

THE ISSUES DISCUSSED IN FRIDAY *KHUTBAH* IN MALAYSIA AN ANALYSIS STUDY OF THE *KHUTBAH* TEXTS PREPARED BY JAKIM IN THE YEAR 2012

Siti Munirah Binti Ibrahim¹, Fouad Bounama², Abdul Salam Muhamad Shukri³

Department of Usul al-Deen and Comparative Religion, International Islamic University^{1,2}
Department of Hadith and its Sciences, Al-Medina International University³

sitimunirah87@yahoo.com¹, fouad.bounama@mediu.edu.my²
abdsalam@iium.edu.my³

Abstract

This study aims to objectively analyze one year's worth of Friday *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM in 2012, in an endeavor to study the nature content in terms of its titles, topics, issues covered; to discover their relevance, strengths and weaknesses. Since, presently, the Friday *Khutbah* in Malaysia is facing many challenges and obstacles, in terms of the topics and issues covered, and the relevance of the contents for society, whether they can reflect with the changing needs of the society or not. It is vital that the *Khutbah* texts should be analyzed, since Friday *Khutbah* has a great role in enlightening the Muslim *Ummah*, as well as unifying them in their stand over the challenges facing them, it has effective influences and important role in changing the thoughts in our society in all walks of life. This study is particularly based on text analysis of the texts of *Khutbah* and reading materials on the topic. The study uses qualitative research which basically involves the tools of library research to obtain the necessary and required data. Furthermore, in analyzing the texts of *Khutbah*, the study uses analytical and critical methods. The study found that the Friday *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM were calendar based and standardized in nature. However, they were mainly focused on Muslims' practical life and emphasised on the basics of Islamic belief and the most known issues. Almost all the *Khutbah* regardless of their topic emphasised on reminding the audience about proper Islamic behaviour. However, there were some irrelevance and weaknesses found in the *Khutbah* texts.

Keywords: *Friday Khutbah, Khutbah texts, Discussed issues, JAKIM.*

1. Introduction

The Friday *Khutbah* has a great role in enlightening the Muslim *Ummah*, as well as unifying them in their stand over the challenges facing them. The function of Friday *Khutbah* is wide, covering many aspects of Muslim life in terms of spiritually, socially, politically, economically, among many others. It is an effective channel for delivering advice and reminding Muslims, guiding them to the characteristics of a good Muslim. It has effective influences and important role in changing the thoughts in our society in all walks of life. Since the Friday *Khutbah* plays this effective role, the *Khutbah* text should be prepared in a very effective way so that the objectives and

wisdom of the *Khutbah* could be successfully transmitted to the audience. In fact, the issues discussed in *Khutbah* are among the main important elements for the effectiveness of *Khutbah*. These issues however, must meet the actual needs and interests of the Muslim societies; to ensure the *Khutbah* texts prepared fulfil the actual needs and interests of the people. The messages of the *Khutbah* should provide some solutions to certain problems faced by society. However, presently, the Friday *Khutbah* in the Islamic world is facing many challenges and obstacles, in terms of the topics and issues covered, as well as the style techniques of writing the *Khutbah* and the relevance of the contents for society, whether they can reflect with the changing needs of the society in facing the era of globalization. It is vital that the *Khutbah* texts should be analyzed, and the content studied, as well as the trends and

relevant patterns used in the *Khutbah*, their relevance, strength and weaknesses towards the society. Therefore, this study is carried out to critically analyze one year's worth of Friday *Khutbah* texts that have been prepared by Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM) (Department of Islamic Development Malaysia), and delivered in Malaysia in 2012, in order to identify the nature of the contents of these texts in terms of the topics and issues covered, as well as this study seeks to identify the relevance, strengths and weaknesses of the contents for society whether they can reflect with the changing needs of the society; so that the problems in the *Khutbah* texts could be properly solve in order to provide better guidelines to produce effective *Khutbah* in the future. This study aim to analyze the contents the Friday *Khutbahs* in 2012 in terms of the topics, the issues covered, to identify the relevance, strengths and weaknesses of the contents of *Khutbah* texts.

2. The Background of JAKIM in Malaysia

2.1 The Establishing Of JAKIM

JAKIM (Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia) is the official Islamic organization under the Prime Minister's Department appointed by government to manage and take care of religious matters in Malaysia.

