

Research Article

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Author for correspondence:

Afifi Lateh

✉ afifi.l@psu.ac.th

✉ Faculty of Education, Prince of Songkla University, Thailand

Islamic Private Schools in Southern Thailand: Prospects and Future Management Models

Afifi Lateh^{id}, Jarunee Thongsuk^{id}, Daniya Machae^{id},
Abdunkareem Masae^{id}, Alawee Lateh^{id}, Narida Khongpheng^{id},
Rohani Pooteh^{id}

Abstract

Background/purpose. Muslim parents in the Deep South of Thailand prefer to send their children to Islamic private schools, expecting that they would simultaneously accumulate Islamic and secular knowledge and become devout Muslims. This study employed a future-oriented research design to explore parents' and alumni's expectations of Islamic private schools and to synthesize future administrative models for these schools.

Materials/methods. The research consisted of three parts: Part I collected quantitative data from 416 parents and alumni; Part II obtained qualitative data from 261 school administrators, department heads, teachers, parents, and alumni; and Part III developed future models for Islamic private schools using data from 32 essay submissions and 10 focus group discussions.

Results. Findings showed that the top expectations included Islamic private school graduates becoming devout Muslims and possessing the ability to apply knowledge in daily life, and schools cultivating students' morals and ethics and providing practical experiences aligned with the Islamic way of life. Three curriculum models emerged—dual education with a special secular program, a merged time structure, and a merged time-curricular structure—supported by two administrative strategies: modernizing for change and preserving cultural quality. Expected learner outcomes included integrative and Islamic lifestyle skills, leading to professional lives grounded in Islamic values and in religious leadership. Administrators were expected to uphold three pillars—Ikhlas, Amaanah, and Adalah—guided by seven proposed strategies.

Conclusion. School administrators must establish a monitoring and evaluation system to guide extensive development based on these available data on learner quality and community outcomes. Once the process can be continuously revised and repeated, schools have a high chance of achieving tangible, sustainable results.

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1. Introduction

Pondok, Pesantren, Sekolah Agama, Madrasah, and Islamic schools are names of educational institutions in Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand that offer comprehensive Islamic Studies subjects, covering the Quran, the Traditions of the Prophet (Hadith), Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh), Morality (Akhlaq), and Arabic Grammar (Nahw, Sorof) (Lukens-Bull, 2010; Margono, 2012). In Thailand, Islamic private schools offer dual education, which follows the Islamic Studies Curriculum BE 2546 (Revised BE 2555), also known as the Islamic track, and the Basic Education Core Curriculum BE 2551 (Revised BE 2560), also known as the Secular, Saman, or General Education track. Muslim parents in the Deep South subregion of Thailand, especially in Pattani, Narathiwat, and Yala, prefer to send their children to schools where primary and secondary education are offered in one place as opposed to public schools, which only provide the secular track. Data from five provincial offices of the private education commission in the Deep South of Thailand (Pattani, Narathiwat, Yala, Songkhla, and Satun) suggested that there are 224 private religious-secular schools in the area (Office of the Private Education Songkhla Province, 2021), and that is four times the number of local public schools of 95.

Parents and members of society have high expectations of the Islamic private schools' administration, their ability to help students transition to higher education, and their cultivation of Islamic ethics. Several studies have confirmed the validity of this notion and noted that students, parents, and community members expect administrators and schools to adapt to and keep pace with the changes of the current era. For instance, Waehama, et al. (2021) explored the characteristics of the Islamic faith and the practices of Islamic studies students in the 21st century and reported that local citizens expected the students to possess religious leadership the most, followed by maintaining a solid bond with Islam and demonstrate adequate Quran literacy, observe Islamic ethics (Akhlaq), do all the Islamic duties (Ibadah), remain firm in the faith (Aqidah), and adhere to moderate Islam, respectively. Salaeharae (2017) also recommended core components of good Islamic school administration that administrators of Islamic private schools should consider, which included 1) Akhlaq (the principle of ethics), e.g., following Prophet Muhammad's examples and behaving to earn trust and credibility; 2) Ibadah (the principle of loyalty to Allah), e.g., following Allah's orders and working for Allah willfully; and 3) Shura (the principles of participation), e.g., clearly assigning roles and responsibilities and tracking and monitoring others' operations.

The outcomes of the management of Islamic private schools remain questionable across various issues, such as the lack of uniform direction in strategic management to drive mission, the absence of tangible scope for assigned duties, and the repetition of unchanged traditional visions (Salae, 2015). Administrators did not emphasize continuous monitoring and evaluation, could not perform their duties as planned, did not consistently use Islamic teachings to motivate staff to work according to plan, and failed to assign the right person to the right task, leaving operations handled by practitioners with a poor understanding of the spirit of such implementation (Chemee, 2015). Islamic studies teachers were found to be comfortable with traditional teaching methods (emphasizing lectures and memorization). Furthermore, they did not intend to train themselves to increase their knowledge, skills, and techniques, which would otherwise have been valuable for classroom adaptation. Moreover, while teachers could not design teaching materials, schools were also not ready to support instructional media (Bakoh & Assalihee, 2020).

Similar results were also identified in Islamic private schools (Madrasa) in Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Kultsum et al. (2022) reported that graduates lacked sufficient Islamic knowledge and did not fully understand Islamic principles. This phenomenon was caused by a curriculum adjustment that reduced Islamic subjects by 30-60%. Mas'ud et al. (2019) consistently discovered that Malaysia prioritized Islamic Studies in public schools with more hours of study than in Indonesian public schools. According to Assalihee et al. (2021), compared to Thailand, teachers in Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia placed a higher priority on pre-class preparation, the establishment of learning

cultures, learning measurement and assessment, teaching evaluation and development, the provision of learning resources, time management, parent involvement, state policy, and the integration of Islam. Conversely, they placed a higher priority on teacher professional development, classroom design, teaching techniques, and the use of ICT in teaching than their Thai counterparts. In addition, Hashim and Langgulong (2008) suggested that Islamic education in Muslim countries worldwide should be managed, indicating that educational content would not be effectively delivered without a suitable instructional approach that is relevant to children and responsive to their problems and requirements as they grow in the Muslim world. Therefore, it is vital for Islamic schools to recruit experts with solid qualifications in the social sciences and Islamic wisdom, and to construct an integrated Islamic curriculum for all levels, including preschool, primary, secondary, and higher education.

Based on the above background and significance, this study examined the parental expectations and future scenario of Islamic private schools in the Deep South of Thailand, with the following research questions: 1) What are the expectations and prospects of Islamic private schools in the Deep South of Thailand? 2) How can the administration models for Islamic private schools in the Deep South be explored and synthesized? and 3) what are the possible future administrative models for Islamic private schools in the Deep South of Thailand? The findings were intended to reveal local citizens' expectations and to suggest actionable future models that school administrators can adopt to achieve concrete results and work toward improving student quality and moral integrity in accordance with the Islamic way.

2. Literature Review

Islamic Private Schools in the Deep South of Thailand

Islamic private schools in Thailand provide a dual-curriculum education. On one side, the Islamic Studies Curriculum BE 2546 (Revised BE 2555) is administered through eight subjects, including Al-Quran and At-Tafsir, Al-Hadith, Al-Fiqh, Aqidah, At-Tariq, Al-Akhlaq, Arabic, and Malay (Ministry of Education, 2012). On the other side, the Basic Education Core Curriculum BE 2551 (Revised BE 2560) is provided through eight subjects, including Thai Language, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies, Religions and Cultures, Health and Physical Education, Arts, Occupations, and Foreign Languages (Ministry of Education, 2008; 2017). In addition, Islamic private schools receive a per-student subsidy of 12,647 and 12,947 baht per year from the government for lower- and upper-secondary students, respectively (Ministry of Education, 2021). Furthermore, the government has also been implementing the 15-year Free Education Policy for students from kindergarten to upper secondary education (Ministry of Education, 2009). As a result, the schools could charge a minimal tuition fee that is as low as a few hundred baht or any amount that does not exceed a thousand baht.

