the passage of congressional bills addressing Muslim development in general. Laws should be passed addressing "Islamophobia" and the misguided use of Muslim and Moro terms in news coverage covering violence and criminalities, which contribute to the demonization of the whole community instead of recognizing individual action.

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Annex 1. Database of Traditional Madaris in ARMM and Adjacent Regions

This research provides the creation of a database on traditional madaris in Excel format, which can easily be made available. Madrasah stakeholders can use the census instrument itself to come up with an updated data, or build up the database by adding more information based on their needs. This database will also be useful for planning purposes, and further allow stakeholders to make crucial decisions and policies.

The annex report discusses the data from the census of traditional madaris presented in frequency and percentage tables, graphs, and figures. These data capture relevant variables to describe traditional madaris in terms of their physical structure, student enrollment, program offerings, teaching and non-teaching personnel, and leaders. They also provide information about the masjid as a complementary and important facility within the madrasah compound, including some information on the imam who is in-charge of the masjid.

A total of 1,850 madaris are included in the database. For ARMM provinces, cities, municipalities, and barangays with known madaris were selected, while for non-ARMM provinces and cities, only three municipalities were included per province. These municipalities have a sizeable number of Muslim population. Using this criterion, three barangays for each of the sampled municipalities were selected to be included in the census. In the case of Cotabato City (a non-ARMM city), all the barangays were chosen given that it is where the seat of the regional government of the ARMM is located.

Before the actual fieldwork, the field supervisors, with the assistance of IAG EnPoldBangsamoro, conducted official coordination activities with the concerned local government units (provincial, municipal, barangay). Through these, all concerns related to the preparation of the database in their areas were addressed. These preparatory field work activities also provided the enumerators with names and locations of madaris in the area.

A council of advisers was organized for the research, from the ranks of eminent Muslim religious professionals from within and outside ARMM, including selected provincial jurisconsults (muftun) from the ARMM Regional Darul-Ifta' (RDI), the Darul-Ifta' of Regional 9 and Palawan, and those from the National Ulama Conference of the Philippines (NUCP). The purpose of the council is to advise the research team about religious and cultural nuances and sensitivity around madrasah education, to be available for consultation and referral, and to critique research drafts when necessary.

ANNEXES

The research team also worked with the Ittihadul Madaris Bil Philippines based in Cotabato City to access the madaris, ma'ahid, and kulliyat under the latter's supervision. Staff arrangements were undertaken to guide research field staff in accessing respondents and visiting the target madaris.

The data were gathered from 1,850 madrasah leaders (principal or owner) in ARMM and non-ARMM study sites who are engaged in teaching or non-teaching functions. Most of the respondents are male (85.1%), and 14.9% are female. The youngest head of madrasah is 16 years old and the oldest is 98 years old. The mean age is 47 years. For the Muslims, age is immaterial for one to become a head of a school as long as he or she is knowledgeable in Islamic teachings. The ethnic affiliation of the respondents depended primarily on the location of the madrasah in the study sites. A sizeable number of them are Maguindanaon (37.6%), Meranaw (28.8%), Iranun (10.1%), Tausug (9.3%), and Yakan (9.2%). A big number of madaris in this study are located in Maguindanao province (643), followed by Lanao del Sur (444).

A questionnaire was used. It consisted of the following variables: name of madrasah and year it was established; profile of head of madrasah; enrollment and schedule of classes; profile of teaching and non-teaching personnel; and data on presence of mosque and profile of imam.

It should be noted that the Lanao team encountered the presence of toril. Discussion on toril is presented in Annex 2.

The data were processed using the Quicktap Survey software subscribed to by the IAG for the research.

Findings

The Traditional Madaris

Number of madaris covered. A total of 1,850 madaris are covered in the census. Of this number, 83% are from the ARMM areas while 17% are from non-ARMM areas. Among the provinces, Maguindanao has the highest number with 643 madaris (34.8%), followed by Lanao del Sur with 444 madaris (24%). Basilan has 112 madaris (11%), followed closely by Sulu with 138 madaris (7.5%).

Outside of ARMM, Cotabato province has the highest number with 112 madaris, and Sultan Kudarat with 68 madaris.

