

An Analysis on the Implementation of Religious Education Policy in Public Schools

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Abstract

Indonesia is a multi-ethnic country with variety of languages, religions and beliefs. Within this diversity, Islam is a religion with majority followers. In this relation, Indonesian government requires the teachings of Religious Education at non-religious schools which can be seen as an endeavour to manage the plurality of the religions. The implementation of Religious Education teaching policy is a political decision regulated by Law, Government Regulation and especially the Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs. The process of drafting government policy regarding Religious Education was featured by a tension between the secular nationalists group supported by non-Muslim elements and Islamic groups which is particularly becomes a topical discussion at the sessions in parliament. Observing the laws, regulations and Regulation of the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs and Minister of Religious Affairs, as a product of policy, indicates that the aspirations of the Islamic group is relatively more fulfilled. So far, the government policy which becomes the basic foundation of the implementation of regulation of Religious Education in schools still has a gap that need to be addressed.

Introduction

Indonesia is destined as a plural country with various ethnicities, languages, religions and beliefs (Qohar, 2016). Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) notes that there are 633 major ethnic groups and 707 languages in the country (BPS 2010, Budiwiyanto, 2016). This fact must be accepted by the Indonesian people. Therefore, it should be managed well so as not to evoke problems, but rather regarded as the strength of the nation (*Kompas*, 2016). The experience of ethnic-based conflict between indigenous people and Chinese-descend citizens in 1988, the conflict between Muslims and Christians in Ambon in 1999, and the conflict between Madurese and Dayak ethnic group in Sampit in 2001, for example, (Lima Konflik, 2016) were terrible events must not take place ever after. In addition to the aforementioned large-scale conflicts, some riots and turmoils caused by small-scale conflicts also often occurred in Indonesia.

In term of faith, Indonesian people embrace different religions and beliefs. Six religions acknowledged by Indonesian government are: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and KongHuchu. The population census in 2010 revealed that 87.18% from 237.641.326 of Indonesia's population were the followers of Islam, 6.96% Protestant, 2.9% Catholic, 1.69% Hindu, 0.72% Buddha, 0.05%

Confucian, 0.13% other religions, and 0.38% were missed or were not asked (Results of the Census, 2010). Indonesia indeed recognizes all religions and beliefs as stipulated in the constitution, that "Everyone is free to embrace religion and to worship according to their religion, ..." (Article 28E paragraph 1 of the 1945 Constitution-UUD). Practically, however, only the followers of six religions are able to meet their civil rights, while the followers of other religions are discriminated, for example, in matters of Identity Cards, Wedding administration, and Religious Education in schools (Minister, 2014).

In order to meet the right of religious people in Indonesia, in the realm of education, government has issued a policy which obliges non-religious schools to provide religious education for all the followers of religions constitutionally acknowledged by government. One of the goals in the teaching of Religious Education (hereinafter abbreviated as RE) in non-religious schools is to manage diversity, especially the diversity of religions and beliefs. This is in line with the formulation of function and purpose of the RE in schools. The function of RE is to create faithful Indonesian people who are featured with a noble character which enable them to keep peace and harmony of intra and inter-religious relationship and interaction. Furthermore, it also aims to develop the capacity of students to understand, appreciate and practice the values of religion that can harmonize their mastery in science, technology and art (PP No. 55 of 2007). In the context of Indonesia, teaching RE is needed as a way to manage existing diversity of religions and beliefs, and it certainly fits with the basic function of religion, namely creating peace and harmony for human being. If curriculum 2013 is examined and analysed, the materials of RE taught in non-religious schools are mostly about lofty moral character including appreciating the diversity of religions (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs 67.68 and 69 in 2013). It is not a fairy tale or harmful thing (Gaylor, 2014).