The administration of Islamic private schools has revealed persistent challenges across curriculum design, instructional management, and student development, reflecting systemic weaknesses in organizational and pedagogical practices. Several studies indicate that inconsistencies between the curriculum and classroom activities have resulted in excessive classroom time and the neglect of life skills development. Teachers cannot yet handle learning diversity and student-centered learning. No modern teaching materials were present, and no development was afforded to procure media technology. Furthermore, the lack of standardized assessment practices across institutions, especially for integrated Islamic and secular subjects, has compounded issues of educational quality and comparability (Jahwae, 2018). Similarly, the shortage of appropriate science learning materials, laboratories, and qualified science teachers underscores the gap between curricular expectations and instructional capacity. Teachers, many of whom lack science degrees, are burdened by excessive workloads, leaving little time for lesson preparation or professional growth (Vasinayanuwatana et al., 2019). To address these gaps, scholars have emphasized the need for systematic teacher training to

strengthen pedagogical competence, instructional design, and assessment literacy (Khareng & Machae, 2020).

From an administrative perspective, the absence of strategic planning and operational coordination has further constrained school effectiveness. Management practices are often implemented without clear plans, calendars, or accountability mechanisms, and administrators themselves may lack experience and a team-oriented approach (Wanglee, 2013). Furthermore, administrators did not allow teachers to work independently, often enjoyed absolute power when running the schools, did not give the decision-making power to teachers, did not treat school workers fairly and rationally when considering salary promotions, and did not allocate the appropriate remuneration to compensate for the workload (Malee, 2017). Nevertheless, administrators were advised to honestly explain the reasons for not paying their staff remuneration commensurate with their educational qualifications (Khamnurak & Wea-useng, 2015). More alarming issues were also identified, including staff resignations due to overloading work in Islamic private schools, and they should be solved by providing opportunities for self-development, implementing staff retention measures, improving their commitment toward working in Islamic private schools, and organizing activities to relieve work fatigue (Churngchow & Sittichai, 2014).

Taken together, these findings highlight that the problems in Islamic private school administration are not isolated but rather stem from systemic weaknesses in organizational management and leadership. Ineffective planning, limited teacher empowerment, inconsistent evaluation systems, and the absence of professional development frameworks point to a lack of coherent management models suited to the context of Islamic education in Thailand's Deep South. Addressing these issues requires an integrated organizational management approach that combines strategic planning, participatory leadership, and human resource development aligned with Islamic educational values. Developing such a management framework would not only enhance the effectiveness and quality of teaching at the institution but also ensure that private Islamic schools meet community expectations, retain qualified staff, and foster both academic and spiritual growth among students.

3. Methodology

This study employed a future research design using exploratory scenarios (Kosow & Gaßner, 2008) and was conducted in five phases.

Phase I - Scenario field identification: Scenario fields were identified in this phase, including the expectations for the future of Islamic private schools in the Deep South and four administrative divisions: academic affairs, budgeting, human resources management, and general administration.

Phase II - Key factor identification: Key factors related to expectations were identified regarding the current and future administration models for Islamic private schools in the Deep South.

Phase III - Key factor analysis: The expectations and future of Islamic private schools in the Deep South were analyzed using quantitative data to visualize alumni's experiences, expectations, and future toward the schools. To collect quantitative data, online questionnaires were developed to investigate alumni's perceptions, experiences, future plans, and expectations regarding Islamic private schools in the Deep South. Furthermore, qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, which extended the knowledge from the quantitative data to synthesize administrative models for Islamic private schools in the Deep South of Thailand. Questions related to the administration models of Islamic private schools were developed and used in interviews and focus group discussions with school administrators, Islamic teachers, secular teachers, parents, and alumni from Islamic private schools in the five Deep South provinces.

Phase IV - Scenario generation: Future models for Islamic private schools in the Deep South were analyzed based on essays submitted to an essay contest on the topic "My Dream Pondok School" (Pondok refers to Islamic private schools). Subsequently, a focus group discussion was held to assess the possibility and suitability of adopting future models in Islamic private schools in the five Deep South provinces.

Phase V - Scenario transfer: The future models for Islamic private schools in the Deep South were proposed in this phase.

Note: Phase III required the quantitative data to be collected from the alumni of Islamic private schools in the five southern border provinces. However, their population size could not be determined. Hence, to address this issue, the Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size for this population based on the projected number of alumni with access to the online questionnaires. Consequently, the ideal sample size was 400, but since the 5% margin of error was added to the equation, the final number of completed returned questionnaires must reach 416. Respondents were selected through convenience and snowball sampling by posting the link to the questionnaires online and on social media. The respondents were required to provide consent before participating in this study. The instrument contained three parts of response items. Part I was designed to obtain demographic data, including sex, age, education, religion, and residency. Part II explored the perceptions of and experiences of Islamic private schools using 14 response items. Part III asked about the future and expectations of Islamic private schools using 10 response items. Three content validity experts validated the instrument, and the response items yielded IOC indices ranging from 0.67 to 1.00. In terms of reliability, a pilot test of the instrument with 30 Islamic private school alumni produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.84.

The qualitative data were collected from 25 Islamic private schools across the five Deep South provinces (five schools per province). From these schools, 261 participants were selected via convenience sampling, comprising 25 school administrators, 50 department directors, 76 teachers, 55 parents, and 55 alumni. Although convenience sampling limits the generalizability of the results, the relatively large and diverse group of key informants provides a reasonable basis for drawing indicative conclusions. Before the interview, the interviewees were asked for consent to use the provided information and to schedule the interview dates and time slots. After giving consent, the interviewees received a set of semi-structured questions to help guide their preparation. The data collection was conducted in accordance with the principles of Respect for Persons, Beneficence/Non-maleficence, and fairness, while keeping interviewees' identifiable information confidential. The guide questions used for the in-depth interviews with the school administrators included 1) How do you manage the development of teacher and learner quality? 2) What school administration issues are your priorities? 3) What administration model are you adopting, and what is the projection of your future dream school? 4) How do you integrate Islamic virtues into the school administration?

Furthermore, the guide questions used in the focus group discussion for department directors were 1) How do you structure the learning schedule to cover both the secular and Islamic courses? 2) What mechanism do you have in place to manage the supervision, quality assurance, measurement and assessment, and student care? 3) Does your school offer a special program or provide any unique teaching management solution? 4) How do you allocate welfare, career advancement, and incentives to motivate the staff? 5) How do you integrate Islamic virtues into the management of the academic, personnel, financial, and general administration sections? For teachers, the set of questions used as a guide in their focus group discussion aimed to discover their views on 1) the strengths of the school, 2) the organization of teaching activities where Islamic and secular contents were integrated, and 3) the expectation for the schools to change in some areas. For the parents in the focus group discussion, questions were designed to explore 1) the reasons for sending their children to the schools, 2) their participation in school activities, and 3) the schools'

communication with them. The group discussion questions for the alumni sought to discover 1) the inspiration that led them to move to these schools, 2) their impressions, 3) the moral and ethical principles obtained from the schools, and 4) previous experiences of learning through integrated education. Three content validity experts validated these questions, and all produced IOC indexes of 1.00.

To proceed with Phase IV, an essay contest was organized on "My Dream Pondok School." The event attracted several parties, including students, teachers, and the public. As a result, 32 writing pieces from a range of contestants were submitted to the contest, including one from an elementary student, 10 from secondary students, 11 from higher education students, and 10 from the public. After the contest, the collected data were used in a focus group discussion with 10 experts (i.e., three higher education teachers, one supervisor, and six Islamic private school administrators) to further propose the future models for Islamic private schools in the Deep South. The quantitative data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation to reveal the demographics, perceptions, experiences, and future expectations of the Islamic private schools. Then, data from the open-ended questions in the questionnaires were analyzed using content analysis. Furthermore, the qualitative data from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions obtained in Phases III and IV were transcribed, summarized, and analyzed by content analysis. Finally, the essay data were analyzed using content analysis, and critical points were synthesized.

Content analysis was conducted through a systematic process. Key themes were identified and supported by sample interview statements while irrelevant data were truncated, leaving only the core content. The data were categorized into subcategories and main categories, grouped by relationship and consistency, and classified by meaning, with specific behaviors described to enhance understanding of the context studied. To verify the credibility of the data, data providers verified its accuracy. Methodological triangulation was also conducted, involving key informants, including administrators, teachers, and alumni, who provided the same information to confirm the accuracy of the data. Furthermore, two experts provided credentials, offered comments, and made observations on the data to verify its accuracy and consistency.

