

Contemporary Practice of Islam and Religious Freedom in Japan

Nissa Ayu Qintani¹, I Ketut Surajaya²

¹Undergraduate Student Japanese Studies Program, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Indonesia, Depok 16424, Indonesia

²Professor of History and Japanese Studies, Department of History, Japanese Studies Program Faculty of Humanities Universitas Indonesia Depok 16424, Indonesia

Abstract: *The development of Islam in contemporary Japan was followed by the development of Islamic religious facilities in this country. This article explained the practice of Islamic teaching in contemporary Japan and the positive response of Japanese society to the implementation of Islamic teaching in Japan. Although Muslims in Japan face many problems in carrying out daily religious activities, they can overcome these problems with the 'help' of Islamic countries and Islamic communities outside Japan. The government does not have specific policy nor facilitates on Islam or any other religions, because religious freedom is guaranteed in the 1947 Constitution of Japan. Government policies on 'halal' industry make it easier for Muslims to carry out their beliefs and also become economic spur for tourism purposes. This qualitative research was conducted using historical research methods and literature studies.*

Keywords: History, Islam, Japan, Facilities, Constitution

1. Introduction

The history of religion development in Japan, Islam was the most recent religion entering Japan, in the 19th century. Christianity had entered Japan in the 14th century and Buddhism had entered Japan in the 6th century. In the late 19th century, Osman Pasha was representative of Ottoman Turks visited Japan as respond to diplomatic visit conducted by Prince Komatsu Akihito a few years earlier. In addition to returning Japan's visit, the Ottoman Turks visited Japan to introduce Islam to Japan. In addition to the relations between Japan and Ottoman Turkey, a large number of Russian Revolutionary refugees from Central Asia and Russia arrived in Japan in 1917 and made contact with Muslims community and it was considered as a factor of the spread of Islam in Japan.

In a very long period of time, Islam expands in Japan even though Islam is still a minority religion. Today, the spread of Islam in Japan cannot be separated from the impact of globalization, which makes it easier for Japanese people to access information about Islam and know deeper about Islam. For example, prayer and culinary facilities for 'halal' food are spreading in big cities like Nagoya, Kobe, Tokyo, Osaka and other cities. There have been many places such as airports, restaurants or hotels that provide facilities for Muslims such as praying room or providing 'halal' food. 'Halal' tour has many enthusiasts that spurred more Muslim tourists to visit Japan.

Muslims tourist does not only feel the easiness in religion activity. Muslim workers who work in the Japanese industrial sector are also given good facilities including religion facilities for workers.

2. Problem Definition

In this study, the problem is whether there is a policy or special treatment from Japanese government towards

adherents of Islam in Japan. How does Japan's government or community institution facilitate Muslims in Japan? What policies or facilities have the government and social institutions provided for Muslims in Japan? This study will focus on the development of Islamic religious facilities in Japan.

3. Research Method

In this study, the method used is qualitative method through literature study. The literature sources used are secondary data in form of books, international journals, e-books and newspapers. The historical approach used in the research includes stages of heuristics, source criticism, interpretation and historiography. At the heuristic stage, author seeks and collects historical sources related to the research theme. At the source criticism stage, author identifies 'authenticity' and the truth of historical information sources that are relevant to be used as research material. The next stage is the interpretation stage, author interprets sources that have been collected and verified in the previous stages. The last stage is the historiography, which describes and analyzes the results of research that have been carried out chronologically and systematically.

4. Literature Review

In this study, author used several books and articles from journals of previous studies. The article by Bushra Anis entitled *The Emergence of Islam and the Status of Muslim Minority* (Anis, 1998) explained the history of the development of Islam in Japan, the presence of foreign Muslims in Japan and problems experienced by Muslims in Japan at that time related to worship infrastructure such as mosques. However, along with the growing number of Muslims in Japan, Islamic facilities especially related to worship places have increased until 1998 when Anis carried out the research. Anis also highlighted that Japanese people are known for adapting some ideologies and practices that

suit their needs and benefit themselves. This can be seen from the religious practices practiced by most Japanese, where at birth they were born as Shinto, when they were married they married in the Christian church and when they died they were buried according to Buddhist rituals (Anis, 1998).