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TABLE 1. NUMBER OF MADARIS COVERED IN THE CENSUS BY PROVINCE/CITY, ARMM AND NON-ARMM

AREA	PROVINCE/CITY	F	%
ARMM	BASILAN (INCLUDING LAMITAN CITY)	203	10.97
	LANAO DEL SUR	444	24.00
	MAGUINDANAO	643	34.76
	SULU	138	7.46
	TAWI-TAWI	61	3.30
	MARAWI CITY	45	2.43
	TOTAL	1534	82.92
NON-ARMM	COTABATO PROVINCE	112	6.05
	LANAO DEL NORTE	40	2.16
	SULTAN KUDARAT	68	3.68
	ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE	13	0.70
	ZAMBOANGA SIBUGAY	14	0.76
	COTABATO CITY	52	2.81
	ILIGAN CITY	7	0.38
	ISABELA CITY	2	0.11
	ZAMBOANGA CITY	8	0.43
	TOTAL	316	17.08
TOTAL		1850	100.00

Year of Madrasah Establishment. The bulk of madaris – 1,228 (66.4%) covered in the census were established between 1994 and 2017, followed by more than a quarter - 541 (29.2%) established between 1968 and 1993. Seventy-three madaris or 4% were established between 1942 and 1967, while the remaining seven (.4%) were established from 1941 and earlier. Data reveal that the biggest number of madaris were established over the past 23 years.

TABLE 2. YEAR MADRASAH ESTABLISHED

YEARS	N	%
1915-1941	7	0.38
1942-1967	73	3.95
1968-1993	542	29.30
1994-2017	1228	66.38
TOTAL	1850	100.00

ANNEXES

Type of Building Materials of Madaris. Most of the buildings used by the madaris are made of a combination of wood and cement (40.8%) and concrete (35.1%). The rest are made of wood (16.8%) and light materials, such as bamboo and sawali or woven bamboo strips (7.1%). The data reveal that Tawi-Tawi has more madaris with concrete structures (62.3%). This may be due to the abundance of sand as a raw material in building their madaris, considering that it is primarily an island province. Almost 40% of the madaris in Cotabato province are made of wood since timber and lumber are more readily available in the area.

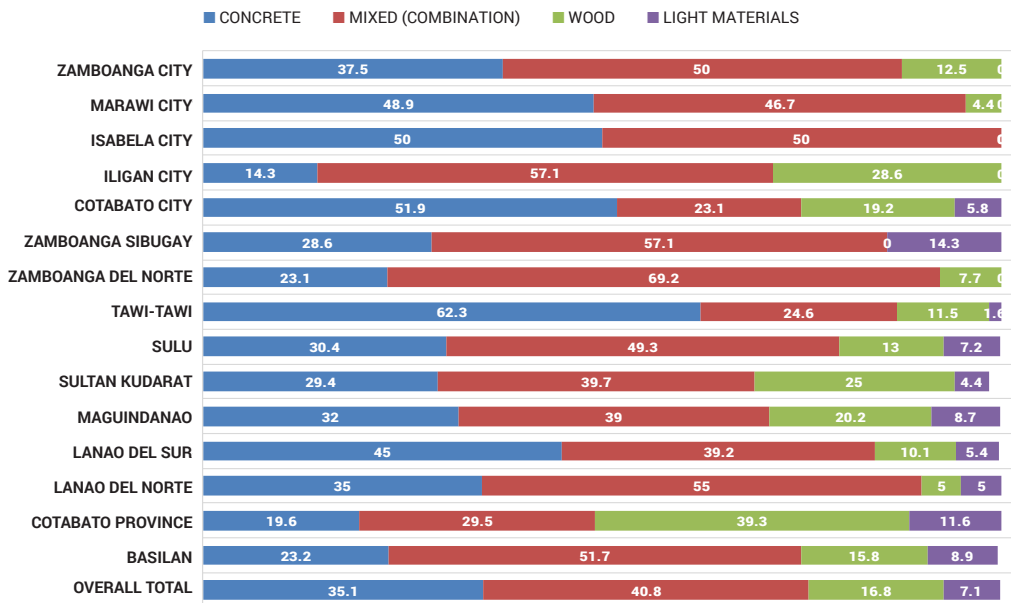


FIGURE 1. BUILDING MATERIALS OF MADARIS (IN PERCENT)

Student Enrollment

Total student enrollment by gender distribution. There are more female enrollees in all madaris in provinces and cities. In the provinces, female enrollment ranges from 50.8% (Cotabato Province) and 65.2% (Lanao del Norte). Among the city madaris, Marawi registered the biggest female enrollment (68.9%) while Zamboanga City has the lowest registered female enrollment (52.3%). In both provinces and cities, 56.8% are female and only 43.7% are male.