4. Results

Part 1: Assessing the expectations and future of Islamic private schools in the Deep South

Most participants were females (62.26%), followed by males (37.74%). The majority were aged 26-45 (70.92%). Furthermore, 51.44% have completed the Sanawee level of the Islamic track, 29.81% have completed the Mutawasitah level, 58.17% have graduated in the secular track with a bachelor's degree, and 22.60% are studying for a bachelor's degree. Most of them either worked as teachers, lecturers, or scholars (60.82%). They resided in Pattani (39.90%), Narathiwat (23.08%), and Yala (19.71%), respectively. Most of them perceived that the past and present administrations of the Islamic private schools were significantly different (47.12%), followed by moderately different (35.10%). Most believed the past and present teaching management were significantly different (49.03%), followed by moderately different (35.58%). Most believed the past and present teaching techniques employed in secular subjects were moderately different (45.91%), followed by significantly different (32.93%). Most believed the past and present teaching techniques employed in Islamic subjects were moderately different (39.66%), followed by slightly different (26.92%) and significantly different (21.64%), respectively. Most believed the past and present cultivation of morals and ethics by Islamic private school teachers were moderately different (37.98%), followed by significantly different (26.68%). The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The Levels of Recognition and Experiences from the Islamic Private Schools (Answers Based On Personal Recognition or the Information Received from Others) (n=416)

	Slightly different	Moderately different	Significantly different	Not different
1. Do you find Islamic private schools' past and present administrations different?	65 (15.62%)	146 (35.10%)	196 (47.12%)	9 (2.16%)
2. Do you think that past and present teaching management are different?	52 (12.50%)	148 (35.58%)	204 (49.03%)	12 (2.89%)
3. Are the past and present teaching techniques employed in secular subjects different?	72 (17.31%)	191 (45.91%)	137 (32.93%)	16 (3.85%)
4. Are the past and present teaching techniques employed in Islamic subjects different?	112 (26.92%)	165 (39.66%)	90 (21.64%)	49 (11.78%)
5. Are the past and present cultivation of morals and ethics by Islamic private school teachers different?	79 (18.99%)	158 (37.98%)	111 (26.68%)	68 (16.35%)
	Yes, almost every school	Some schools	Unsure	No information
6. Do Islamic private schools offer a wide variety of special secular programs, such as the Olympics and Science-Math programs?	154 (37.02%)	197 (47.36%)	58 (13.94%)	7 (1.68%)
7. Do Islamic private schools offer a wide variety of special Islamic programs, such as the Quran-Science Program, the Arab/Malay Program, and the Tahfiz Program?	85 (20.43%)	265 (63.70%)	53 (12.74%)	13 (3.13%)
	Never	Very few (1-2 subjects)	Some (3-5 subjects)	Almost all (at least 6 subjects)
8. Your experience learning in Islamic-secular integrated subjects	140 (33.66%)	133 (31.97%)	108 (25.96%)	35 (8.41%)

Based on the participants' recognition of special secular programs offered in the Islamic private schools, most believed they were provided only in some schools (47.36%), followed by almost every school (37.02%). At the same time, most participants recognized that only some Islamic private schools offered a special Islamic program (63.70%), followed by almost every school (20.43%). Regarding their exposure to integrated Islamic-secular subjects, some participants reported never having such exposure (33.66%), others were exposed to 1-2 subjects (31.96%), and others had taken 3-5 subjects (25.96%). The participants indicated that the subjects with the highest potential for tangible Islamic-secular integration were the Social Studies, Religions and Cultures subject, followed

by Science and Technology, Foreign Languages, and Health and Physical Education, with 85.09%, 70.19%, 53.13%, and 44.47% agreement, respectively. In contrast, the subjects with the lowest potential for Islamic-secular integration were Mathematics, followed by Thai Language and Arts, with 39.67%, 39.18%, and 25.24% agreement, respectively. Moreover, the Islamic Studies subjects that the participants preferred, enjoyed learning, and had positive memories of were At-Tariq (The History of Islam), Al-Fiqh (Islamic Law), and the Quran, with the 61.06%, 51.92%, and 50.72% agreement, respectively. The top reasons for participants' enrollment in an Islamic private school included the opportunity to study Islamic teachings for daily-life application (45.43%), followed by the opportunity to study both secular and Islamic subjects (36.54%).

The top aspects that the participants believed the Islamic private schools need to change were teaching contemporary Islamic studies or teaching new knowledge to keep up with the changing world (18.49%), followed by improving the depth of subject content for further expansion and application in real life (16.30%), and utilizing a wider variety of teaching techniques (10.95%). The top mottos or principles that the participants adhered to and had learned from Islamic schools were Islam guides the way of life or the adherence to Islamic principles (29.29%), followed by living a life strictly based on faith and rules of practices (20.37%) and staying honest, disciplined, responsible, dedicated, diligent, and patient (15.56%).

Most participants expected and wished to see the future of the Islamic private schools in the Deep South revolve around “the cultivation of morals and ethics or the provision of practical experiences that are aligned with the Islamic way of life such as observing Amaanah and make donating a habit” ($M = 4.62$, $SD = 0.67$), followed by “organizing Islamic learning activities that meet the needs of the Islamic way of life” and “organizing Islamic experience activities for future application, such as leading the Salah, reading Khutbah, and explaining Islam dharma” ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 0.71$), “administrators having up-to-date visions” ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 0.81$), and “administrators having the capacity to manage academic, staff, and financial affairs” ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.82$), respectively. Details are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2. The Future and Expectations of Islamic Private Schools (n=416)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Priority	Ranking
1. The administrators having up-to-date visions	4.49	0.81	High	4
2. The administrators have the capacity to manage academic, staff, and financial affairs	4.46	0.82	High	5
3. The distinctive identities of Islamic private schools compared to secular schools	4.38	0.81	High	6
4. Organizing secular learning activities that meet the needs of society and communities	4.31	0.85	High	8
5. Organizing Islamic learning activities that meet the needs of the Islamic way of life	4.60	0.71	Extremely high	2
6. Integrating Islamic Studies into secular subjects to connect both fields of knowledge (the given and sought knowledge)	4.37	0.86	High	7

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Priority	Ranking
7. The cultivation of morals and ethics or the provision of practical experiences that are aligned with the Islamic way of life, such as observing Amaanah and making donating a habit	4.62	0.67	Extremely high	1
8. Organizing Islamic experience activities for future application, such as leading the Salah, reading the Khutbah, and explaining Islamic dharma	4.60	0.71	Extremely high	2
9. Introducing new secular and Islamic views and experiences to the students, such as cryptocurrency and Hajj or Umrah businesses	4.30	0.91	High	10
10. Parental involvement in school teaching management	4.31	0.89	High	9

On the necessity for Islamic private schools to provide special programs, most participants agreed that the Tahfiz program should be among the first to offer, followed by Arabic, Malay, and Indonesian language programs, a preparation program for Babo, Tok Guru, and Ustaz, a preparation program for teachers, a preparation program for entrepreneurs, and a preparation program for physicians at the means of 4.39 (SD = 0.81), 4.30 (SD = 0.79), 4.30 (SD = 0.87), 4.18 (SD = 0.83), 4.06 (SD = 0.84), and 4.04 (SD = 0.82), respectively. In terms of expectations, Islamic private school graduates are expected to become devout Muslims (32.62%), followed by having the ability to apply knowledge in life (29.31%) and the knowledge and ability to pursue higher education (14.66%), and become a leader or assume a role in community development (12.29%), respectively. Details are described in Figure 1.