The policy of RE teaching always a political decision, or the result of a compromise agreement between the government and the public. The debate on Law No. 20 Year 2003 is mainly triggered by the rights of the students, *"Every student at any academic year will receive religious education in accordance with their religion and taught by teachers of the same religion"* (Article 12 paragraph 1a). The parliamentary debate on the subject was also followed by students demonstrations, especially from the

Christian groups who rejected the bill and Muslim groups who support the legalization of the Act (Summary, 2004-2006). This policy is contrary to the previous policy that does not require private schools to teach religious subjects in accordance with the religious affiliation of the students (Act No. 2 Year 1989), for example, Catholic schools must teach Islamic religion or vice versa. The implication of this regulation is that the school must provide a budget to recruit the teachers, and also provide the facilities and infrastructures needed. Although government guarantees the appointment of teachers, provision of facilities and provision of infrastructures required for the implementation of the policy, government is not fully able to meet its obligations as promised (Government Regulation No. 55 Year 2007). This paper examines the government's policy on the implementation RE teaching as stipulated in the Law, Government Regulation and Regulation of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. It argues that in some ways there is a gap between the idea or theory and the practice at the school.

This paper will be structured as follows: it begins with an introduction that briefly explains the diversity of ethnicities, languages, cultures and religions, as well as the gap between the idea and practice of RE at schools. In the second part, this paper describes the ideas in the form of regulations issued by government to regulate the implementation of the RE. The third section is critical analysis on the practice of RE at the schools. This section will also include the synthesis and recommendations for the purpose of future improvements. This kind of method is considered appropriate to analyze the government policies in the implementation of the RE in the country with a plurality of religions and beliefs.

RE in the National Education System

The implementation of RE teaching has a long history. It traces back to the period of the revolution to the New Order and the present Reform Era. Since then, the government has issued many policies that may not be presented as a whole, because it is a historical study of RE. In order to prevent the beheading of the chronology of the implementation of the RE accordingly the historical part of it is deliberately described briefly.

Prior to the legislation of Act No. 20 Year 2003 which is currently being applied, which is then followed by Government Regulation No. 55 Year 2007 on Religious Education and Spiritual Education and the Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs No. 16 Year 2010 on the Management of Religious Education in Schools, the government has issued Act No. 4 Year 1950 on basics of Education and Teaching in schools and Act No. 12 Year 1954 on Applicability Statement of Act No. 4 of 1950. Two of the last acts are the regulation of the RE in the early days of post-independence. Act No. 4 Year 1950 Article 16, set the teachers' attitudes towards religion and belief, *"in school, teachers must be respectful for each religious sects or belief of life."* In Article 20, it is also stated that: *"In the public schools, the instruction of religion is conducted; parents establish whether his son would follow the lesson."* In this Act, the RE is only given to a public school, but it is optional. Act No. 12 Year 1954 Article 20 asserts that, *"a. Whether a kind of school provides religious instruction is dependent on the age and the intelligence of the students. b. Students who had grown up (adult students) may authorize and choose whether to participate in the religious instruction or not. c. The characteristic of religious teaching and the number of the teaching hours is stipulated in the Act about the type of school. d. Religious instruction does not affect the achievement and the grade promotion of the students."* Until 1989, RE became a subject that was merely taught in public schools and it was optional, adult students or parents of students who have not grown up may choose whether to follow or not.

In the New Order period, the policy of the RE is furthermore stated in Act No. 2 Year 1989. Article 39, Clause 2 confirms that, *"The content of the curriculum in every kind, paths and levels of education must include: a. pancasila education; b. religious education; and c. civic education."* RE in this Act, has been determined as a compulsory subject for all types, lines and levels of education both in public and private educational levels. However, it has not covered the entire religious rights of the students to get the RE in accordance with their religion and are taught by educators who have the same religion. Therefore, its implementation in schools was limited to majority religious followers. Consequently, minority religious group will only follow the majority's privilege. For example, when Christian students study at Islamic schools, they may

follow the Islamic Religious Education (IRE) and vice versa. In this second phase, the position of RE teaching is already legal and is better than the two previous phases.