JAKIM began with the establishment of the National Council for Islamic Affairs Malaysia (Majlis Kebangsaan Bagi Hal Ehwal Ugama Islam Malaysia MKI) in 1968, when its establishment was agreed by the Conference of Rulers. In 1974, the Secretariat of the MKI was upgraded to a Religious Division in the Prime Minister's Department and was given the name of the Islamic Affairs Division (BAHEIS). In line with the development of the country and the contemporary needs of the Muslim community, the Islamic Affairs Division (BAHEIS) was restructured. On 2nd October 1996, the Cabinet agreed with the recommendation that the status of BAHEIS of the Prime Minister's Department be upgraded into a Department effective on 1st January 1997 with the name Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM).¹

To strengthen the management and produce a more efficient workforce, JAKIM is divided into four main sectors: 1) Policy Sector, 2) Human Development Sector, 3) Management Sector and 4) Sector under the Director General. These sectors formed 22 divisions and all of them are under the support of JAKIM compared to just 14 divisions during the earlier part of its establishment. Divisions in the Policy Sector are the Planning and

Research Division, Islamic Development Division, Communication Division, Fatwa Management Division and Law Coordination Division. The divisions under the Human Development Sector are divided into *Da'wah* Division, Human Development Division, Family, Social and Community Division, Publishing Division and Media Division.²

Thus, since its establishment in 1968, JAKIM has played an important role in managing the development of Islamic affairs as well as building the spiritual strength of the progressive community. Without a doubt, JAKIM plays a very crucial role in spreading the teachings of Islam, protecting and preserving Islam as an official religion in Malaysia. JAKIM is also responsible for planning and applying the appropriate policies in attempts to help the Muslims fulfil their obligation as Muslims effectively and properly.

2.2 The Functions of JAKIM

JAKIM, as the main agency in managing Islamic affairs at the federal level and the secretariat to the national council for Islamic Affairs Malaysia, performs three main functions which are legislation and standardisation of Islamic law, Islamic administration coordination as well as adjustment and development of Islamic education.³

This study does not intend to explain the functions of JAKIM as a whole. However, there will be a brief explanation of the function of JAKIM in Islamic administration whereby the task in preparing and producing the *Khutbah* is included. In this function, JAKIM has many responsibilities to carry out. It has to control the deviation of faith (*'aqidah*) of deviated groups that threaten national security, to streamline the administration of Islamic affairs at the state level, to plan administrative policies and Islamic affairs management based on the provision in the Federal Constitution, to build well-established Islamic thinking amongst the people (*ummah*) based on the beliefs of the *Ahl al-Sunnah Wa al-Jama'ah*, to lead research efforts on current issues in the fields of faith (*'aqidah*), Islamic law, astronomy and finance (*mu'amalat*) at the national, regional and international levels, to become the reference and advice service center related Islam to the government and private agencies, to become the information and documentation one-stop center related to Islamic thinking and knowledge generated through various forums and conferences at the national and international levels.

¹ Quoted from official website of JAKIM www.islam.gov.my Retrieved on January 10, 2015.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

2.3 The Role of JAKIM in Preparing the *Khutbah* Texts

In fact, JAKIM plays a significant role in preparing the texts of Friday *Khutbah* in Malaysia especially in the Federal Territory. As for *Khutbah* texts in other states, they are usually prepared by their respective religious state.

Generally, JAKIM has its own defined criteria and guidelines which need to be followed in preparing and producing the texts of *Khutbah* as an attempt to ensure the purpose of the *Khutbah* could be achieved.

In preparing the text of the *Khutbah*, JAKIM has its own appointed team and panel which are responsible in producing and preparing the texts of the *Khutbah*. The panels are generally lecturers, qualified students in religious studies, free-lance writers and also trained *Khateeb*s. JAKIM has 35 appointed panels of writers who are responsible for searching the related materials via the technical committees from several divisions which are KESUMA JAKIM, Masjid Negara, Masjid Wilayah and Masjid Putra.¹ JAKIM prepares and supplies the *Khutbah* texts to four main mosques in Federal Territory which are Masjid Wilayah Persekutuan, Masjid Tunku Mizan, Masjid Putra and Masjid Negara. A live streaming *Khutbah* is broadcasted from either one of these four mosques once a week.²

Interestingly, the task in preparing the *Khutbah* texts is done through several steps. Usually, JAKIM will conduct workshops three times in a year in order to give exposure and training to *Khateeb*s and appoint panels of writers under JAKIM. This workshop is significantly conducted for them so that they can get to know the current condition of society life better.³ Through this workshop they will be exposed to and informed about issues which need to be continuously focused on and addressed to society. They also would make some drafts of topics on related issues which have potential importance and benefits in the future.