Expectations of Islamic Private School Graduates - Percentage

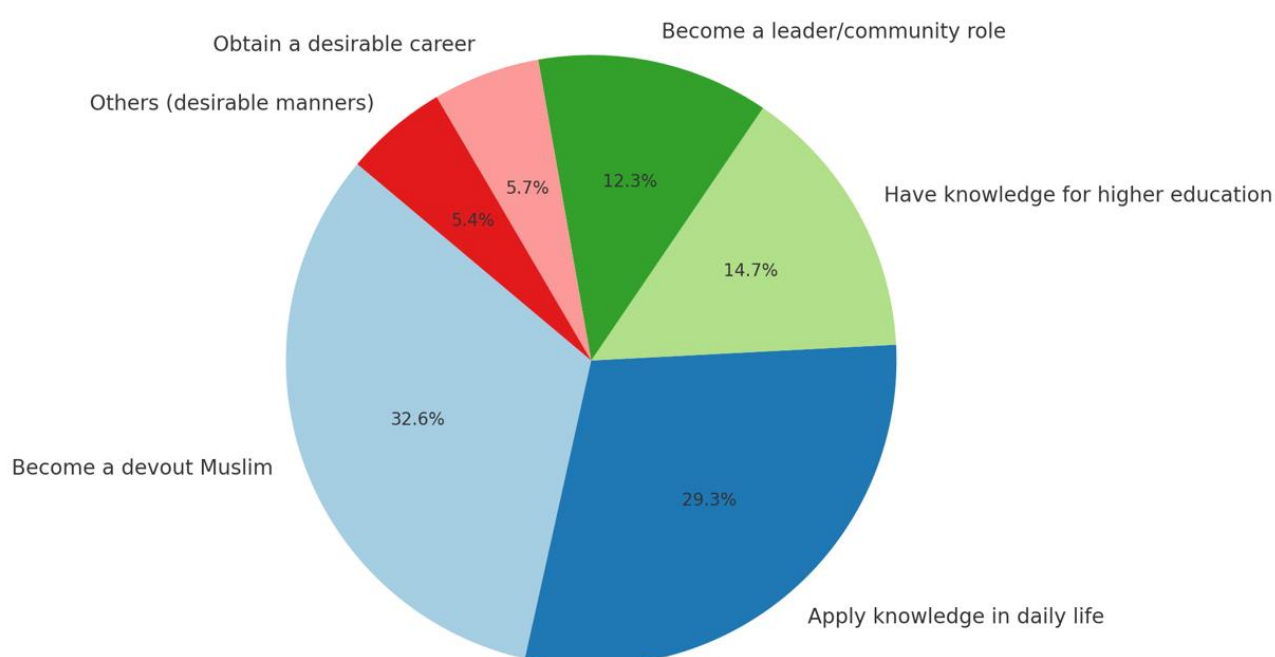


Figure 1. Expectations of Islamic Private School Graduates

Part 2: Exploring and synthesizing the administration models for Islamic private schools in the Deep South

The interviews were conducted with the school administrators from 25 schools (including Islamic private schools and secular schools providing the Islamic-secular integrated curriculum). By provinces, four schools are in Pattani, five in Yala, five in Narathiwat, six in Songkhla, and five in Satun. In summary, the interviews revealed the following insights.

1. There were two ways the schools were established. Firstly, some were established as Pondok (Islamic training centers). Currently, 19 of them have evolved into registered and accredited Islamic private schools. Secondly, six others were either formally established as Islamic private schools or secular schools providing the Islamic-secular integrated curriculum.

2. Furthermore, there were two school administration systems. The first administration system is supervised by a foundation governed by a founding family. 22 schools used this system. The second administration system is supervised by a foundation governed by an elected administrator who is not a member of the founding families. Three schools were using this system.

3. There were two systems of school departments and divisions. The first system comprised 23 schools, with their departments managed by teachers. The second system comprised two schools, and their departments are managed by hired personnel.

The Islamic private schools in the Deep South of Thailand utilized three curriculum management models.

1. Dual education with special secular programs: The time structure is integrated between the two curricula: the Islamic Studies Curriculum BE 2546 and the Basic Education Core Curriculum BE 2551. More specifically, the time structure was integrated by merging student development activities to reduce the class burden and allow students to have one day off, Friday, to perform Friday Salat, their religious services. In this model, students receive two certificates upon graduation, including the compulsory (basic) education certificate and the beginner, intermediate, or advanced Islamic certificate, depending on the case. In addition, this model focuses on offering specialized secular programs, such as Science, Mathematics, and English Language, tailored to school contexts and parents' needs. Schools that use this administration model tend to be supervised by new-generation administrators who seek to attract more students by responding to parents' needs. See the following interview data.

"Our school is closed for only a day. The challenge of Islamic private schools is that we have to provide the same level of educational quality as public schools. However, we also have to maintain excellence in our Islamic education as well. We also have special programs because it is undeniable that parents today want their children to excel in secular education. They expect their children to graduate and find good employment. So, we offer these programs because there is a need for them. Our school offers a variety of special programs, including secular programs focused on science, mathematics, and English, and Islamic programs that emphasize Tafiz science. We have to cater to both groups of parents, the ones with the Islamic aspiration and the others with occupational aspirations." School Administrator 3, Narathiwat Province

2. Dual education with an integrated time structure: The time structure is integrated between the two curricula: the Islamic Studies Curriculum BE 2546 and the Basic Education Core Curriculum BE 2551 by merging student development activities to reduce the class burden and allow students to have two days off, which are Friday and Saturday. In this model, students receive two certificates upon graduation, including the compulsory (basic) education certificate and the beginner, intermediate, or advanced Islamic certificate, depending on the case. This model does not offer

special programs. Teaching is provided following both the Islamic Studies Curriculum and the Basic Education Core Curriculum. Upper secondary students are divided into two educational streams: secular science-mathematics and secular languages. Like public schools, schools in this model aim to prepare students for higher education at universities. With this format, some schools offered basic career subjects to train their students' basic vocational skills since some might not wish to continue their education and start working afterward. See the following interview data.

"Some of our class periods are merged according to the dual curriculum integration. Students can take two days off like other schools, but we are closed on Friday and Saturday instead. Our school is an Islamic private school. Most schools like ours use this schedule to set their days off. However, we do not offer special programs. We teach every class to the same standard, but occasionally use newly developed teaching approaches to improve students' quality. We also have an MOU with vocational colleges. We invite their staff to share vocational knowledge with our students so that they can improve their occupational skills." School Teacher 4, Satun Province

3. Dual education with a merged time and curricular structure: This administrative model is more than time integration because it also integrates the content of two subjects into one, such as learning science alongside the Quran. However, only 2 of the 25 schools involved in the in-depth interviews were found to implement this administration model. In addition to reducing class time and merging redundant content, this administration model also allows teaching activities to be organized so that students can connect knowledge from the two fields. In addition, this curriculum administration model encourages the application of Islamic principles in real-world situations, enabling students to develop their knowledge and skills in line with their potential and to apply them correctly. See the following interview data.

"Our curriculum is integrated with nature because we want our children to study the Quran while studying Science and Mathematics subjects, because the Quran has all the knowledge relevant to these fields. This allows the students to see the long-standing connection between earthly knowledge and the Quran. Muslims need to know deeply about these principles because they can be applied in daily life. Take the movement of these stars as an example; the Quran can explain them all. Our science teachers would also need to improve by acquiring more Islamic knowledge to better understand God's greatness, as this knowledge has been taught for thousands of years. The same idea also applies to Mathematics. This is indeed a collaboration between a secular teacher and Ustaz, but it works for both because our Tarbiyah system is so strong that it can push us to this point." School Teacher 6, Songkhla Province

To promote teacher quality development, each school administrator implemented different strategies. However, they could be grouped into three core strategies, including 1) selecting suitable personnel, 2) enhancing routine work with personnel development innovation, and 3) developing by assessments. See the following interview data.

"We recruit teachers based on qualifications, using an entrance examination. We pay attention to the teacher entrance examination because we believe a capable teacher makes a good teacher. We do not allow candidates to take advantage of personal connections or relationships with administrators. In addition, we train our personnel before the start of each semester based on their work departments. Speakers who understand the school's administration model are also invited to provide training according to the school's targets." School Administrator 5, Yala Province

"I let the teachers think and act. You must trust your teachers to be capable and let them work how they prefer. Let them help think and design. We have teacher training very often. In most cases, teachers help each other train. Occasionally, we invite external speakers, but our

primary focus is on-site development. The teachers' happiness matters because happy teachers often develop healthy ideas. When they had an idea, I gave them an opportunity. If you do not allow room for creativity, they will never come up with new ideas. Here, we try new teaching concepts and techniques regularly. For instance, this Quranic Science subject was created when I allowed my teachers to improve our school." School Administrator 4, Narathiwat Province

Furthermore, six core administration interventions were found to be implemented to enhance student quality, including 1) offering special programs, 2) emphasizing international or national educational standards, 3) introducing new teaching and learning concepts, 4) focusing on Islamic knowledge, 5) cultivating vocational skills, and 6) establishing a system for promoting ethical behaviors. See the following interview data.

