

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

On Mac 10, 1981 the Prime Minister of Malaysia Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad had initiated the use of Islamic Principles as the basis of reference in the development planning of our country. This occasion marked our government intention to implement the inculcation of the Islamic principles, values and teachings as the basis of reference by all government agencies and the private sectors. Then, the Deputy Prime Minister who held a meeting with the "Jawatankuasa Kemajuan Hal Ehwal Agama Islam Malaysia" to endorse the formation of "the Islamic Consultancy Body" as suggested by the Prime Minister. The main function of this body is to be responsible of analyzing all development planning and filters the unsuitable items, which are not in accordance to the Islamic principles, values or teachings (Mohd Zaini bin Mohd Talha, 1985, 2 and 3). This suggestion is in accordance with the Al Quran, translated as:

"O ye who believe! Obey God, and obey the Apostle, and those charged with authority among you. If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to God and His Apostle, if ye do believe in God and the Last Day: That is best and most suitable for final determination"

(An Nisa'a 5 : 59)

Inline with the introduction of the government Islamic policy for the development planning, the Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) had taken a similar step. On April 15, 1985, *Kor Agama Angkatan Tentera (KAGAT)* were established with the aim to solve all Islamic matters and activities in the MAF. Before the formation of KAGAT, those tasks have burdened to the civilian

religious teachers or *ustaz*. The moral of establishing KAGAT is in accordance to Al Quran, translated as:

“And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong, and these it is that shall be successful”

(Ali Imran 3 : 104)

Further to that, the MAF had introduced a policy known as the Islamic Mental and Spiritual Building Policy in the MAF (*Dasar Pembinaan Mental dan Kerohanian Islam Dalam Angkatan Tentera Malaysia*), that was promulgated by the Armed Forces Council (AFC) or *Perintah Majlis Angkatan Tentera (PMAT)* Serial 9:1991 on May 20, 1999. The aim of this policy is to mould the armed forces personnel as an obedient and true Muslim, making the Islamic principles, teachings and values as their guidance and way of life. This policy contained a list of a suggested daily, weekly, monthly and yearly activity that to be implemented and practiced by all Armed Forces (AF) personnel. This policy is inline with the Al Quran, translated as:

“I have only created Jinn’s and men that they may serve me”.

(Azzariat 51 : 56)

1.2 Research Objective

The objective of this research is as follows:

1.2.1 To identified the effectiveness of Islamic Mental and Spiritual Building Policy Implementation by the Army units.

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1.2 Research Objective

The objective of this research is as follows:

1.2.1 To identified the effectiveness of Islamic Mental and Spiritual Building Policy Implementation by the Army units.

1.2.2 To identified the level of basic Islamic knowledge (*fardu ain* and *fardu kifayah*) of the Army personnel

1.2.3 To identified the effectiveness of KAGAT personnel in assisting and performing their function as the teacher, preacher and implementer of the Islamic teaching in the Army units.

1.3 **Research Problem**

The Islamic Mental and Spiritual Building Policy PMAT 9:91 had been in existence in the MAF for the past 13 years as attached in Annex A. The aim of this policy is to ensure that every Muslim soldier in the service will adhere to the Islamic teaching and appreciate it with full of awareness and self-realization. To achieve this aim and ambition, its' need a consorted effort from every level of command, from the highest rank to the lowest rank in the MAF organization especially, among the Muslim. Various level of command will also be implementing this policy.

After the introduction and promulgation of this policy in the MAF, the units faced problems in translating the listed activities since there is no further instruction explaining or elaborating the matter. Most of the units conducted and implemented this policy based on the unit commander's and the KAGAT personnel perception and interpretation according to the unit's capabilities and initiative. The policy had listed out thirteen types of activities for the whole year programmed which accumulated a total of 857 hours for the AF personnel to perform. Some unit found it difficult to implement and some just disregard that policy. Additional to that, in a unit there existed a different level of Islamic knowledge and understanding among the personnel, this made the implementation of the policy more difficult and probably for the some unit, they do not implement at all activities.