In *Asian's Policy Journal* No.5, Michael Penn wrote an article entitled 'Public Faces and Private Spaces: Islam in the Japanese Context' (Michael, 2008) which contained Japan's societal perspectives on religion and Islam in general and Japanese public opinion on Islam after the September 11, 2001 tragedy. Penn explained the problems experienced by Muslims in Japan. According to Michael, Japanese society was the most secular society in the world. Japanese society regarded religion as part of Japanese tradition and culture. Religious events such as *Obon*¹ and *Hatsumode*² were carried out by many people as cultural and traditional events rather than religious ritual. Michael also found that the nature of worldliness and lack of attention to abstract concepts characterizes the religious attitudes of most Japanese, in this case, where many Japanese people who were not bound in their daily religious practices practiced syncretism in their religious activities. Most Japanese beliefs are a mixture of Shinto, Buddhist and Christian. Many pray at Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples even though the person is not a follower of the teachings of the temple even without regard to the temple dedicated to God. The practice of syncretism implies that religion or belief that demands adherence and sole belief for one God is less acceptable in Japanese society (Michael: 2008). Thus, Michael added that, Islam as a religion that requires its adherents to obey one God has difficulty being able to enter and be accepted in Japanese society. This condition was also coupled with a lack of information about Islam which was recently entered Japan in the late 19th century, compared to Buddhism and Christianity.

In addition, the world perspective of Islam after the September 11, 2001 tragedy and information about Islamic brutality in the media regarding the tragedy had a wide impact on the views of Japanese people who regard Islam as a bad religion, pursuing peace. Moreover, most Japanese people do not interact intensively with Muslims and get most of the information about Islam from television (Michael: 2008). Islam as a minority in Japan and information about Islam in Japan was still difficult and makes a number of problems experienced by Muslims in Japan, both in carrying out their obligations or simply living life as part of Japanese society.

Yoza Achmad Adidaya thesis entitled '*Halal*' in Japan: *History, Issues, and Problems* (Superpower: 2016) described the history of the development of 'halal' culinary in Japan. Yoza said that the development of 'halal' culinary in Japan was associated to the factor of Muslim workers who work in Japan.

¹ Annual ceremony for Buddhist to commemorate ancestors. It is believed ancestors will visit their living family during *Obon* ceremony.

² Ritual to visit Buddhist or Shinto temple in new year.

In *Asian's Policy Journal* No.5, Sakurai Keiko article entitled 'Muslims in Contemporary Japan' (Sakurai, 2008) described the development and increasing number of mosques in Japan and the role of mosques for Muslims in Japan. Sakurai concluded that mosques in Japan were not the only places of worship but also as a mean to strengthen Muslim community outside the mosque.

In a journal published by Hughright Osaka on Minorities in Japan, Yeseul Christeena Song (Song: 2008) in an article entitled 'The Everyday Life of Muslims in Japan' explained that life and social order in Japan was one of the difficult factors in carrying out religious obligations for Muslims, which according to Song, due to cultural ties and religious views of the Japanese towards Islam. Nevertheless, Song also discovered that there was a tendency for Muslims in Japan began to adapt them as part of Japanese society while continuing to implement Islamic rules in Japanese society.

4.1 Historical Background

The development of Islam in Japan began at the end of the 19th century. According to Abu Bakar Morimoto (1980), as quoted by Anis (1998), Islam was originally known in Japan as part of western religious thought. In 1870 the biography of the Prophet Muhammad was translated into Japanese. However, the translation of the biography was only for reading.

Several decades later, precisely in 1889-1890, the Ottoman Empire sent the Ertugrul ship led by Osman Pasha for a diplomatic return visit after Prince Komatsu Akihito visited Turkey a few years earlier. On the voyage home, the Ertugrul ship was hit by a storm in Wakayama Prefecture, Japan.

The Meiji Emperor ordered the survivors to be delivered back to Turkey using the Hiei and Congo warships. At the same time, there were several Japanese sailed to Turkey to give their condolences and as representatives to give donations collected by the Japanese to the families of the deceased sailor. Some Japanese who visited Turkey stayed for several years to learn about Turkish culture and taught Japanese culture. A few Japanese were converted to Islam while staying there and when they returned to Japan, they taught Islamic teachings to Japanese society.