As shown in Figure 2, there is high gender disparity among madrasah students in Marawi City, Lanao Norte, Lanao Sur, and Sultan Kudarat.

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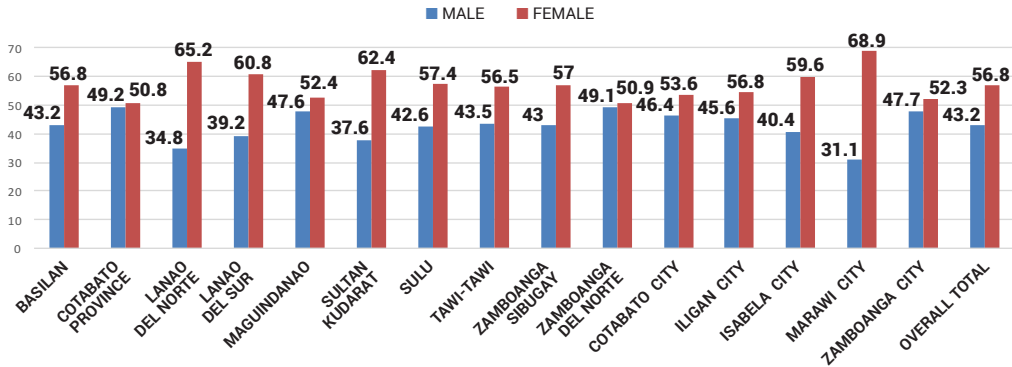


FIGURE 13. TOTAL MADRASAH ENROLMENT BY GENDER (IN PERCENT; WHERE N=264,086)

Program Offerings of Madaris and Class Schedule

The madrasah program offerings consist of seven levels: tahderiyah (kindergarten), ibtida-i (primary), idadi (intermediate), thanawi (secondary), kulliyah (college), majistir (master's), and dukturah (doctoral).

Among the 1,850 madaris in the census, 1,676 (90.59%) offer tahderiyah (kindergarten) program; 1,472 madaris (79.56%) offer ibtida-i (primary) education program; 1,148 madaris (62.05%) offer idadi (intermediate) education program; 404 madaris (21.83%) offer thanawi (secondary) education program; and 39 madaris (2.37%) offer kulliyah (college) education program.

Among the 1,676 madaris offering tahderiyah program, most (1,644 or 98.09%) offer the program on weekends, and only 32 madaris (1.90%) offer the program on weekdays. Of the 1,472 madaris offering ibtida-i (primary) education program, 1,446 madaris (98.23%) offer on weekends, and 26 madaris (1.76%) have classes on weekdays.

Of the 1,148 madaris offering idadi (intermediate) education program, 1,129 (98.34%) offer on weekends and 19 (1.65%) offer on weekdays.

Among the 409 madaris offering thanawi (secondary) education program, 374 (91.4%) offer weekend classes and 35 (8.6%) offer weekdays classes.

These data reveal that most of the madaris offering tahderiyah, ibtida-i, idadi, and thanawi offer weekend classes. This is because most of the students enrolled in the madaris are also enrolled in secular schools, whose classes are held during weekdays. This situation is the opposite when it comes to those offering kulliyah program. For the 39 madaris offering kulliyah (college) education program, 71% offer weekday classes and 28.2% offer weekend classes. Since kulliyah program is already specialized, most of the students are full-time, and thus classes are held during weekdays.