2.4 The Criteria and Guidelines of Friday *Khutbah* Texts Prepared by JAKIM

2.4.1 JAKIM's *khutbah* text manual guidelines⁴

1) The text must be written in Bahasa Melayu since it is the official language of Malaysians.

¹ Siti Maryam Khalid, "Analisis Teks *Khutbah* Jumaat JAKIM Tahun 2007-2011", (Unpublished Academic Exercise, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 2009), 60.

² Ibid, 60.

³ Ibid, 60.

⁴ Ibid, 61-63.

2) The texts prepared must be original. In other words, they have never been produced and published by any other institutions before. JAKIM is strictly concerned with the etiquette in producing and preparing the texts of *Khutbah* in which the texts prepared by the panels should be derived from their own ideas and clean from any plagiarism.

3) The preparation of *Khutbah* texts in JAWI is using the writing styles and techniques as prescribed by Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka.

4) The preparation of *Khutbah* texts, especially the contents, must be done in accordance to the topic and focus given by JAKIM.

5) Each of the *Khutbah* text sent to will undergo a checking process before it can be published.

6) Each of the *Khutbah* text sent and contributed automatically becomes the property of JAKIM. JAKIM is free for to edit, publish and print its works and it can re-broadcast the text when necessary.

2.4.2 JAKIM's Requirement and Conditions of Preparing the Texts of *Khutbah*

Generally, the requirements and conditions as prescribed by JAKIM in preparing the *Khutbah* texts is basically follow the basic requirements in accordance to the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and those requirements are agreed upon the majority of *Fiqh* scholars. Those requirement and condition are:⁵

1) It must contain the five basic fundamentals of *Khutbah* which are Praise be to God, the *Salat* on the Prophet (peace be upon him), admonitions to *Taqwa* in both *Khutbah*, prayer on behalf of the faithful and recitation of a part of the *Qur'an* in the first *Khutbah*.

2) The contents of the *Khutbah* and its description must be focused upon the prescribed topics. In order to fulfil this condition, the content of the *Khutbah*:

a) Should not include any teachings or ideas which clearly go against the teachings of the *Qur'an and Sunnah*.

b) Should not touch anything related to the dignity and position of the Yang Di Pertuan Agong (YDPA) and Malay Kings who represent the leaders of Islam in Malaysia.

c) Should not include any threats, defamation, anger, oppression and bad thoughts towards certain opposition parties, etc.

d) Should not include any arguments and debates on issues of who is the best leader in society and who deserves to govern this country. Any political issues which promote harm are totally forbidden and not allowed to be discussed

⁵ Ibid, 64-65.

in the *Khutbah*. This is vital to secure safety and peace in society.

e) Any evidence, supporting details and quotations must mention the sources from which they are derived.

f) Any references used in the *Khutbah* must be ensured that they come from authentic and trusted sources.

2.4.3 The Sources of the *Khutbah* Texts Prepared by JAKIM

The sources of *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM mainly derive from the two authentic Islamic sources which are the *Qur'an and the Sunnah*.¹ The body of the *Khutbah* usually contains references to the *Qur'an and the Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). Other sources include the books of Muslim scholars, book of *Tafsir*, quotations from academicians, contemporary Muslim scholars and other related academic references.

JAKIM carefully selects and decides on the appropriate *Qur'anic* verses and *Hadiths* of the Prophet (peace be upon him) which relate to the issues discussed as concrete and constructive evidence to convince the congregation on certain arguments in the *Khutbah*.

In conclusion, JAKIM is very dedicated in selecting trusted and authenticated sources or references for preparing the *Khutbah* texts because this is among the important requirements and conditions in preparing the texts. The references must free from any elements of deviant teachings or of *She'ites* belief. This is because JAKIM has an established team or panels of writers where each of them has expertise in this field. They are the trained *Imams*, lecturers, religious officers, etc.

3. The Analysis of the *Khutbah* Texts

3.0 Introduction

The contents of the Friday *Khutbah* prepared by JAKIM in 2012 has revealed that these *Khutbahs* ranged over a variety of topics including religious matters, social and moral issues, political issue, general issues, Islamic history and many others issue concerned in the society. These issues are intended to respond to day-to-day problems occurring in the society in the light of Islam. We will analyze bellow the contents of the *khutbah* texts in terms of its titles and the issues discussed.