RE teaching, in the fourth phase has become legally more progressive. It is perceived that the position of religion is more critical in the national education system, as articles of Act No. 20 Year 2003 claims. The same opinion was also expressed by Davit Setiawan (2014) by citing several articles in the Law of National Education System (UU SISDIKNAS) and Government Regulation about Religious Education and Religiosity. Complementing the government's policy, the Minister of Religious Affairs also issued Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs number 16 Year 2010 on the Management of the RE at schools. Policy-makers who are from religious background, especially from among the Muslim students, seem to have stronger bargaining position. Therefore, the legal products that are produced by the Muslim students also look more and more religious. This condition is certainly much more different than the condition in the revolution era, in the post-independence era until the New Order regime where the secular nationalists have a stronger position in government (Steenbrink, 1986; Marwan Saridjo, 1996). The arguments about the strengthening position of the RE can be looked further in the explanations below.

First, it is mentioned in several articles of the Law of National Education that education is a conscious and deliberate effort to create an atmosphere of learning and the learning process in order learners or students to actively develop their self-potential to have a strong religious spirituality attachment, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed by the students, communities, states and nations "(Act 20/2003, article 1). While on the function and purpose of the national education, it is stated: "National education serves to develop the ability, to form the character and to create civilization of the nation's dignity in the context of educating the nation aiming at developing students' potentials in order to be human who has true faith, fear of God Almighty, and has a noble character, healthy condition, a lot of knowledge, capabilities, creativities, self-independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens" (Act 20/2003, article 3). The mentioning of phrase religious spirituality attachment, indicates that in the government's view, religion has an important position and significant meaning in the context of education.

Second, the development of the curriculum. “Within the framework of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia, the design of curriculum should be drawn up by taking into account: (a) an increase of faith and piety, (b) enhancement of the noble character, (c) an increase in potential, intelligence, and interest of the students, (d) the diversity of potential of the area and the environment, (e) the demands of regional and national development, (f) the development of science, technology and art, (g) religion, (h) the dynamics of global development, (i) national unity and national values.” (Act 20/2003, article 36). In line with the understanding, function and purpose of education above, the phrase “religion, faith and piety” in the development of curriculum are being re-emphasized. Clearly, this shows that in the context of Indonesia, religion does not only occupy the domain of the private realm, but also becomes a public domain.

Third, religious education is an integral part of the national education reformation and development. It is stated: "Renewal of the national education system requires a particular strategy. The strategy of national education development in this Laws include: (1) the implementation of the religious education and the noble character, (2) ... "(The general explanation of Act 20/2003). *Fourth*, religious education is a compulsory subject in the curriculum of primary, secondary and high level of education. "(1) The curriculum in primary and secondary educational levels must contain: (a) religious education, (b) civic education, (c) language, (d) mathematics, (e) science, (f) social science, (g) arts and culture, (h) sport and physical education, (i) skills/vocational, and (j) local content. (2) The curriculum of higher education must contain: (a) religious education, (b) civic education, (c) language. "(Act 20/2003, article 37 / 1-2).

How is government's policy in relation to the teaching of RE in the school? In this case, there is Act No. 20 Year 2003 on National Education System, Government Regulation No. 55 Year 2007 on Religious Education and Religiosity and the Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs number 16 Year 2010 about the Management of Religious Education in Schools is an implementation of the regulation. The Laws, the Government Regulation and the Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs become the foundation of the policies in order to manage the implementation of RE in schools. Four aspects are considered essential to study more and more about the RE in schools are understanding, function and purpose of RE, the curriculum and the

teaching and learning process of RE, liabilities of educational unit, and educational staffs.