ANNEXES

TABLE 3. PROGRAM OFFERINGS AND CLASS SCHEDULES

PROGRAM OFFERING	CLASS SCHEDULES		
	WEEKDAYS	WEEKEND	TOTAL
TAHDIRIYYAH	32	1644	1676
IBTIDA-I	26	1446	1472
IDADI	19	1129	1148
THANAWI	35	374	409
KULLIYAH	28	11	39

Teaching Personnel

Gender Distribution of Teaching Personnel. Except for Lanao Sur and Lanao del Norte, all the provinces have more male than female teachers. Zamboanga del Norte (77.6) and Zamboanga Sibugay (77.5) register the highest percentage of male teachers. Basilan has the smallest majority with 54.9% male teachers. Lanao del Norte has 31.8% male teachers and 68.2% female teachers, and Lanao del Sur lists 30.9% male teachers and 69.1% female teachers.

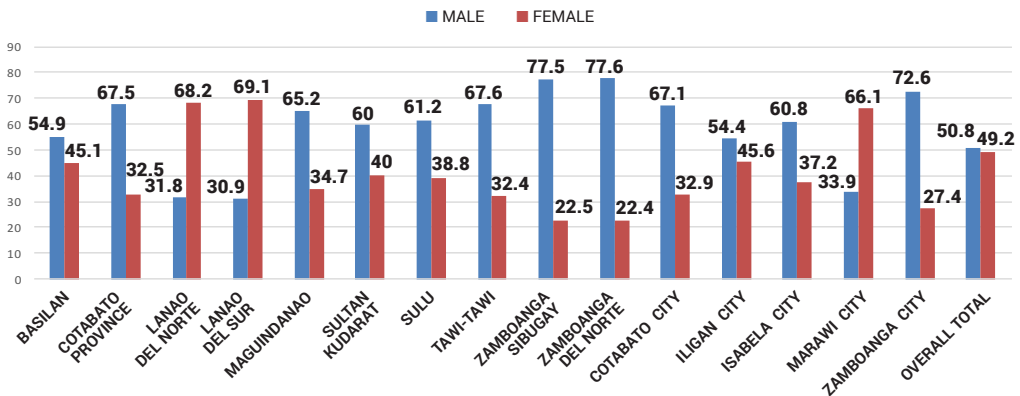


FIGURE 3. GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHING PERSONNEL BY PROVINCE AND CITY (IN PERCENT)

Gender distribution of non-teaching personnel by province and city. In all provinces there are more male than female non-teaching personnel. Zamboanga Sibugay shows the highest percentage of male personnel (80%) while Lanao del Norte has only 52% male personnel. In the cities, however, Cotabato (71%) and Iligan (62.5%) show a bigger number of male personnel, while Marawi (45.8%) and Isabela (25%) indicate a lesser number of male personnel.

RESEARCH ON TRADITIONAL MADARIS IN ARMM AND ADJACENT REGIONS

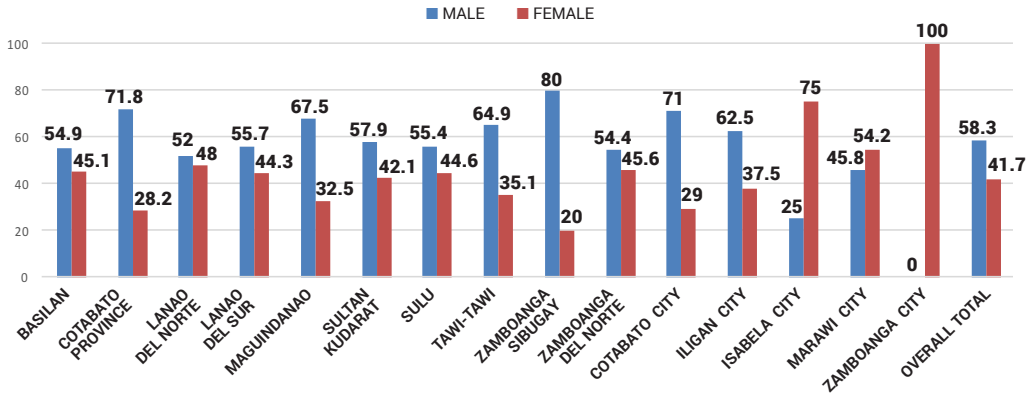


FIGURE 4. GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF NON-TEACHING PERSONNEL BY PROVINCE AND CITY (IN PERCENT)

Distribution of overseas-schooled madaris teachers by province and city.