Diplomatic relations between Turkey and Japan paved the way for Islam to enter Japan. However, the development of the Islamic community in Japan occurred when many Tartar Muslims from Central Asia and Russia fled to Japan to avoid Russian Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. The refugees were given shelter in Japan and began to establish Muslim communities in Japan. Some Japanese people were converted to Islam after often dealing with the Islamic community. Marriage between Muslims foreigners and Japanese were also the reason for the increasing number of Muslim Japanese. The establishment of mosques in Japan followed the development of Islam and the Islamic community in Japan. The first mosque to be established in Japan was the Kobe Mosque in 1935 and the Tokyo Camii Mosque in 1938.

Morimoto (1980), in Anis (1998), described that Japan experienced Islamic Boom twice. The first Islamic boom took place during World War II by Japanese military government. At that time, Japanese military government studied Islam and Muslims through research centers and Islamic organizations. In 1935-1943 hundreds of books and journals about Islam were circulated around Japan. The Islamic boom was aimed to provide knowledge for members of the Japanese military regarding Islam, which indeed has many followers in China and Southeast Asia, which at that time were occupied by Japan. Because the aim was not to spread the teachings of Islam, but as a strategy of war in World War II, the Islamic Boom ended after the end of World War II.

The second Islamic Boom came after the Oil Shock phenomenon in 1973 when the OPEC³ Arab member country raised oil prices to almost 12 dollars a barrel. In addition, OPEC embargoed oil exports to countries such as the United States, Japan and Western Europe. This was done as response by Arab countries against countries that supported Israel during a fight against Egypt and Syria in the *Yom Kippur* War (1973) and as response to the decline of the United States currency as the main currency for oil trading with OPEC members.

Arab countries and other countries in the Middle East are world oil suppliers that are very influential in the sustainability of Japanese economy. After realizing the importance and the role of Arab countries in their economic sustainability, Japan sought to gain Arab sympathy. El-Maghribi, Mohammed, and Adli in their article entitled "Islam in Japan: The History of Islam in Japan" (El-Maghribi, NBM, Soliman, MA, & Adli, MA, 1995) explained that mass media in Japan published massive news about the Islamic and Arab world (Middle East) specifically.

Massive coverage of Islam and Arab countries made Japanese people who initially did not know about Islam easily got information from news on TV or newspapers. Japanese mass media showed pilgrimage held in Mecca. Not only news about Islam and the Middle East, the voice of the *Adhan* and the recitation of the *Quran* were also heard. News about Islam in mass media at that time made Japanese people knew more about Islam and not a few people finally embraced Islam. El-Maghribi said that there were many conversions at that time, about tens of thousands of people. Although many Japanese embraced Islam due to the end of Oil Shock, the news about Islam and Arab began to disappear slowly.

Anis (1998) said that the Iranian Revolution, which occurred in 1979 made Islam, was known in the world, including in Japan. Japan, which initially learned things about Islam and the Middle East through Europe and the United States, felt the need to begin studying directly about it by sending several Japanese students to the Middle East. Not a few of these students who returned to Japan had embraced Islam.

Until now, there has been no official valid data regarding the number of Muslims in Japan. However, based on several

different sources, Hirofumi Tanada who examined the number of Muslim populations in Japan in 2011 stated that the estimated number of Muslims in Japan was around 100,000 people where 10,000 of them were Japanese⁴. Most Muslims in Japan were foreign Muslims who worked in Japan and then had families.

The development of Islam in Japan was followed by the emergence of Islamic communities in Japan, both by Muslim foreigners and Japanese Muslims. Along with the development of communities and the increasing number of Muslims in Japan, the demand to fulfill Islamic needs was increasing. Places of worship or mosques are being built in Japan using Muslim donations in Japan and assistance from Islamic countries such as Arab and Turkey. Some communities took the initiative to rent mosques and *mushalla*⁵ with the results of joint donations. 'Halal' food was sold in 1980, and the 'halal' industry began to develop in 1985 and was based in the Kanto area (Adidaya, 2016). Until now, Islam was growing in Japan followed by the development of Islamic facilities in Japan.

4.2 Religious Freedom in Japan

Freedom of religion in Japan is regulated in Article 20 of the Japanese Constitution of 1947 Chapter 3 concerning the rights and duties of the people as follow: Article 20 of the Japanese Constitution Verse 1: Religious freedom is guaranteed for all. No religious organization will receive any privileges from the State, or exercise political authority. Verse 2: No one will be forced to take part in any religious, celebration, ritual or practice. Verse 3: The state and its institutions may not conduct religious education or other religious activities. The article shows the position of the state in religious affair in Japan. The state guarantees religious freedom and give people the boundaries of the country where the State and its institutions should not do religious education and religious activities.