3.1 The Titles of *Khutbah*

The titles of the *Khutbahs* will reveal what the *Khutbah* is all about. From the title the congregation may predict the issues that are going to be discussed and delivered by the *khateeb*. Throughout the texts of *Khutbah* prepared by JAKIM, we discovered that most of the titles of 2012's *Khutbahs* were very clear, direct and precise. Normally the titles were structured in a sentence with no more than seven words. The words were chosen clearly to tell the congregation about the issue the *Khateeb* is going to address. The examples for such titles include "Commencing school (Menempuh Gerbang Persekolahan)", "Beware! The trap of Valentine (Awas Jerat Valentine)", "Excellence leadership of Rasullah (Keunggulan Kepimpinan Rasulullah)", "Teacher generates innovative education (Guru Penjana Inovatif Pendidikan)", "A concept of Isra' Mi'raj (Gagasan Isra' Mi'raj)", "Ramadhan Preparation (Persediaan Menyambut Ramadhan)", etc. However, there are several *Khutbahs* title which we opine were not direct in their meaning. In other words, the titles were different from the *Khutbahs* theme statement. For instance the title "The loveliest face (Wajah Terindah)" on 18th May, "The door of acceptance (Pintu Keredhaan)" on 28 September, "The chosen one (Insan Terpilih)" on 12th October and "Allah's Gift (Anugerah Ilahi)" on 19th October" were short and simply given in a sentence. When those titles are looked at first, we had no idea what the *Khutbah* is all about. When the opening of the *Khutbah* text was read, the researcher understood the issue discussed. The title "Loveliest face" actually highlighted a special person we called "Mother". This text of *Khutbah* conveys a message how precious a person we call mother is and the obligation to appreciate our mother. In regards to "The Door of acceptance", this *Khutbah* was delivered in conjunction with "World's Elderly Day" and conveyed a message to do good to

¹ Ibid, 45.

parents by respecting and appreciating them. The *Khutbah* warned to congregations from neglecting their parents and reminding them of the severe punishment for those neglecting and committing bad things towards their parents. The *Khutbah* further exposed the statistics of the elderly sent to welfare homes each year to show the current trend of Malaysians sending their parents to such places for better care. Meanwhile, for “The Chosen One”, the *Khutbah* was about the obligation of performing *Hajj* because that month was the month when people go to *Makkah* to perform the *Hajj*. Therefore, the *Khutbah* highlighted this ritual. Then for “Allah’s Gift”, it was about a child as a gift from Allah the Almighty. This *Khutbah* emphasized on the roles and responsibilities of parents in raising their children. This *Khutbah* was basically responding to World’s Child Day which took place that week. These four themes were good, however the titles should be clear to captivate the interests of the congregation. Some people perhaps may say that the titles are not the most important aspect of the *Khutbah*, however, they can certainly help. In fact, titles are intended to make people curious and wanting to hear more.

3.2 The Issues Discussed In the *Khutbah*

The results of research show that there were varieties of issues discussed in one year in the *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM and those issues are responses to current conditions and circumstances of the community in general. Those issues are social, moral and ethical issues, religious issues, contemporary issues, political and others. These issues were addressed to fulfil the current needs of society and also offer them some solutions for the problems they were dealing with. Besides, there were also general or world issues which responded to certain circumstances happening outside Malaysia specifically major events like wars in other Muslim countries, natural disasters and others. JAKIM within the concept of brotherhood was very concern about what was happening to them and what they were facing with. JAKIM’s response to those issues proves the sense of belonging and unity among Muslims.

Furthermore, in JAKIM’s *Khutbah* texts, the issues discussed were not solely focused on one issue. Some may focus on one issue and some on many issues in one *Khutbah*. For example there were *Khutbahs* which focused on religious instruction without social or moral elements involved such as “*Aqidah* threat for the Muslim”, “Calling of *Barzakh*”, “The significance of Month of *Syaaban*” “*Ramadhan* Preparation” and many others. Meanwhile, there were also some *Khutbahs* with many issues mixed together such as “The importance of paying debt in Islam”, “The fragile of faith weaken the unity”, “A reflection of Natural Disaster”, “Controlling the *Nafs*”, “Beware! The

trap of Valentine”, “A concept of *Isra’ Mi’raj*”, etc. “A Concept of *Isra’ Mi’raj*” for instance, instead of addressing the obligation to perform the five daily prayers, also highlighted the current social problems occurring in society due to neglecting prayers. The *Khutbah* further relates that the attitude or behaviour of a person is also connected to prayers. Another *Khutbah* is entitled “*Hijrah* and One *Ummah* development” which is addressed the needs for transformation in society so that they may become better *Ummah*.