First, the notion of religious education. "Religious Education is education which provides knowledge and determines attitudes, personality and skills of students in the practice of their religion, which is carried out at least through the subjects/courses in all lanes, levels and types of education." (Article 1/1, Government Regulation. 55/2007). In this definition, it can be understood that the RE is given in the form of subjects for all levels and types of education both in public and private schools. The function and purpose are: (1) "Religious education functions to form the Indonesian people to be a person who has true faith, fear of God Almighty, a noble character and has ability to keep the peace and harmony among people with different religion " (2) "Religious education aims at developing the capacity of learners to understand, appreciate and practice the values of the religion that can be harmonized with the mastery in science, technology and art." (Government Regulation. 55/2007, article 2 / 1-2).

Second, the curriculum and the learning of RE. (a) "All students at any educational institution have the rights to: (a) Have religious education in accordance with their religion and are taught by educators who follow the same religion" (Act 20/2003, Article 12/1). "Teachers and/or teachers of religion-related courses or subjects who are from the same religion with their students are facilitated and provided by the government and/or regional governments according to the needs of the educational unit ... "(explanation of Act 20/2003, article 12 (1). Furthermore, it is explained that; a). Religious education is conducted in accordance with the National Education Standards. (b) Religious education is taught according to the stage of psychological development of the learners. (c) Religious education encourages students to obey the teachings of their religion in everyday life and make religion as the foundation of ethics and morality in their private life, family, community, nation, and state. (d) Religious education embodies harmony, peace and respect between people with the same religion and people with different religion. (e) Religious education is able to build and form a mental attitude of the learners to act, behave and become honest, trustworthy, disciplined, hard-working, independent, confident, competitive, cooperative, sincere and responsible person. (f) Religious education fosters the attitude of critical, innovative, and dynamic, so that it will become the stimulant of the learners to have a good competence in the

area of science, technology, art, and/or sports. (g) Religious Education is held by way of an interactive, inspiring, fun, challenging, and encouraging creativity and independence, as well as the motivation for a successful life. (Government Regulation. 55/2007, article 5). In the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs, there are only six RE in the school curriculum; Islamic Education and Character Building, Catholic education and Character Building, Christian education and Character Building, Hindu Education and Character Building, Buddhist education and Character Building and Confucian education and Character Building (The Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs, No. 16 Year 2010 article 2, Clause 2 , The Regulation of the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs, 67, 68, 69 and 70/2013). Religion and beliefs which is outside those six religions do not get service at the school. This fact could be seen as discrimination against minority religions.

Third, the liabilities of educational institution (1) Religious education in formal education and equality education program is organized at least in the form of the lesson or subject of the religion. (2) Each of learners in the educational institution in all lanes, levels and types of education are entitled to have religious education in accordance with their religion and are taught by the educators who follow the same religion (3) Each educational institution provides a place to hold religious education. (4) Educational institution that cannot provide a place to hold religious education as referred to in article 3 can cooperate with the educational institution with the same level or the organizers of religious education in the community to conduct and to teach religious education for students. (5) Each educational institution provides space and opportunities for learners to practice their religion under the provisions of the religion professed by learners. (6) The place of practicing religious worship as referred to in article (5) may be room inside or around the environmental education units that can be used by the learners to do worshiping. (7) Educational institution that has distinct and particular identity of religion is not obliged to build houses of worship of other religions other than in accordance with the hallmark of the religious educational institution the follow (Government Regulation. 55/2007, article 4). The liabilities of educational institution is to organize the RE in the form of subjects, to fulfil the rights of learners to receive the appropriate RE, to provide a place for the implementation of the RE, and also a place of worship (not a house of worship) in accordance religions of the learners. Those

obligations of the educational institution as well as a right of learners must be met by the education unit.