In a report entitled International Religious Freedom Reports, it was explained that the Japanese constitution guarantees freedom of religion and requires countries to refrain from education and other religious activities. This was done so that people will not abuse these rights and must be responsible for using these rights for the welfare of society. (U.S. Department of State, 2016)

Based on this article, the religious freedom of Japanese people is guaranteed by the State and no one should violate the article. In its implementation, Japan obeys the article by guaranteeing the religious freedom of its people. In addition to article 20 of the 1947 Japan constitution, there are several other articles that regulate freedom of religion in Japan such as Article 19, which is still part of chapter 3 on the rights and duties and Article 87 the mass is contained in chapter 7 of finance. These articles read as follows. Freedom of thought and conscience shall not be violated.' The religion of a person is the result of thought and something that is believed to be from the heart of the person. Therefore the

³OPEC stands for Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

⁴ Hirofumi Tanada, *Muslim Population in the World and Japan, 2011*, (*Human Sciences Research* 26 (1), p. 2013)

⁵Smaller worshiping place, compare to Mosque, for Muslims.

people have right of freedom of thought, whether religion is good for them or not, must not be violated.

Article 89 of the 1947 Japanese constitution reads as follows: 'There is no public money or other property that will be issued or used for the use, benefit or maintenance of any religious institution or association, or for charity, education or virtue that is not under the control of public authorities'

Article 89 was different from articles 19 and 20, which are part of chapter III, and describes the rights and duties of the people. Article 89 regulates finance, which explained that state finances couldn't be used for any religious institution or association unless the institution is under the control of public authorities. So that, not many religious institutions or associations get financial assistance from the state.

5. Discussion

5.1 The Latest Development of Islam in Japan

In 1998 Anis explained problems experienced by Muslims in Japan at that time, such as lack of places of worship (mosques and *mushalla*), difficulty in finding 'halal' food, lack of Islamic education and the absence of Islamic burials (Anis, 1998). In 2008 Song, Sakurai and Michael described problems experienced by Muslims in Japan. Song (The Everyday Life of Muslims in Japan, 2008) explained that one of reasons why Muslims in Japan found it difficult to carry out their religious obligations was the social life in Japan. Michael (2008) and Sakurai (2008) found problem of Muslims in Japan was to find 'halal' food. Sakurai specifically explained the problems of Islam in Japan were Muslim education and burial.

The problem of Islam in Japan from 1998 to 2008 did not experience significant changes. 'Halal' food, places of worship, Islamic cemeteries, Islamic education and social life in Japan were problems experienced by Muslims in Japan. As Muslims grow in Japan and increase in Japanese society's knowledge of Islam, problems experienced by Muslims in Japan have gradually been overcome somehow.

5.2 'Halal' in Japan

Halal is a word from Arabic language meaning "allowed". Halal is all objects or things that are allowed for Muslims. This term usually refers to food, meat products, cosmetics, personal care products, pharmaceuticals, food ingredients and things that come into contact with food⁶. In the application of 'halal' food, the food shall not contain pork and liquor. The meat you eat must also be 'halal' through cutting the animal in an Islamic manner. Japanese people who are still laymen with Islam do not know what food is allowed and should not be eaten by Muslims. Therefore, interest in 'halal' did not spur as it is today.

Anis explained that in 1998 there were only 18 shops selling 'halal' meat throughout Japan. In Tokyo, there were 16 stores that sold 'halal' food ingredients and 4 'halal' restaurants in Japan. Because of the small number and

distance of the distant store a Muslim must travel long distances or wait long enough to get the 'halal' food ingredients.

Adidaya (2016) in his thesis explained that in the beginning, Japan had no interest in the 'halal' industry because of the lack of interest in religion in Japanese society. The problem of Muslims in Japan in getting 'halal' food does not make 'halal' industry in Japan increase. The time was when Japanese government wanted to expand tourism sector in Japan to Southeast Asian tourists. It is also related to 2020 Olympics, which will be held in Japan, so Japan's government is trying to deal with the number of tourists coming from different countries.