Interestingly, even though there were varieties of issues included in the *Khutbahs*, the majority of them mentioned basic beliefs such as the Oneness of God, the ultimate Creator and sustainer. Furthermore, a good part of any *Khutbah* prepared by JAKIM regardless of its topics dwell on reminding the congregation about proper Islamic behaviour and that doing good deeds is what constitutes a true Muslim. The researcher discovered that even when the topic of sermon is ritual or theological, an intertwined theme is always ethical. Overall, the issues discussed in the *Khutbah* prepared by JAKIM regardless of its topic mainly focus upon Muslims’ practical life. This is JAKIM’s commitment in fulfilling its duties on religious care for the community.

Besides, the result also show that the content of *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM in 2012 were free from controversial issues, extremist as well as political issues.

The researcher found that there were some JAKIM’s *Khutbah* texts which contained political messages such as those on “Loving the country”, “Loyalty to the Ruler”, and “One Malaysia Unity building”. However, these messages were general and knowledge-based. Political messages generally aim to inform, educate, remind the congregation about their responsibilities as Malaysians and encourage them to respect and be loyal to the leaders of country and help each other to protect the country and preserve peace and harmony. In addition, the message in the *Khutbah* also reminded the leaders of the nation to be honest in carrying out their duties. The political issues included in JAKIMs’ *Khutbah* texts were free from controversial issues. JAKIM very carefully ensured such topics would not be included in the *Khutbahs*. Attacking or criticizing Malaysian political leaders, the government or community leaders in Malaysia directly or indirectly is highly prohibited. Also, any condemnation of decisions or opinions made by Muslim political parties, the government or individuals in Malaysia is also not allowed. JAKIM is very committed to ensure the *Khutbahs* used guide the community in the right direction since the contain advice on life issues.

Without doubt, there were a variety of issues covered in JAKIMs’ *Khutbah* texts of 2012. However, the researcher opines that emphasis on the *Qur’an* as guidance for Muslims should take place frequently in the *Khutbahs*.

This is because the *Qur'an* contains the ultimate solution for all of our problems. It contains the remedy and cure for spiritual, psychological and emotional ailments. Moreover, the *Qur'an* is where believers find rest, they find their remedies for both physical strength and nourishment for the soul as they seek guidance.

4. Findings and Suggestions

4.0 Introduction

Based on the study on *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM in the year 2012, it is observed that some of these texts had their own relevance, strength and weaknesses. Undoubtedly, there were also *Khutbah* texts which were not relevant and had many weaknesses in several aspects such as the topic, the content, the explanation given, etc.

Interestingly, there were several factors that influenced the preparation of the *Khutbah* texts by JAKIM. The study has shown that the *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM were actually calendar-based in nature. The results of analysis prove that most of the issues addressed in the *Khutbah* were based on the Islamic calendar, political calendar and events calendar. Current issues and events that took place in society as well as certain themes pursued by the government were also contributing factors affecting the process of preparing the *Khutbah* texts.

As for the *Khutbah* texts prepared under calendar-based, the audience can normally predict the issues to be addressed and some of them may say that the content of the *Khutbah* is similar to the previous *Khutbah* with the same theme. It is a repetition of the same topic with little additions and improvements. The examples and arguments given are not the latest ones. The writers should upgrade the contents of these *Khutbahs*. It does not matter if the themes were the same. However, the issues and the topic addressed should vary and be explained with different and appropriate approaches.

We need to realize that the *khateeb*s in Malaysia usually read texts of the Friday *Khutbah* prepared by the panel and approved by the state religious authorities. The contents of the *Khutbah* cannot be changed by the *khateeb* in order to avoid any adverse implications for the Muslim community. However, the *khateeb* should also be alert about the current affairs of the society and he can select as well as deliver appropriate *Khutbah* in response to the condition of the society. However, this can be done only with the permission of the authorities involved.

4.1 The Relevance of the *Khutbah* Text

It is important to note that in any event, the *Khutbahs* prepared by JAKIM in 2012 clearly showed that they were relative to certain occasions. This can be seen through several *Khutbah* texts prepared for this purpose. For instance, “Commencing school” and “The door of knowledge” were related to the new school session, “Keeping and protecting life” in response to 25th Ops Sikap Campaign, “Excellence leadership of Rasulullah” related to the Prophet’s birthday, “Beware! The trap of Valentine,” “One *Ummah* fight against crime” in relation to National Anti-Drug’s Day, “Religious Fortress” was related to the anniversary of PDRM (Polis DiRaja Malaysia) (The Royal Police Malaysia) and many others. From this, it is proven that JAKIM is very committed and consistent in preparing the *Khutbah* texts relevant to society’s life. The issues discussed in the 2012 *Khutbah* were relevant to society in the calendar-based context and some events that took place within the society.