Fourth, RE teachers (a) Teachers of religious education in the educational institution organized by the Government or Local Government are supplied by the Government or local government pursuant to their respective authority under the provisions of laws. (B) teachers of religious education in the educational institution held by the public is provided by the related educational institution. (C) in the case of educational institution cannot provide it, it is central Government and/or the regional government's responsibility to provide the teachers in accordance with the needs. (Government Regulation. 55/2007, article 6). In this article, it necessitates the government to provide the RE teachers needed, especially in schools organized by the government or local government, including the religion teachers in private schools which are organized by society. That is, even though the school is organized by the society, if the school cannot afford to provide the teachers, the government is obliged to provide religion teachers as needed.

Discussion: Critical Analysis

The implementation of RE teaching in non-religious schools cannot be seen simply as subjects. Rather, RE teaching is more appropriately viewed as a compliance mechanism of religious rights of citizens stipulated in the constitution, as well as a strong political will to educate citizens to behave positively and to ensure the survival as a nation within a unitary republic. The religion certainly has multi-functions. It rules its followers in almost every aspect of both personal and communal life. RE education is not solely oriented to the students, but there is a 'national interest' in it (Summary, 2004-2006), that are for keeping the harmony and peace among the followers of every religion, further maintaining the unity of a nation. It is indeed a natural thing in a pluralistic country that has a variety of religions, ethnics and cultures, the policies of the teaching of the RE is not solely oriented to the interests of the students. However, if practically the schools that are held by the public society have not fully met the policy in the implementation of the RE, then it becomes the government's job to straighten and fix it.

The Practice of the implementation of RE at the schools is not always in line with the government policy. Some of them are described and analyzed critically below. *First*, the understanding and the function of the education based on the government's view. It appears that the government puts proportionally religion in the context of life of the state. The fragment of the definition of the education above ".....so that the learners are actively developing their self-potential to have the spiritual power of religion....", and of the educational function ".... developing students' potentials to become people who have a true faith and piety to the God Almighty,", " these sentences asserts that the state considers the religion as an essential thing. It is not surprisingly that in Indonesia ".... too many things are associated with religion, and too few things that have a distance to it." (Hardiman, 2016). Because of the huge eagerness and spirit to bring the religion into all aspects of life, especially the life of the state, it sometimes ends up with friction between the adherents of religions. The most prominent one that we can take as an example is when the formulation of Law No. 20 Year 2003. The secular nationalists supported by the Christians and by the Muslim groups competed against one another for taking a higher influence. However, In the national stage it is chronologically seemed that the competition was won by the Muslim groups mainly through the legal products. Consequently, the impact of RE at schools largely attended by the students from *Abangan* Islamic families significantly influence in the process of deepening the teachings of Islam (*santrinisasi*) (Khozin, 1998).

Second, the implementation model of RE. The government through policies of the RE respect the plurality of religions (Act No. 20 of 2003, article 12, clause 1), although practically, the public schools which are mainly managed by religious private institutions and organizations are not always consistent in implementing the existing policies. Davit Setiawan (2014), notes that there are four practices/models in the implementation of the RE at the schools.

(1) Practice/model as the provisions of the national education system. The students receive religious education in accordance with their religion and are taught by educators who share the same religion. This model is conducted in the public/private schools that does not have any particular religious mission and most private institutions that have distinctively particular religion. (2) The educational model of religiosity. In this model, the students learn about religions together under the guidance of the teachers of religious education institution

being appointed. The students who have the same religion as taught by the educational institution will gain deepening material from the religion teachers. While others merely discuss religious teachings and religious experience in accordance with their beliefs. This model is held in Catholic educational institutions under the Archdiocese of Semarang. (3) Practice/ model of religious education in which the students from all religions only receive religious education in accordance with religious educational institution and are taught by religious educators of educational unit. These models are usually done with the agreement of the students' parents before being accepted. Most of the private educational institutions that have distinctively particular religion organizes and implements this model. (4) Practice/model of religious education in which the students receive religious education as the provisions of the government with extra lessons about the special features of the religious educational unit concerned. This model was developed at the school, namely by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah (the two biggest organization of islamic society) educational institutions where the students receive religious education in accordance with the Government and extra lessons about ideology, history and other things related to the teachings and doctrines of Nahdlatul Ulama or Muhammadiyah.