1.4 Important of Research

Based on the facts mentioned above, it is important to make a study on the subject to identify the effectiveness of the Islamic Mental and Spiritual Building Policy that had been in MAF for the past thirteen years. Based on this research, a subsequence study can be conducted either to enhance these topic or related subjects. As mentioned by the Director of *KAGAT* in a book about the Knowledge of Islamic Religion, "the intention and effort of implementing the Islamic Mental and Spiritual Building Policy is producing a durable soldier at all level, mentally and spiritually. This pure aspiration could be achieved through educating every soldier with the basic Islamic knowledge and teachings (*fardu ain and fardu kifayah*)"¹.

The benefits of this research are as follows:

1.4.1 To addressed the different understanding in implementing the listed activities of the policy by units and *KAGAT* personnel (*Burhanuddin Abdul Jalal, 1996*).

1.4.2 To identified and analyze the problems and give some recommendations to overcome the implementation problems as guidelines by the units and *KAGAT* personnel.

1.4.3 To identify the weaknesses of the policy and the result of the study could be use as a basis in preparing a comprehensive, detailed, practical and achievable activity as references for units and *KAGAT* personnel.

¹ Jabatanarah Kor Agama Angkatan Tentera, Pengetahuan Agama Islam untuk Angkatan Tentera Malaysia, p vi, Kuala Lumpur. 1992.

1.5 Research Background

The policy is the main reference for various units as a basis and guidelines in organizing their daily, weekly and monthly Islamic activities since 1991. Briefly, the Army comprises of the Army Headquarters, the Army Field Command, four Army Infantry Divisions and twelve Army Infantry Brigades. These units was divided into various corps such as the Royal Malay Regiments, the Royal Ranger Regiments, the Royal Armour Regiments, the Royal Signal Regiments, the Royal Engineers Regiments, the Royal Artillery Regiments, Commando units, the Royal Military Police Regiments, Royal Mechanical Electrical and Engineers Corps, Royal Ordnance Corps, Royal Transport and Supply Corps, Services units such as Pay and Clerical. For this study, we have decided to focus on an army unit, preferably located in Seremban as our sample unit to represent the whole Army.

1.6 Research Design

The research design is to use exploratory research technique and survey technique. For the survey technique, we will use self-administered questionnaires and interview. We use the survey method because of the following advantages:

1.6.1 In-expensive and less time consuming.

1.6.2 Do not require as much skill to administer the questionnaires.

1.6.3 Completed responses can be collected all completed responses within a short period.

1.7 Research Methodology

1.7.1 Sampling technique. In this research, the sampling technique is non-probability data sampling in particular the convenient sampling.

1.7.2 Respondents.

The sample of respondents was chose from the Army personnel who are working in the Army units located around Seremban area. A self-administered questionnaire was use for the data collection. Three hundred sets of questionnaires have been distributed to two units in Seremban, 24 Royal Malay Regiment and 5 Royal Artillery Regiment. The officer in-charge had been briefed to ensure the correct selection of respondents for the sampling from units. The respondents should be from various ranks and file, mixture of senior, junior in term of services and sex.

1.7.3 Questionnaire and Measurement Attitude Scale.

The questionnaire consists of eight pages with 29 questions and all questions are close-ended type. Its was prepared in one version, only in *Bahasa Malaysia (BM)* since most of the Army personnel especially at lower ranks is more proficient in this language. There are four sections all together which comprise as follows:

1.7.1 Section I consists of 11 attributes that measure basic Islamic knowledge. The score for each item for Section I are recorded on a Five point Likert scale with "1 labeled as never (N) , 2 labeled as seldom (S), 3 labeled as sometimes (SM), 4 labeled as often (O), and '5' labeled as "Very Often (VO)".

1.7.2 Section II consists of 10 attributes that measure the unit and personnel involvement in the implementation of the Effectiveness of Islamic Mental and Spiritual Building activities by the unit. Five point Likert scale was used where 1 labeled as very bad (VB), 2 labeled as bad (B), 3 labeled as average (A), 4 labeled as good (G), 5 labeled as very good (VG).

1.7.3 Section III consists of two attributes that measure the effectiveness of *KAGAT* personnel function in assisting the unit implementing the policy. Five point Likert scale was used where 1 labeled as very poor (VP), 2 labeled as poor (P), 3 labeled as average (A), 4 labeled as good (G), 5 labeled as very good (VG).