Figure 5 shows a big number of overseas-schooled madarasah teachers, particularly in the provinces of Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, and Basilan.

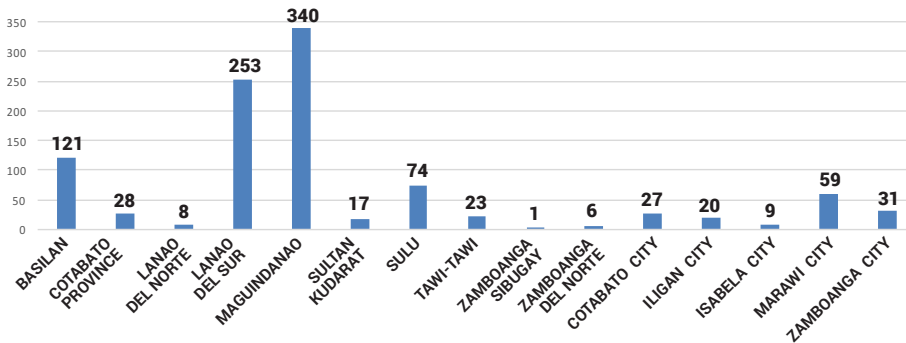


FIGURE 5. DISTRIBUTION OF OVERSEAS-SCHOOLED MADARIS TEACHERS BY PROVINCE AND CITY (IN FREQUENCY)

Gender distribution of heads of the madaris by province and city. The heads of the madaris in all provinces and cities are mostly men. In the provinces, 84.5% of the madaris heads are male and so are the 85.1% of their counterparts in the cities. Only Lanao del Norte registered a low 52.5% of madaris headed by males. All the other provinces have 85-94% male madaris heads.

ANNEXES

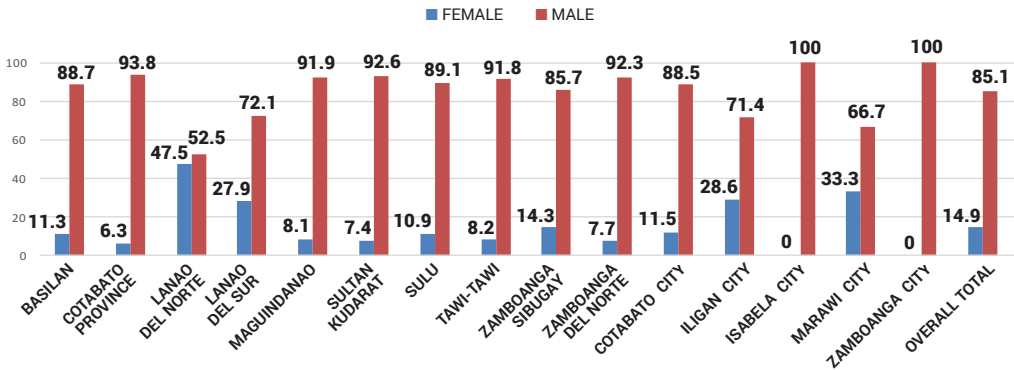


FIGURE 6. GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF MADRASAH HEADS (IN PERCENT)

Age of the madaris head. The mean age among the madaris heads is 47 years, with the youngest being 16 years of age and 98 as the oldest. Majority of the madrasah heads are with ages ranging from 38 to 59 years old.

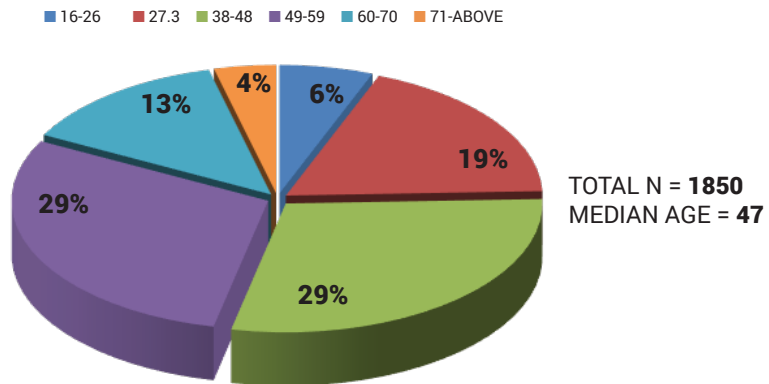


FIGURE 7. AGE DISTRIBUTION OF MADRASAH HEADS

Heads of madaris by ethnicity. More than a third of the madaris heads are Maguindanaon (37.6%); more than one-fourth are Meranaw (28.9%); and the rest are Iranon (10.1%), Tausug (9.3%), Yakan (9.2%), or Bangingi (1.8%).