The mapping above shows that there are diversities of the practice in the implementation of RE at the schools. The public schools tend to run the RE practices which is in line with the regulations made by the government, while the private schools vary in practicing and implementing the existing regulations. All of the existing practices are considered to be legal, or at least the government does not concern about the existing practices. This may be because of the powerlessness of the government, but it also shows that the private schools have a strong position in line with its involvement in the provision of the educational development in Indonesia. Because generally, most of the private schools have been existed since Indonesia has not gained its independence and these private schools also have a major contribution in the voyage of the nation.

Mustofiqon (2011) has conducted a research on non-Muslim schools and he classifies that there are at least two models of the non-Muslim schools namely; non-Muslim opened school and non-Muslim closed school, or in other terms, it is called moderate and puritan schools. The non-Muslim opened school are more concerned with the sociological mission in managing their educational institutions, in which is one of the implications is to accommodate the needs and the rights of the students that is in line with the existing law and regulation and does not force them to learn the religion followed by the institution or the school. The non-Muslim opened school tend be

nuanced pluralist-multicultural, although it still protects the religious affiliation in the school. While the non-Muslim closed school are an educational institution which is more concerned with the mission of the religion followed by the school. Schools have an ideological mission agenda based on the characteristics of the religion being professed, so it does not give and teach any other RE except the religion adopted by the school. Both of these models according to Musfiqon (2011) are awakened situationally, and do not know alliance of the theological basis being adopted, for example, not all Christian schools are opened schools and not all Catholic schools are closed schools in character.

Third, each unit, type and level of education require to provide the RE that also should have the RE curriculum in which the curriculum is under the government control. In accordance with the function of the RE to form the Indonesian people to be a person who has true faith, fear of God Almighty, noble character and has ability to keep the peace and harmony of **intra and inter-faith**, therefore the government is critically concerned with the curriculum of the RE. For this reason, the government through the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs, sets up the Basic Framework and Structure of the Curriculum for primary and secondary education (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs No. 67, 68 and 69/2013). In the curriculum of the RE, there is always a teaching material on a tolerant attitude towards other human beings and specifically inter-religion at all levels of education.

Through the RE curriculum in which its development is done with a *top-down* approach, the government can directly control the RE materials which by certain groups are considered as a form of co-optation of the state against the RE curriculum in the school. This way, for a certain period of time, at least until the end of the New Order regime (1998) is quite effective to prevent the extreme attitudes of religion, especially among Muslims. However, since the reform era where an access to the migration flow of information across countries is getting stronger, the government control over the growth of the extreme religious attitudes through the RE is no longer effective, as a result, Islamic radicalism began to emerge and to cause negative impacts on Islam in particular. Since then, Islam in Indonesia is stereotypically stigmatized as a terrorist religion, a religion which supports violence, and is no longer tolerant to other faiths or religion. The government needs to create and to enhance its control of the RE practice

in schools and in institutions of religious education through dialogue and other democratic means, for the purpose of promoting tolerance and respect as religious models towards plurality can be realized.

Fourth, the government and local government provide RE educators/teachers. Two issues concerning RE teachers are the issue of the quality and availability to meet the needs of the teachers that cover all religions (PP 55/2007).

"Of the many obstacles in the implementation of religious education is the problem of recruitment. In an atmosphere of materialistic life as a way of life called "modern" today, the prestige of expertise particular religion ("professional", as the selection of the primary areas of expertise) slumped sharply enough, because they are not able to give "the promise of job" which is sufficient (meaning that it can produce material rewards which are comparable to other areas of expertise). These symptoms can be seen in a lot of realities, one of which is the difficulty that is getting more and more of the institutions of religious studies (such as IAIN and religious faculty in public universities) to obtain good "human materials," let alone the chosen ones. Field of religious studies are generally in a very low position of the scale of priority, and is often being the last alternative for prospective students. Therefore, it is easy to know and to assume that the "human material" in the field of religious studies is "the rest of the human material", whereas the quality of human material is crucial for the quality of work, in any field of study, and more decisive than the institutional role like high school or university itself. "