1.7.4 Section IV, the last section consists of six attributes that use ratio and nominal scale. It is about socio-demographic details such as sex, age group, rank, terms of service, level of religious qualification and martial status.

1.8 Data Analysis

All the data collected have been editing, categorized and coded according to some meaningful classification scheme. The raw data is feed into the computer using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 11.5) Programmed to process the data descriptive statistic such as frequency distribution, cross-tabulation, chi-square, mean score and standard deviation were used to analyze the data.

1.9 Primary Data

Apart of self-administered questionnaire as mentioned above, the primary data was collect through personnel interviews. The Commandant of the *Institute Latihan Kefahaman Islam (ILMI)*, senior officers and *KAGAT* staff was interviewed to confirm the implementation of the policy in various units and what are follow up action issued by *KAGAT* directorate in translating at such policy to the course participants (*KAGAT personnel*) during the tour in *ILMI*. Besides that, our own experiences while serving the unit could be use to confirm the implementation part of this policy.

1.10 Secondary Data.

In our research, most of the secondary data are gathered from the policy itself, articles written on the subject, journals, and related books. Most of the sources are available from the main library of University Malaya and other libraries such as International Islamic University, the Ministry of Defense, Institute Latihan Kefahaman Islam (ILMI) and Management Wing, Army Institute of Management (IPDA).

1.11 Limitation of Research

The limitations of research that might affect the accuracy of the finding are as follows:

1.11.1 **Sampling Problems.** There may be sampling problems arising because the personnel who fill out these self-administered questionnaires differ from those who do not.

1.11.2 **Respondent Bias.** During the research, we assume the probability of not all respondents will cooperate and give sincere answers when answering the questionnaire. There is also a possibility of respondent bias where they are not serious, take the questionnaire lightly, just answer for the sake of answering, some individuals tend to use extremes when responding to questions, some individual answer the questions to show they know although the real fact they are not sure of the answer.

1. 11.3 **Administrative Error and Analyzing.** Administrative error encompasses error happening during data-processing process and sample selection error. For data-processing error occurs because of incorrect data entry, incorrect computer programming, or other error during data analysis (William G. Zikmund, Business Research Methods, 2003, 184).

1.11.4 **Limitation of Time of Research.** This research was conduct on the concurrent basis where the time allocated to conduct the research varies from one semester to the other. In the first semester, the research day is on every Friday, in the second semester once in two weeks and in the third semester on every Friday.

1.11.5 **No Allocation of Fund.** There was no allocation provided in conducting this research. All expenses was from our own pocket money and that created some difficulty in conducting the research especially in buying related book and the surfing internet.

1.12 **Research Administration**

This research was conduct on Jan 04 until Jul 31 2004. We had prepared a schedule as working reference in conducting this project paper. On top of that, this is to ensure the outline planning of this study would be use and implement and followed as strictly as possible with the aim of completing this project paper in time.

1.13 **Research Overall Organization**

This study on the effectiveness of Islamic Development and Spiritual Building in the Malaysian Armed Forces as stated in the policy in PMAT Serial 9:91 will have four chapters and arrange as follows:

1.13.1 **Chapter 1 – Research Introduction.** This chapter covered the research objective that to be achieved. Beside that, its' also illustrated the research problem, importance of research, research background, research design, research methodology, data analysis, primary data, secondary data, limitation of research, research administration and research overall organization.

1.13.2 **Chapter 2 – Literature Review.** The literature review discussed in length in Chapter 2 that is relating to our study.

1.13.3 **Chapter 3 - Data Analysis and Finding.** Chapter 3 discussed the analyzed results using SPSS application covering respondent's demographic profile, implementation of Islamic activities in

the Army units, respondent is level of basic knowledge of Islam and the effectiveness of function *KAGAT* personnel. The research used the frequency distribution to identify the highest means of value. It has also discussed the findings and recommendation.

1.13.4 **Chapter 4 – Conclusion and Recommendation.** This chapter covers the conclusion of the study and gives recommendation on the outcomes found as elaborated in Chapter 3.