RESEARCH ON TRADITIONAL MADARIS IN ARMM AND ADJACENT REGIONS

TABLE 4. MADRASAH HEADS BY ETHNICITY

ETHNICITY	F	%
MAGUINDANAON	695	37.6
MERANAW	535	28.9
IRANON	187	10.1
TAUSUG	172	9.3
YAKAN	171	9.2
SAMA	45	2.4
BANGINGI	34	1.8
DULANGAN MANOBO	1	.1
JAMA MAPUN	2	.1
KALIBUGAN	1	.1
MAMALO/TIDURAY	1	.1
MISSING DATA	4	.2
TOTAL	1850	100.0

Madaris with Masjid in the Compound

One key facility needed in the madrasah is the masjid. In this context, the masjid is not just a prayer hall; it is also a place where students can practice what they have learned in the classroom. The imam leads the congregational prayer in the masjid and runs its affairs. 1,219 madaris have masjid within their compound. The following are some of the characteristics of the imam connected with the madaris included in this study.

Age and education of imam. More than half of the a’immah are within the 50-60 (32.1%) and 39-49 (26.6%) age range. The mean age is 49 years old.

436 of the a’immah in the census (35.8%) have thanawi education; 388 of the a’immah (31.8%) have kulliyah background and 395 a’immah (32.4%) have ibtida-i background.

TABLE 5. AGE AND EDUCATION OF A’IMMAH

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
17-27	81	6.7
28-38	195	16.0
39-49	325	26.6
50-60	392	32.1
61-70	173	14.2
71-ABOVE	53	4.3
TOTAL	1219	100.0
MEAN AGE	49	
EDUCATION OF IMAM		
IDADI	395	32.4
KULLIYAH	388	31.8
THANAWI	436	35.8
TOTAL	1219	100.0

ANNEXES

Distribution of Foreign- or Locally-schooled Imam

Among the a'immah, 1,152 (94.5%) studied locally, and only 67(5.5%) studied overseas.

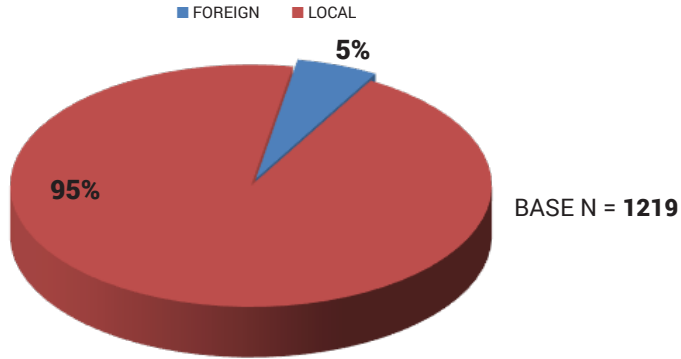


FIGURE 8. SCHOOL WHERE THE IMAM GRADUATED

Foreign country where the imam were schooled. Of the 67 a'immah who studied overseas, 29 (43.3%) were schooled in Saudi Arabia, 10 (14.9%) in Libya, 6 (9%) in Jordan, 5 (7.5%) in Sudan, 4 (6.0%) in Egypt, 4 in Pakistan, and 3 in Syria.