"We did not select the best kids. We did not ask them to take an examination. We did not choose candidates because these kids would not receive the development they need if we did. So, we did not select them, took them all in, and divided them into classes based on their performance from the first semester. This division was to increase their quality with the special curriculum so that they can obtain special talents and maximize their potential." School Administrator 4, Songkhla Province

"This school not only teaches Dua or the way to apply Islamic principles in everyday life, but also issues related to occupations. Students receive vocational training from their primary and secondary levels. They value everyone who has graduated. I am always proud to tell people that I graduated from this school. In addition to academic knowledge, teachers in this school also remind me to take care of my parents and set themselves as examples." School Alumnus 3, Pattani Province

"I sent my child to study Tafiz science here because I like how the school's administration and its teachers. They seem to keep developing themselves and organizing new activities for my child. The teachers take very good care of the children. You can see that the school is always changing here because teachers never stop improving. I asked a teacher why the teachers here looked happy. He said that the school administrator allows him to develop himself and develop new ideas in a supportive environment. I think I can trust them, although I am not a local here." Parent 3, Narathiwat Province

In terms of school administration models, there were two groups. 1) The group with a school administration model: Most of these schools utilize English names and abbreviations as their school names. For instance, WIT is from Watanatham Islam School, the TRIAM Model is from Triam Sueksa School, the RAHMAs model is from Rahmadiyah School, and the HARID Model is from Darulhadis Kindergarten. Most of them were adapted from the PDCA administration process, with a sense of teamwork, school contexts, or school strengths added to the models. 2) The group without a school administration model: The school administrators in this group did not believe they needed to formulate a concrete administration model. However, they had implemented some, such as a participatory model, an academic quality focus, and a focus on Islamic principles. Nevertheless, every school administrator had a way of managing their school, with a clear sense of direction for quality enhancement. See the following interview data.

"At first, I was not serious about creating an administration model. However, I was studying for a master's degree, and my lecturer asked me to create a school administration model. So, I went back and discussed with my teacher colleagues, Babo, and Mama on what concepts we have based on to run the school. After finding that we emphasize Hadith, we implemented two models, the Harid model and the Hadith student quality model, both based on Islamic

principles. Eventually, our school administration has a clearer working goal." School Administrator 4, Yala Province

"I like the way the administrator here manages his school. Babo (the school director) is easy to approach. He runs the school by emphasizing Islam. Cleanliness must come first. You can ask him about anything related to Dua. He can give all the answers. I trust him and his management. I saw him instruct teachers to take care of the parents. Any guest who visits the school will be well taken care of. He has rolled out new projects. There are new ways of teaching mathematics and the Quran in daily life. A teacher told me that Babo also teaches Dharma to the teachers himself. I like the management here." Parent 1, Pattani Province

"This school is set up as a foundation, and there is a committee to select school administrators. They have a system for selection and teacher evaluation. One of the systems I like the most here is Tarbiyah, which systematically manages the entire school, including teachers and students. The Tarbiyah groups bring members closer. Each group has a Murabbi (Islamic leader) to train us to stay conscious while working. This kind of administration brings Islam closer to my heart until now when I am working. I had it from this school." Alumni 6, Songkhla Province

The school administrator's strategies were divided into two groups. 1) Strategies for creating a modern organization to support change: The school administrators in this group employed modern management concepts. For instance, strategies were used to manage academic affairs, human resources, general administration, or even finance. This group of administrators is aware of today's rapid social changes and recognizes the need for Islamic private schools to adapt as an organization to keep up with these changes. 2) Strategies for maintaining the quality of original cultures: The school administrators in this group view school administration as an effort to maintain the quality of the original cultures. This means that emphasis is placed on the quality of how Islam and the Quran are taught and learned, as well as on the practices for becoming ideal Muslims. This group of administrators believed that the administration of Islamic private schools must be maintained to maintain the original Islamic culture and strengthen the foundation of Islam. See the following interview data.

"I use a post-modern administration model and have been trying to persuade everyone to accept and keep up with the current changes. I have been convincing teachers and administrative committees to anticipate changing situations. For example, I urged them to consider what will happen after COVID-19, whether teachers will be needed as an occupation in the future, and whether square classrooms are needed any longer. I do not know for certain what the future holds, but I want to transform teachers' mindsets and invite them to adjust their perceptions. In terms of the administration model, we emphasize participation and the use of the Halakah circle, which is PLC. We hold a simple meeting without the need for formalities. We focus on the results of discussions as we can use them for further development. We use a case study model. We plan, forecast, and talk a lot about how to help our children discover themselves." School Administrator 3, Yala Province

The school administrators' dreams and administration models were categorized into two groups. 1) The first group included administrators who wish to see their students live happy lives following the Islamic way. They build their administration model around the happiness of their students, following the Islamic way. They aspire to position their schools as Islamic refugees for students and parents. 2) The second group included the administrators who wished to develop their own according to international standards. They envisioned that the future models should work toward meeting higher standards, such as their schools becoming a hub for producing medical students, new entrepreneurs, and global scientists. See the following interview data.

"I dream of making this school Allah's paradise, where every child and teacher can be happy and work according to his plan. My dream for Islam is the simplest one. I want to see this paradise where my students can be happy when they behave according to the Islamic way." School Administrator 1, Pattani Province

"I want to see the children look happy, be themselves, fear Allah, and live a good Muslim life." School Administrator 4, Yala Province

"I want to build an innovative school, create a food database for Narathiwat Province, and store as much detail as possible. I want to draw a connection to arts and cultures to explain how each food was invented. Further, I want to design food journeys that show how food is made, from raw materials through processing and export. I want to build a dormitory that supports Gastronomy." School Administrator 1, Narathiwat Province

There were two ways that the school administrators utilized Islamic moral principles in their administration. 1) The first group adhered to specific provisions. Most school administrators in this group adhered to the Word of Allah, such as Amaanah (responsibility) and Ikhlas (honesty), and 2) the second group adhered to a non-specific principle of Islam. Most school administrators in this group believed that Islamic private schools were founded on Islamic principles and ways from the beginning. Therefore, every activity and administration in school must be strictly guided by Islamic principles. It may not be as specific as a Hadith or a Prophet's verse, but all school activities must be based on Islamic principles. See the following interview data.

"Everyone must observe Amaanah because we were all born with a duty and responsibility. In addition to our work responsibilities, we, as Muslims, have the honor of serving Allah with faith and honesty. We must fulfill the duties given, and they must be done willingly. Do your best so that you will not be investigated in the next world." School Administrator 4, Pattani Province

Part 3: Analyzing the future models for Islamic private schools in the Deep South

In addition to the essay contest on "My Dream Pondok School," an expert seminar was also held to propose future models for Islamic private schools. The results are as follows.

Integrative learning skills: Essay writers reflected that integrative learning skills were significantly needed, and training should be provided for students in Islamic private schools. With the skills, students will be able to apply, analyze, and synthesize knowledge from their school experiences. Integrative knowledge was indicated as applicable in daily life. See the essay excerpts below.

"...We can read Arabic because we read the Quran every day, but we cannot fully understand it because we do not yet know the meaning. I would like to learn to read and learn the meanings so that I can understand verses in the Quran that have every aspect of teaching, including staying safe and away from evil provocation. Although my friends are lost in Nafsu, I would learn to fear sin with my knowledge and Taqwa in Allah." Male student in Grade 2, Pattani Province

"...I might need to adjust the teaching methods when teaching Islam so that the students would want to learn more. This could be achieved by convincing the students to recognize the importance and necessity without being obsessed with the social influences encountered..." Male Teacher, Songkhla Province

Islamic life skills: Essay writers also noted that these skills were significantly needed and that training should be provided to students in Islamic private schools. With the skills, students will be able to face situations and solve everyday problems related to Muslims. See the essay excerpts below.