Adidaya also found that 'halal' is booming in Japan because it was considered as a big business opportunity in Japan. Not only revolves around the food and beverage sector, tour packages also obtain 'halal' certification. Not a few travel agents offered tours intended for Muslim tourists or known as 'halal' tours. In addition to the travel business, 'halal' business is increasingly growing in Japan from food, cosmetics, medicine and clothing. This 'halal' trend occurred after Japan tried to improve their tourism sector. In addition, visa-free application in several ASEAN countries with the majority of Muslims people is the reason for the spread of 'halal' in Japan. Japan's efforts to improve its economy are also carried out by making 'halal' products. Japan's declining economy made Japan aim for the tourism industry. While Japan's domestic production was decreasing due to less population in Japan. Japan is targeting Southeast Asian market to export 'halal' products because there are many Muslims in Southeast Asia.

Japan is a country with little services related to term 'halal'. In efforts to build success and growing 'halal' industry, the Kyoto tourism federation as local government institutions, held 'halal' seminars every month throughout 2015 to provide understanding about 'halal' and Islamic tourism to people working in the tourism sector (Adidaya, 2016). According to data from 'Halal' Media Japan quoted by Adidaya, the number of restaurants with 'halal' concept in Tokyo was more than 300 restaurants. Osaka and other cities had approximately 33 restaurants using 'halal' concept. In 2012, the Islamic Center of Japan noted that there were approximately 55 'halal' food stores spread across Japan.

In addition to restaurants and grocery stores, 'halal' was increasingly spread into the campus environment. Some universities in Japan provide 'halal' food for Muslim employees or students. The first university to enforce this was Osaka University in 1995. Furthermore, the procurement of 'halal' food at the university was followed by Kyushu University (2005), Nagoya University (2006), Tokyo University and Tohoku University (2007), Kyoto University (2009) and Waseda University in 2012. This was done because there were many foreign Muslim students in student exchange program to Japan (Yusof & Shutto, 2014). The increase in 'halal' industry was inseparable from the increasing needs of Muslims in Japan for 'halal' food and the growing development of Islam in Japan.

5.3 Mosque in Japan

⁶ Islamic Council of Victoria

A mosque is a place where Muslims pray. For Japanese Muslims, the existence of a mosque is very important to carry out their religious activities or simply become a place of religious learning. Anis (1998) explained that even though many housing units have been converted into mosques, Muslims in Japan need the existence of major mosques such as the Tokyo Mosque and Kobe Mosque.

Sakurai (2008) found that mosques were exclusive places owned by Muslims in Japan who were minority group so that the existence of mosques in Japan was more than just a place of worship. In Japan, mosques have a role as a place for people to exchange information. Inside the mosque there was office, library, kitchen, computer room and sitting room. Some mosques even provided overnight accommodations for visitors on weekends. Sakurai explained that mosques in Japan were not only places to worship and pray but to carry out marriage ceremonies, praying for the deceased, study religion and even become social or business meeting places (*Muslims in Contemporary Japan*, 2008). Therefore, the mosque is a place to exchange information on Muslims in Japan, both information about religion and daily information.

Muslims in Japan initiated leasing mosques in Japan by giving donations in form of money (Yasunori, 2007). Mosques in Japan were generally small and shaped like ordinary buildings; this was due to the high price of land and construction costs for a large mosque. In addition, tax rate for buildings in Japan is very expensive, so Muslims in Japan could only rent small buildings. The cost of managing and administering mosques is the paid by Muslim donations in Japan (Sakurai: 2008). The Japanese government could not issue fund for mosque construction because of article 89 of Japan's Constitution, which prohibited the expenditure of funds for religious organization or institution. So that, in fulfilling Muslim wishes for mosques, Muslims in Japan must provide their own mosque or *mushalla*.

Quoted from 'Halal' Media Japan in 2015 the number of mosques in Japan was 100. The development of mosques in Japan looked quite large compared to 2007 when there were only 38 mosques in Japan (Sakurai, 2008). Several small prayer rooms or *mushalla* have been provided in several airports and tourist attractions, especially those that are crowded with tourists from Southeast Asia, this was done by Japanese government to promote tourism in Japan. These developments did not escape the many requests for mosques in Japan to meet the needs of Muslims in Japan due to the growing development of Islam in Japan.

5.4 Islamic Cemetery

Based on Islamic teachings, the deceased must be buried with their heads facing Mecca or the *Qibla* of Muslims. In Japan, people who have died are usually cremated. Cremation is required in Japan and regulated in many city regulations⁷. This was done to maintain the cleanliness of ground water and overcome the problem of small open land in Japan. Many people in Japan also carried out cremation

⁷Enacted on major cities such as Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya.

because the cost was the cheapest compared to other types of funerals (Ardika, 2009).