TABLE 6: FOREIGN COUNTRY WHERE A'IMMAH GRADUATED

COUNTRY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
SAUDI ARABIA	29	43.3
LIBYA	10	14.9
JORDAN	6	9.0
EGYPT	4	6.0
INDONESIA	2	3.0
KUWAIT	2	3.0
PAKISTAN	4	6.0
SUDAN	5	7.5
SYRIA	3	4.5
UK	1	1.5
YEMEN	1	1.5
BASE N	67	100.0

Annex 2. Toril

While conducting the census of madaris, the Lanao team encountered the presence of toril, which is a boarding school specializing on understanding, memorization, and recitation of the Qu'ran. Young Moro people interested in acquiring the skill in Qu'ran reading enroll in toril. Students enrolled there are not allowed to leave the place nor be visited by their parents. Some toril would require their students to stay for at least a month with no contact at all with the outside world. It is only after this period that they are allowed to go outside. Some students are orphans, while others are encouraged by their parents to enroll there. In many cases, the students themselves are the ones who want to enroll in toril.

The data generated from the census include: (a) number of toril in the study areas; (b) year the toril was established; (c) enrollment; and (d) number of teaching and non-teaching personnel.

Number of Toril and Their Location

Out of the 52 toril recorded, a big majority(64%) are located in Lanao del Sur. Less than a fifth (23.1%) are found in Marawi City, and a few (38%) are in Lanao del Norte (9.6%) and in Iligan City (3.8%).

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF TORIL BY LOCATION

LOCATION	N	%
LANAO DEL SUR	33	63.5
MARAWI CITY	12	23.1

Overall, the 52 toril have a total of 2,696 enrollees. Of this number, 55% are enrolled in Lanao del Sur. There are more males (68.4%) than females (31.6%) enrolled in toril. No female enrollee is recorded in Iligan nor in Lanao del Norte. In Lanao del Sur, there are 44.3% female enrollees. In Marawi, a large majority (81%) are males.

The toril in Iligan City and Lanao del Norte have all male enrollees. In Lanao del Sur, there are relatively many females enrolled at 44.3% of the 1,656 total enrollees. In Marawi City, a large majority (81%) are males.

TABLE 2. TOTAL ENROLLMENT BY GENDER

PROVINCE/CITY	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
ILIGAN CITY	80	100.0	0	0.0	80	2.7
LANAO DEL NORTE	148	100.0	0	0.0	148	5.0
LANAO DEL SUR	922	55.7	734	44.3	1656	55.5
MARAWI CITY	893	81.0	209	19.0	1102	36.9
TOTAL	2043	68.4	943	31.6	2986	100.0

ANNEXES

Teaching personnel

A total of 268 teaching personnel handle classes in the 52 toril. Classified by gender, 6 of 10 are males. The teaching personnel of toril in Iligan City and Lanao del Norte are all males, and so are all their enrollees in these two areas.

TABLE 3. TOTAL NUMBER OF TEACHING PERSONNEL BY GENDER

PROVINCE/CITY	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
ILIGAN CITY	7	100.0	0	0.0	7	2.6
LANAO DEL NORTE	11	100.0	0	0.0	11	4.1
LANAO DEL SUR	79	58.1	57	41.9	136	50.7
MARAWI CITY	74	64.9	40	35.1	114	42.5
TOTAL	171	63.8	97	36.2	268	100.0

Non-teaching Personnel

There are 133 non-teaching personnel. Majority (59%) of them are in Lanao del Sur, while 26% are in Marawi City. Classified by gender, majority (67.7%) are males.

TABLE 4. TOTAL NUMBER OF NON-TEACHING PERSONNEL BY GENDER

PROVINCE/CITY	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
ILIGAN CITY	4	80.0	1	20.0	5	3.8
LANAO DEL NORTE	9	64.3	5	35.7	14	10.5
LANAO DEL SUR	48	60.8	31	39.2	79	59.4
MARAWI CITY	29	82.9	46	17.1	35	26.3
TOTAL	90	67.7	43	32.3	133	100.0

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Attorney Bacani is the founder of the Institute for Autonomy and Governance. He is a former vice president for research and extension and dean of the College of Law of Notre Dame University in Cotabato City, Philippines. A fellow of the United States Institute of Peace (Washington, DC), he specializes in political solutions to conflicts and in promoting the rights of minorities. He was also a Hubert Humphrey fellow at the University of Minnesota, specializing in federalism and conflict management, short-term consultant on constitution-making in Nepal, and visiting lecturer at the European University Centre for Peace Studies in Austria.

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