"It was a place that taught me Islamic and secular knowledge I can apply in my daily life correctly...It inspires me to become a better person and a good servant of Allah. It trains me

to provide public religious services, such as Salah for the dead body, reading Maulid Nabi, leading Salah, and reading Khutbah on Fridays." Male Student in Grade 3, Narathiwat Province

"What I want to happen in Pondok schools is activities promoting personal aptitude or supporting each student's personal interest. Examples of the activities include sports, career, Anasyid, Qari, Tahfiz Al-Quran, arts, and leadership (Imam, Khateb, and Bilal)." Male Teacher, Narathiwat Province

"... Life skills are taught specifically through living and survival skills, which will come in handy in desperate times. For instance, I learned how to cook rice, make simple dishes, make Roti and Ashure, butcher fish and meat, and explore various ingredients. used in foods such as lemongrass, ginger, and galangal..." Male Student in Grade 2, Pattani Province

"I would like to see a Pondok school that helps young people generate income while studying ... and would like them to offer subjects that help young people to discover their careers, matching individual talent. For example, the school can offer classes in marketing in modern society and in food processing for export. These subjects should also integrate commercial and occupational knowledge that is compatible with Islam." Male University Student, Pattani Province

In addition to the quality factors of integrative learning and Islamic life skills, as summarized above, the focus group discussion also revealed expert approval of two additional quality factors: selecting careers compatible with Islamic principles and growing up as a Muslim with religious leadership. Careers that are compatible with Islamic principles refer to jobs that follow the provisions of Islam principles. Muslims with religious leadership possess the knowledge and ability to lead their religious practice and to shed light on issues related to Islam to the public. The three core pillars of sincerity (Ikhlas), responsibility and trust (Amaanah), and justice (Adalah) can be defined as follows:

1. The principles of sincerity (Ikhlas): School administrators must be sincere and act in good faith before Allah, without exploiting others.
2. The principles of responsibility and trust (Amaanah): The school administrators must pay attention to the duties assigned to them, work with trust, and manage to facilitate so that the staff perform their duties to the full extent of their accountability and potential. The administrators must value mutual discussions, suggestions, and support, also known as "Tarbiyah."
3. The principles of justice (Adalah): The school administrators must maintain fairness when assigning tasks, allocating compensation, giving promotions, providing welfare, and settling disputes to ensure fair governance. They must further allow their staff to participate in every step of the operation, also known as "Shura."

Action must be taken to improve student quality and produce positive impacts on communities. Furthermore, the school administrators should utilize the seven strategies which can be presented as the future models for Islamic private school administration in the Deep South (Figure 2) as follow:

1. The strategy for developing students to keep up with the Islamic world: Students must develop self-direction, self-control, and social skills to be aware of changes by applying knowledge of basic practices in accordance with the Islamic way.
2. The strategy for developing teachers' competencies: Teachers must receive development to design learning activities that integrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes while adjusting their role from teaching to facilitating learning. Teachers must assess learning outcomes, emphasize post-learning development, and urge students to discover their potential. The teachers must be able to observe classes, take notes on their observations, write a class reflection, and adopt and share best practices within the professional learning community.

3. The strategy for developing an integrated learning management process: A proactive learning management process must be developed to connect secular and Islamic subjects using thought-provoking questions, interactive activities, and tasks for autonomous knowledge summarization. The aim is for the students to use the knowledge in their daily lives. Note that it may be necessary to define an integrated learning unit by managing the overlapping time structure, subjects, standards, and indicators to reduce the learning burden.

4. The strategy for providing stable welfare: Work motivation must be boosted by fair compensation, promotion, housing welfare or subsidies, access to loans, rights to medical treatment, and accident insurance.

5. The strategy for building a strong and sustainable network: Develop the capacity to connect groups of educational institutions with a similar goal to establish cooperation for continuously and systematically promoting teacher development, academic activities, student activities, and community outreach.

6. The strategy for differentiating: Schools' public images must be differentiated and modernized using an administration that emphasizes learning management efficiency to attract students and parents. This process can start by analyzing the schools' strengths and unique elements that others would find difficult to imitate. Note that communities and external organizations should be invited to collaborate in the development and management to maximize student benefits.

7. The strategy for generating school income with businesses: Schools must find and select products, services, or venues to generate income. This could be through distributing products or providing across sales channels. Another possibility is to establish a sales channel for distributors, including students, teachers, parents, alumni, and other interested parties.

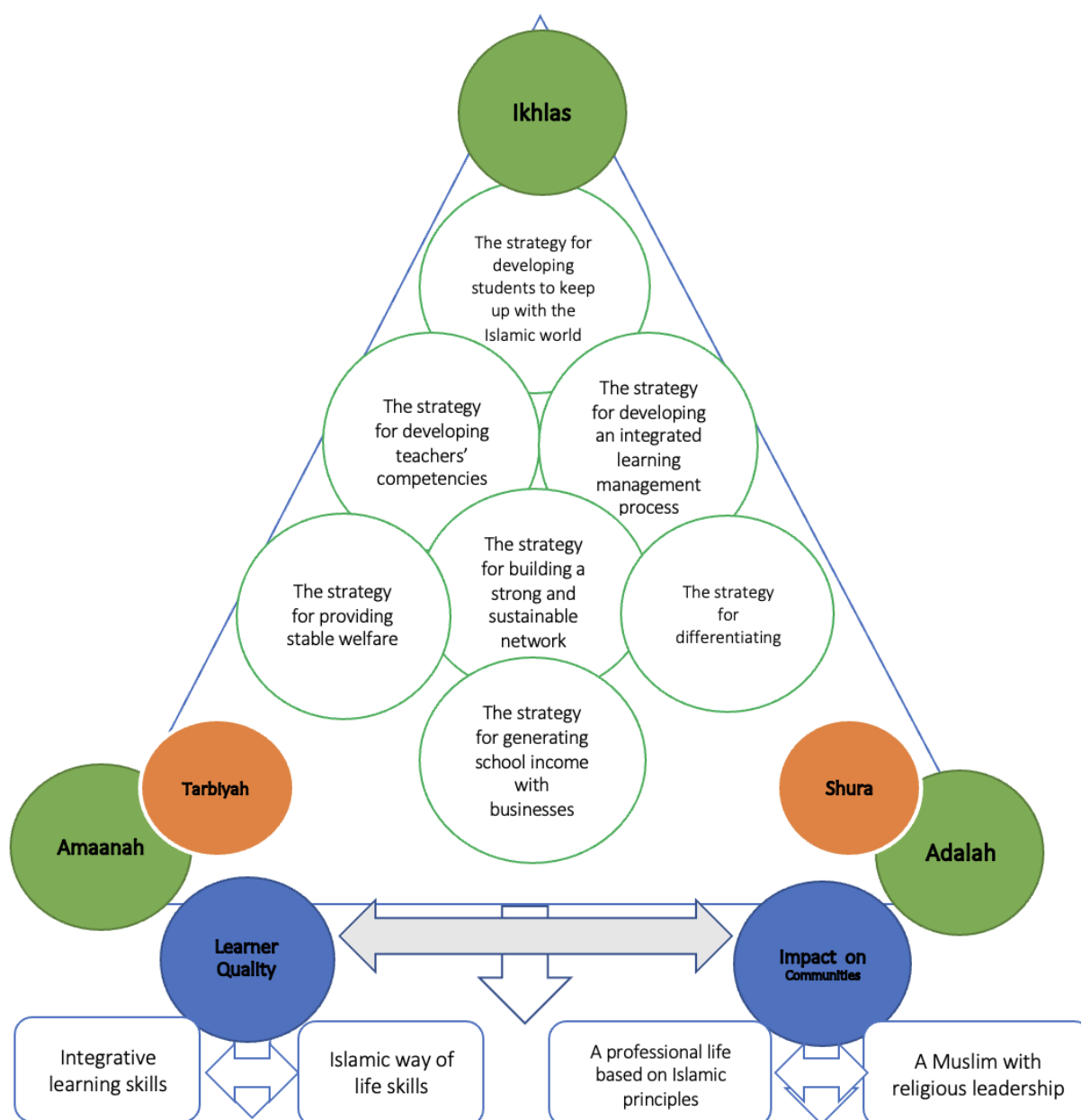


Figure 2. The Future Models for Islamic Private Schools in the Deep South

5. Discussion

The participants perceived that the Islamic private schools' past and present administration, teaching management, and teaching techniques for secular subjects were different. However, the past and present teaching techniques employed in Islamic subjects, and the cultivation of teachers' morals and ethics, were perceived as only slightly or moderately different. Based on the later part of the findings, a possible explanation for the slight differences is that these missions may have been prioritized from the inception of these schools. Nevertheless, the participants were not entirely satisfied with the current outcomes. In line with Raihani et al. (2016), teachers usually read the content chunk by chunk aloud, without encouraging students to ask questions. Furthermore, three influencing factors were highlighted in Islamic Studies teaching, which is personal, ideological, and socio-political. Driessen and Valkenberg (2000) found that students in Dutch Islamic schools did not have a different problem regarding well-being and self-confidence compared to those in public schools. Although the past and present teaching techniques employed for secular subjects were perceived to be different, several studies confirmed that the gap in such differences is smaller than

that of public schools. For example, Binmudnee and Abu (2014) showed that students from private education institutions in the Deep South of Thailand had lower Ordinary National Educational Test (O-NET) scores than students in public in all five subjects, including Mathematics, Science, Thai Language, English Language, and Social Studies. Moreover, Suwanworaboon and Haruthaithanasan (2018) reflected that the government had made great efforts to improve students' academic achievements in the area by organizing a tutoring program for the O-NET examination. Nevertheless, it still failed. Scholars have debated whether tutoring is necessary to improve O-NET results and whether O-NET results can accurately reflect students' abilities and academic achievements in the field. Driessen and Merry (2006) consistently reported that students attending Islamic schools did not produce less satisfactory academic results than those attending secular schools with similar socio-ethnic challenges. Hence, there is no consensus that Islamic school students perform inferiorly. However, it was also found that Islamic school students struggled to keep up with the pace of those in typical Dutch schools. This means that Islamic schools have, so far, not achieved one of their primary objectives: boosting academic performance. Al-Lawati and Hunsaker (2007) discovered that no facilities or initiatives were provided for gifted students in Islamic schools in the USA.