Anis said that there was only one Muslim cemetery in Yamanashi Prefecture west of Tokyo, Japan by 1998. The Japanese Muslim Association owned this cemetery. This cemetery was adjacent to the Buddhist Temple, which provides 4,800 square meters of land for special burial of Muslims. Sakurai explained that due to the small size of the cemetery, burial fees at the association were the same as the cost of bringing the deceased back to their home country, so Muslims who were native Japanese could not do this process. Most Muslims in Japan are foreign workers who do not have enough money.

So the Islamic Center of Japan tried to raise funds to buy land that would later be used as Muslim burials. Until 2010, Islamic cemeteries in Japan had grown to three different locations, namely Yamanashi, Kobe and Yoichi (remote areas in Hokkaido). The cemetery in Kobe was a cemetery managed by the city government and intended only for the residents of Kobe. Other burials at Yoichi are considered too far, making it difficult for families to visit⁸. In 2014, an Islamic cemetery was opened in Yawara, Ibaraki Prefecture. The area can cover about 450 graves. The burial ground was purchased from funds donated by the late King Fahd from Saudi Arabia. The cemetery was open to public with a funeral fee of 30,000 Yen for children and 120,000 Yen for adults⁹.

Along with the increasing number of Muslims in Japan, they are still trying to fulfill the need for Islamic cemeteries. Considering that more than 100,000 residents in Japan are Muslims where 10,000 of them are local Japanese citizens (Tanada, 2011) more funerals are needed to accommodate the needs of Muslims in Japan.

5.5 Islamic Education

Islamic education in Japan is another problem because many Japanese Muslims regret the lack of Islamic education in Japan. Anis (1998) explained that Japan's government schools or local schools do not teach education about religion¹⁰. Islam was taught only as part of history and not taught deeply. Islamic education was taught by Islamic institutions or communities in Japan by opening classes to study Islam. Because there was no official Islamic religious school for children, learning about religion was usually conducted at home with teachers who come to the house.

Anis (1989) said that Islamic Center of Japan took initiative to raise funds and establish Muslim schools for children in Tokyo after realizing lack of Muslim schools in Japan and no higher Islamic education institutions. Although there were several Arabic study programs, Middle Eastern study programs, Islamic *Sharia* law and other institutions, these

⁸ "Tak Ada Tempat Bagi Muslim yang Meninggal di Jepang" (<http://www.voa-islam.com/read/suaramedia/2010/08/18/9303/>)

⁹ Haroon Qureshi, *Muslim Graveyard-Yawara, Ibaraki-ken* (<http://www.islam.or.jp/en/2014/07/24/graveyard-yawara/>)

¹⁰ Japanese Constitution article 20 part 3

institutions are in different places and not enough to facilitate the needs of Muslims.

One of the mosques in Japan, the Otsuka Mosque registered as an educational foundation such as an Islamic school to the government, until later it was decided, this mosque would continue to operate as a childcare center without official status. This was done in order to meet the needs of Japanese Muslims who need Islamic education for their children (Yasunori, 2007).

Many Muslim parents who considered Japanese local schools are not the right environments for their children to learn the teachings of Islam. They are worried that the lunch provided by the school contains food that is prohibited by Islamic teachings. Not infrequently many Muslim parents prepare supplies for their children at school. Muslim parents who wanted their children to learn more about Islam choose to take their children to mosques that open religious classes as an additional class outside formal school. While some foreign Muslim parents who feel that religious education in Japan is not enough will send their children to live with their grandparents in their parents' country (Sakurai, 2008).

In 2016, the first international Islamic school in Japan was inaugurated as YUAI International Islamic School (YUAI-IIS). This school was initiated and managed by Indonesian Muslim groups whose foundations are under the FGA Education Foundation¹¹ and in collaboration with the Japanese Islamic Center. Its location was adjacent to the Tokyo Mosque and made it easy for students to move between schools and mosques. YUAI-IIS was dedicated to teaching Islamic science and international curriculum in a supportive environment. In the first 3 years, YUAI-IIS would open regular classes for kindergarten, elementary school and junior high school. While non-regular programs are held in the afternoon or on weekends. The classes offered are intensive courses in English in an Islamic environment where there will be learning about Islamic teachings¹².