".... If this problem continues without insurmountable, it is feared that someday the experts (formal) in religious field can no longer be called the '*ulama*', but rather should be called *juhala 'is* based on their real ability (not formal). We can imagine the consequences when leadership over the people is held by experts who actually do not have the expertise. Therefore, the challenge that confronted the religious education is how to make the field of religious studies into a kind of expertise the prestigious high and full of prestige, so as to attract the attention of the best human material. "(Nurcholish Madjid, 1991).

The issue raised by Nurcholish Madjid (1991) above has not been resolved until now. In many cases, institutions of higher education which educate teachers of religious studies (in a formal way) accept students without any rigorous selection and criteria. All applicants of the prospective students as the future prospective teachers of RE are almost accepted wholly. Ironically, from those who are accepted, it is still hard to have good and qualified "human material" according to by Madjid, let alone the best ones. The implication is that schools will also generally be difficult to have a qualified RE teacher. The solutions must be offered, government or religious institutions must do

their best effort to provide scholarships to prospective teachers of RE through selection, to obtain qualified candidates of the teachers.

The other issue of the RE teachers is the question of the availability of the teachers which are relatively sufficient to the teachers needed by the schools. As a result of the moratorium on the appointment of civil servants, one of which is the RE teachers, then in various regions appear many complaints about the lack of the RE teachers in many aspects. A study located in ten cities/regencies in ten provinces, particularly in 189 public Junior High Schools and 196 private Junior High School which have more than one religion experienced a shortage or lack in the number of RE teachers (Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Kong Hu chu). Public Junior High Schools require 220 teachers and private Junior High School need 113 teachers with 10 targets. The main obstacle faced by cities/regencies in fulfilling the needs of RE teachers in public and private junior high schools is the lack of fees or fund to pay the teachers. Another obstacle is that the appointment of RE teachers is not comparable with the needs (Suprpto, 2006).

The lack in number of RE teachers takes place almost at all religions as (please refer to such reports as, "*Siswa Beragama Kristen Belajar Islam Akibat Kurangnya Guru Agama Kristen di Aceh Singkil*" ("Christian Students Learn Islam Due to the lack of Christian Teachers in Aceh Singkil") (*The Jakarta Post* , 29/03/2016), "*Jumlah Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Minim*" ("The number of Islamic Education Teachers is Very Few") (<http://print.kompas.com/baca/29/01/2016>), "*Gereja Katolik Indonesia Hadapi Kekurangan Guru Agama*" ("The Indonesian Catholic Church Confront The Lack of Religion teacher") (<http://indonesia.ucanews.com> / 2016/07/15), and "*Agama Khonghucu Babel Kekurangan Guru Agama*" ("Religion Babel Confucian Faces The Lack of Religion teacher") *Bangka Pos*, 24 September 2013). Indeed, there is no choice for the government but to fulfil the lack of RE teacher by appointing graduates of religious studies program with is accompanied by adequate selection process to get the qualified teachers.

Closing

The gap between the regulation and the implementation of religious education teachings in the schools have to be further narrowed. The government needs to focus on

the objectives of the RE teaching in schools by paying attention to the issues surrounding religious rights of the learners, issues about the materials of RE which are not only in schools but also in religious educational institutions, and the issue of the teachers which is not only from the aspect of availability, but also from the aspect of quality. Sociologically, the policy of RE teaching in non-religious schools has indeed strengthened the influence of Muslim religiosity called *abangan* to become more and more pious. This aspect also needs an attention in order that their religious model is suitable with what the government has been desired to become tolerant religious people and be able to appreciate the differences in both internal religious communities and among other religions.

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