The above results can be influenced by several factors, including the fact that Islamic teachers did not earn a degree in Education compared to secular teachers. Furthermore, it could be due to the abilities of secular or Islamic teachers to organize learning activities, the availability of learning materials, and the management decisions made by school administrators. In line with Badawi (2006), the problems were related to the absence of infrastructure, resources, activities, and services in American Islamic schools. The limited access to funds affected schools' ability to recruit and retain qualified instructors and to construct scientific laboratories and libraries. Bakoh and Assalihee (2020) reported that teachers did not attempt to develop themselves or increase their knowledge, skills, and techniques to provide more adaptive teaching management. In addition to teachers' inability to design teaching materials, the schools lacked the necessary instructional media. Jahwae (2018) noted that teachers could not manage diverse, student-centered learning. There were no modern teaching materials or technological support to create instructional media. The measurement and evaluation of integrated Islamic-secular subjects have not yet been standardized. Hayeedoloh (2018) found that administrators lacked time to supervise and monitor teachers' classroom management. Chemee (2015) stated that the administrators lacked continuous monitoring and evaluation, could not perform their duties as planned, and failed to assign the right person to the right task, leaving operations handled by practitioners with poor implementational understanding.

Regarding children's admission to Islamic private schools, the parents expected their children to be familiar with the Islamic environment. Once they graduated, these students were expected to have the knowledge and understanding to live according to Islamic principles and to perform Islamic activities properly in accordance with the provisions. Clyne (1998) reported that Australian Muslim parents faced cultural, language, and occupational barriers and hence did not have the opportunity to participate in administering their children's education in non-Islamic schools. Moreover, Gurr (2010) reported that Western Muslim parents began to show anxiety as their children were neglected in moral development. Bakar et al. (2018) also identified factors affecting students' choice of Islamic religious secondary schools (SMA), as parents in Malaysia have the power to decide which Islamic schools to send their children to. Additionally, the study showed no link between the students' decisions to attend SMA and school administration, peer pressure, or school location. In this study, the participants expected Islamic private schools in the Deep South of Thailand to give top priorities to "the cultivation of morals and ethics or the provision of practical experiences that are aligned with the Islamic way of life such as observing Amaanah and make donating a habit," followed by "organizing Islamic learning activities that meet the needs of the Islamic way of life" and "organizing Islamic experience activities for future application, such as leading the Salah, reading Khutbah,

explaining Islam Dharma." Moreover, the school administrators were expected to possess up-to-date visions, administrative knowledge, and competence to manage academic affairs, staff, and budgets. In the same vein, Shakeel (2018) reported the parental wishes that western Islamic schools should attempt to fulfill, and they included the schools replicating moral principles and Islamic teachings, promoting academic achievements, subsidizing the cost of attending Islamic schools for those in need, teaching the history of Islam and Islamic principles, tackling potential apathy or isolation in Islamic education, and procuring competent teachers. Furthermore, Saada (2013) introduced the concept of citizenship education and the difficulties teachers faced in helping their students develop civic identities in the American geopolitical environment and in teaching them the concepts of diversity and togetherness. One of the difficulties was the conflict between moral absolutism and pluralism that emerged while the students were exploring Islamic and democratic identities, as the issue centers on the moral foundations of civic education in Islamic schools.

Graduates from Islamic private schools were expected to become devout Muslims, apply their knowledge in daily life, have sufficient knowledge and skills to pursue higher education, and become leaders or assume roles in community development. To meet these expectations, school administrators must create a concrete plan for their operations and monitor progress closely. Furthermore, they may need to modify the learning and skill-building activities to align with these expectations. According to Siregar (2021), parental involvement, school discipline, co-curricular activities, student diversity in learning, and teachers serving as role models were essential factors supporting the implementation of teacher strategies in Islamic education to cultivate Akhlaq among students. Another critical variable facilitating Akhlaq's growth in Islamic education is the social environment. Similarly, Islamic learning atmospheres were among the top preferences according to Islam et al. (2019), followed by instructional quality and classroom strictness. Hidayat and Wijayanto (2020) organized a culturally and contextually grounded mathematics learning activity for Grade 4 students at SD Negeri 06 Kota Salatiga, Indonesia, and reported that the activity improved learning performance compared to regular lessons. Saffkolam et al. (2021) integrated Islam into science subjects for Grade 7 students in Islamic private schools in Yala Province and showed that the integration of Islamic history enhanced students' understanding of the nature of science. To integrate Islamic principles and the Deep South contexts into mathematics education for secondary students, Lateh (2020) developed an instructional model with six activities, including 1) attention-grabbing, 2) presenting contents, 3) validating, 4) building awareness, 5) practical training, and 6) presenting outcomes. The study recommended that students be given time to reflect on mathematical and Islamic knowledge to connect it to daily life, and that teachers be encouraged to explore and select Islamic content relevant to lessons or local contexts to enhance its connection to Islam.

After synthesizing Islamic private school administration models, it was found that some schools still did not have a contextualized model. Some have formulated a model, but it is not yet operationally responsive and is used only to reflect school identities. Furthermore, these models' possibilities and opportunities were not explored or extracted. No strategy was used to implement the models and achieve student outcomes that meet parents' expectations. Hence, the future models for Islamic private schools must focus on student quality achievable through two outputs, including integrative learning and Islamic life skills. These skills do not separate secular knowledge from Islamic subjects. Instead, they promote cross-disciplinary integration to ensure students can apply the knowledge they gain in school to their daily lives. Moreover, the communities also expected Islamic private school graduates to pursue careers based on Islamic principles and grow up as Muslims with religious leadership. Simply put, these are the outcomes that society and communities expect. These expected outcomes are no different from those of Wanichyakorn and Soontrayuth (2012), which aimed to empower learners to keep up with social changes, adopt ethical traits according to Islamic teachings, and acquire knowledge and skills to pursue higher education and fulfill occupations in line

with local and national demands. Some cases in Malaysia and Indonesia have implemented these models with successful results. According to Eissa and Khalid (2018), the Quranic and Prophetic Teaching Methods (QPTMs) play a crucial role in helping students acquire desirable characteristics, including tolerance, open-mindedness, diversity acceptance, patience, collaboration, and respect for others and authority. Teachers also remarked that students' self-confidence, self-appreciation, creativity, and spiritual traits had all improved, in addition to the life skills such as communication, teamwork, and leadership. Che Noh et al. (2019) found that primary school teachers in Malaysia used Quran recitation skills in teaching, covering the introduction, development, closure, and teaching aids. Findings suggested that the students improved their learning performance and demonstrated satisfaction and positive attitudes toward Quran recitation skills, as these skills have practical use during Salah.