5.6 Muslim Social Life in Japan

Muslims in Japan do not get bad treatment from Japanese society because of their religion. Although Japanese consider Islam negatively after the September 11, 2001 tragedy and from media coverage, Japanese society did not clearly show their dislike of Islam. The problem for Muslims in Japan was not on the security of themselves but in their social life.

Muslims are obliged to pray five times a day, which takes 10-15 minutes in each implementation. Two of the five prayers shall be conducted during the day and evening when people are working. According to Song, individuals who bring their religion not only to the public but also into the workplace will get cultural barriers in Japan. A ten-minute pause twice a day can be a problem in Japan that was known for its hard-working nature and respect for time.

In social relations in Japan, gathering while drinking alcoholic beverages was a culture especially for workers in Japan. Many events organized by the office provide liquor. Muslims in Japan try to give an understanding that they are forbidden to drink liquor so they must refuse if they are offered to drink alcohol. Some Japanese people understand this but not a few who criticized (Song, 2008).

Increasingly, more Japanese people understand the prohibitions and obligations that Muslims must live. Based on Japan's openness to Islam, Muslims in Japan experienced the difference and ease in carrying out their religious activity. Doing prayers during working hours can be understood by Japanese people who are open with Islam. When there are office events, some Muslims are excused if they don't drink alcohol.

As Song said before individuals who bring their religion to the public space will get cultural barriers while those who can adapt to the way of life of the new community are more likely to be accepted in the community. Muslims in Japan must try to mingle with other Japanese people as part of Japanese society. On the other hand, Japanese society must accept the differences that Muslims have in Japan in order to create a society that understands each other to avoid disputes between diverse groups in Japan (The Everyday Life of Muslims in Japan, 2008).

The development of Islam in Japan was initiated by Muslims who were in Japan both foreigners and local Japanese. The development of religious infrastructures such as mosques, 'halal' restaurants, educational facilities and funerals were all the result of Muslim cooperation in Japan to fulfill their religious needs. Muslims in Japan together gave donations to advance the development of Islam in Japan. Religious facilities are mostly the result of Japanese Muslim donations and some assistance from the Islamic community outside Japan. It was not common for several Islamic countries in the Middle East to send funds to help develop Islam in Japan.

Japan's government cannot provide funds or religious facilities for Muslims in Japan because of the regulations in the Japan's Constitution, which stated that the State might not provide funds or state property used for any religious institution or association¹³. Therefore the construction of mosques and provision of land for burial is carried out by the followers of Islam themselves. Although Japan's government cannot provide funds or property, the Japan's government opened prayer rooms to pray in public places that are considered important such as airports and tourist attractions. This was done because many Muslim tourists visited Japan in recent years.

The development of Islamic education in Japan was also not carried out by the Japanese government but by the Islamic association in Japan. This is due to the rules in Japan, which state that, the state and its institutions may not conduct religious education or practice any religion¹⁴. Therefore religious education needed by Muslims in Japan cannot be

¹¹ Foundation that establish International Educational Agency

¹² See in <http://yuaischool.com/e/about-yuai/>

¹³ 1947 Japan's Constitution article 89

¹⁴ Ibid. Article 20

taught in formal schools and is usually taught by the Islamic community in mosques.

6. Conclusion

Most Muslims in Japan are foreigners who come to Japan to work and some then married to have families in Japan. The development of Islam in Japan was inseparable from the problems faced by Muslims in Japan such as the difficulty of finding 'halal' food, lack of mosques and Islamic cemeteries, lack of Islamic education and the problems of Muslim social life in Japan.

The policies of the Japan's government in developing 'halal' industry in Japan was not part of Japan's government policy towards Muslims in Japan but related to Japan's government plan to expand tourism and economic sectors. In addition, the construction of worshiping places such as *mushalla* in public places, airports and tourist attractions was a form of Japan's seriousness in expanding the tourism sector. Along with the development of Islam in Japan, Japanese society became inclusive to Islam and made Muslims in Japan feel comfortable in carrying out their obligations either at work or in daily social lives.

7. Future Scope

The development of Islam in Japan was facilitated by Muslims in Japan themselves by making donations and using funds provided by Islamic countries and Islamic communities outside Japan. The policies carried out by Japan to enlarge tourism and economic sectors through 'halal' industry were in form of business carried out by Japan in order to gain benefit for Japan. However, these efforts also made Islam increasingly known and developed in Japan and Muslims would gain benefit from these policies.

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