The models obtained from this study focused on the three pillars that the school administrators and department directors must observe, including sincerity (Ikhlas), responsibility and trust (Amaanah), and justice (Adalah), which would bring success to the administration of the four divisions according to expectations. More specifically, they included sincerity, acting in good faith for Allah without exploiting others, paying attention to the duties assigned to them, working with trust, managing to facilitate so that the staff performs their duties at their full accountability and potential, maintaining fairness when allocating assignments, allocating compensation, giving promotion, providing welfare, settling disputes, and ruling with fairness. Similarly, Salaeharae (2017) also recommended core components of good Islamic school administration that administrators of Islamic private schools should consider, which included 1) Akhlaq (the principle of ethics): behaving to earn trust and credibility; 2) Ibadah (the principle of loyalty to Allah): following Allah's orders and having the intention of working for Allah; and 3) Shura (the principles of participation): clearly dividing responsibilities into departments and tracking and monitoring others' operations. On this note, Nesalaeh and Yeesunsong (2020) supported that the administrator had the lowest performance in justice (Adil), followed by responsibility (Amaanah) and consultation (Shura), with slightly higher scores. These findings demonstrated that the characteristics that the administrators should pay attention to and are associated with concrete results Show concrete results are the three pillars (i.e., Akhlaq, Amaanah, and Adalah) and the above two practices (i.e., Tarbiyah and Shura), which can be implemented through the proposed future models by focusing on six key strategies, which included 1) the strategy for developing teachers' competencies; 2) the strategy for developing students to keep up with the Islamic world; 3) the strategy for developing an integrated learning management process; 4) the strategy for generating school income with businesses; 5) the strategy for providing stable welfare; and 6) the strategy for differentiating. These findings are in line with a school administration theory known as the balanced scorecard (Kaplan & Norton, 1996), which focuses on four perspectives: financial, customer, internal process, and learning and growth.

In the same vein, Wanichyakorn and Soontrayuth (2012) proposed an Islamic school model suitable for Thailand to promote Islamic faith and the development of learner quality toward lifelong learning. On this note, Juhaeni, et al. (2021) proposed three strategies for school development in Indonesia, including 1) programming: a course of actions taken by schools to accomplish objectives, 2) budgeting: how the budget is spent to carry out or materialize the intended strategy, 3) processing: raising graduates' quality in four stages as follows, which were (1) work meeting at the start of the academic year; (2) admitting new students; (3) the curriculum implementation; and (4) competency examination. Furthermore, Tabroni and Ismiati (2021) have employed three strategies to develop schools in Indonesia: 1) school policy to raise the standard of education programs, 2) Pesantren-based excellence, and 3) infrastructure and facilities to increase educational quality. The three strategies were utilized to achieve expected outcomes, including 1) setting ideal examples and promoting Islamic beliefs; 2) formulating a model for student-centered learning; 3) fostering

innovation and creativity while recognizing student diversity and uniqueness in terms of talents and aptitudes; 4) constructing a learning process to promote healthy school environments.

In the future, Islamic private schools might need to evolve into smart schools, considering there are several success stories in Malaysia. More specifically, smart schools should adopt Tabrizi and Kabirnejad (2017). They include 1) two strategies for educational democratization (i.e., the provision of equal opportunities within the curriculum and the curricular adaptation to accommodate diverse learning styles, cadences, and talents); 2) chances for stakeholders to enhance talents and qualities; 3) the increased involvement of stakeholders in the actual educational process; 4) staff development in technology and thinking; and 5) individual holistic development, including intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical traits. Implementing the above strategies is a challenge for administrators as they strive to develop Islamic private schools toward their aspirational goals. For education policy, these findings suggest prioritizing leadership development rooted in Islamic ethics, embedding accountability and fairness in administrative standards, promoting participatory decision-making, and integrating these principles into teacher training, curriculum design, and school evaluation frameworks to ensure alignment with both operational and moral objectives of Islamic private schools.

6. Conclusion

The administration of Islamic private schools in Thailand remains significantly problematic, with a range of obstacles, including the inability to meet parent expectations. The top expectations were being a devout Muslim, applying knowledge in daily life, and having sufficient knowledge and skills to pursue higher education. This study proposed future models for Islamic private schools in the Deep South of Thailand, grounded in three pillars within the scope of Islamic principles and seven strategies to push the organizations toward achieving two significant outcomes: learner quality and community outcomes. Implementation requires raising administrators' awareness of the pillars, analyzing school contexts, assigning strategy leaders, engaging external consultants, and establishing a continuous monitoring and evaluation system. With iterative application and refinement, these models have strong potential to produce sustainable, measurable results.

7. Suggestion

Implementation of the proposed models may be influenced by administrators' capacity, commitment, resource availability, and contextual differences, which could affect the speed and generalizability of achieving tangible outcomes. To address this, relevant academics may need to initially raise awareness of the three pillars among administrators. Then, administrators can analyze the school's financial context to incorporate strategies into school development goals. They will also develop strategic plans that can be implemented immediately. This may require delegating responsibility to supervisors. Each strategy may be implemented, or external consultants may be appointed to facilitate implementation and achieve results in a relatively short period of time. Furthermore, administrators must establish a monitoring and evaluation system to utilize data on student quality and community outcomes to drive clearer results. This process can be implemented continuously until tangible results are seen. Limitations include dependence on administrators' capacity and commitment, resource availability, and contextual variations, which may affect the pace and generalizability of achieving tangible results.

Declarations

Author Contributions. Afifi Lateh: Literature review, conceptualization, methodology, data analysis, review-editing and writing, original manuscript preparation. Jarunee Thongsuk: Literature review, data analysis, original manuscript preparation. Daniya Machae, Abdunkareem Masae, Alawee Lateh,

Narida Khongpheng, Rohani Pooteh: Literature review, data analysis, original manuscript preparation. All authors have read and approved the published on the final version of the article

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Ethical Approval. The study adhered to ethical research standards and received ethical approval for research involving human subjects from Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus (Approval Code: psu.pn.2-058/65). The submission for research ethics approval included the following documents: a research proposal, a proposal for ethical review of human research, a self-assessment ethics assessment form, a research volunteer information statement, a statement of informed consent for research volunteers, a request for waiver of consent from volunteers, the background and expertise of the researcher and co-researchers, and research instruments. The confidentiality of the informants' identities was maintained. Prior to interviewing key informants, the researchers requested permission from each informant and informed them of their rights. After data collection, the researchers had key informants review the records. The researchers presented the findings to the key informants studied and received feedback to assess the accuracy of their conclusions and interpretations.

Data Availability Statement. The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data is not publicly available due to the risk of identification of study participants.

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About the Contributor(s)

Afifi Lateh, PhD, is associate professor at Faculty of Education, Prince of Songkla University Pattani campus. He received the doctoral degree in Research and Statistics in Cognitive Science from Burapha University Thailand and master's degree in Applied Statistics from Silpakorn University Thailand. He has conducted extensive research and published widely in the areas of educational statistics, teaching statistics, and organizational administration. He is currently Dean of the Faculty of Education, Prince of Songkla University.

Email: afifi.l@psu.ac.th

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0442-5706>

Jarunee Thongsuk, PhD, is a director of Ban Kato School, Pattani Primary Education Service Area Office 1 Thailand. She received her doctoral and master's degrees in Educational Administration from Prince of Songkla University, Thailand. She has researched focus on educational administration, and teaching sciences.

Email: jarunee.3921@gmail.com

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0009-0002-0093-4236>

Daniya Machae, is a vice director of Saiburi Islamic Wittaya School, Office of the Private Education Pattani Province Thailand. He received the master's degree in Educational Administration from Prince of Songkla University Thailand. He has researched focus on educational administration, and teaching Thai.

Email: danithai02@yahoo.com

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0009-0003-9502-3132>

Abdunkareem Masae, is an assistant director of Solihiyah School, Office of the Private Education Pattani Province Thailand. He received the master's degree in Educational Administration from Prince of Songkla University Thailand. He has researched focus on educational administration, and teaching English.

Email: mixboy1682@gmail.com

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7041-6720>

Alawee Lateh, is a lecturer at Faculty of Management Sciences, Prince of Songkla University Hatyai campus. He received the master's degree in Logistics Engineering and Supply Chain from Prince of Songkla University Thailand. He has researched focus on administration and management. He is currently a PhD Student in Technology, Operations and Logistics Management, University Utara Malaysia.

Email: alawee.l@psu.ac.th

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3738-3431>

Narida Khongpheng, PhD, is a lecturer at Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Prince of Songkla University Pattani campus. She received the doctoral degree in Korean Language and Culture Education, Korea University. She has researched focus on Korean language and culture education.

Email: sopha.k@psu.ac.th

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0586-0195>

Rohani Pooteh, PhD, is a lecturer at Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Prince of Songkla University Pattani campus. She received the doctoral degree in Malay Studies, National University of Malaysia. She has researched focus on linguistics.

Email: rohani.p@psu.ac.th

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6177-2715>

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