As for citations from the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*, JAKIM carefully selected the appropriate and relevant ones for the issues discussed in the *Khutbahs*. In other words, there were cross links between the stories and the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*. The frequency of using *Qur'anic* verses and *Hadiths* in each text was not more than four times.

4.2 The Strengths of the *Khutbah* Texts

One of the strengths of the *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM is that most of them were relative to certain occasion. For instance “*Aqidah* threat for Muslim” was written in response to the emergence of *She'ite* sects, “Patriotism youth the Country’s savior” in response to World Youth Day, “*Ihsan* for innovative workers building” in response to Labour Day and many more. Interestingly, this is good, and it is how most of the *Khutbahs* of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) were written. When something happened that needed to be addressed he stood up and gave a *Khutbah* about it even if it was not a *Jumu'ah*.¹ If the texts of the *Khutbah* included giving a consideration to current situations and focus, then the *Khutbahs* on them were good. For example, in *Ramadhan*, the *Khutbah* addressed the fasting activities, at *Hajj* time it addressed about the pilgrimage, and in *Rabe' al-Awwal* it addressed the *Hijrah*. Such conditions proved that JAKIM considers certain occasions, and it has the understanding and wisdom about the reality of societal life. Even when

¹ Sahih Bukhari. Muhammad Ibn Ismail. The Book of Prayer: *Khutbah* at the time of Solar Eclipse. Vol 2, No 1046, Riyadh, 1985. P, 35.

the issue of the *Khutbah* is overtly ritual or theological, an intertwined theme is always ethical. The messages conveyed are still related to Muslims' practical life.

The other strength of the *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM could be seen through the explanation of *Qur'anic* verses and hadith as quoted in the *Khutbahs*. The writers of the *Khutbah* text successfully extracted the relevant and significant points from the *Qur'anic* verses and also *hadith* and they were relevant to the topics. For instance, in the *khutbah* entitled “*Ihsan* for innovative workers building”, six principles of *Ihsan* from some *Qur'anic* verses and *Hadith* were quoted for this purpose. Besides, in *Khutbah* “A Concept of *Isra' Mi'raj*” the writer of the *Khutbah* text, briefly gave the meaning of “careless in prayer” from *Surah al-Ma'un: 5*. Meanwhile, in *Khutbah* “wordly wealth, poorly hereafter” the writer of the *Khutbah* text explained the term “*Muflis*” and the characteristics of those who are *muflis* on this earth as stated in the *Hadith* of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him).

Furthermore, the quotations and citations of some opinions from the Muslim scholars also became part of the strengths of the *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM in 2012. The majority of the *Khutbah* texts were supported by quotations from the sayings of Muslim scholars in different books.

In addition, even though the issues or topics included in the *Khutbahs* are mostly the same every year, JAKIM is supposed to present and portray the issues in a proper and attractive way so that the audience could avoid boredom and they can gain something new. JAKIM may present the *Khutbahs* in different approaches, different contexts and support them with relevant examples related to the current conditions of society.

In addition, based on the analysis, the researcher found that the texts had no political or controversial contents. For the researcher, this is a good action taken by JAKIM because there were competitions between political parties in Malaysia then. So, any political issues which may cause harms or chaos among society should be avoided and issues which promote unity in the society and loyalty toward the country must be focused upon.

The strengths in the *Khutbah* text prepared by JAKIM must continuously be improved otherwise the *Khutbah* will lose its significance. JAKIM should make an effort to make the *Khutbah* become something that people appreciate. The *Khutbah* has an opportunity to benefit and help reform people's hearts.

4.3 The Weaknesses of the *Khutbah* Texts

There are some weaknesses identified in the *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM in 2012. Much of contents of the *Khutbah* were knowledge-based and descriptive in nature.

The description without relevant examples made the *khutbahs* unattractive. For example, in the *Khutbah* on the issue of *Zakat*, the *khateeb* repeatedly informed and reminded the audience regarding the obligation of paying *Zakat* and also the effects of not paying *Zakat* in this earth and the hereafter. Without a doubt, the majority of the audience already knew about this obligation. It was hoped that the *Khutbah* could also inform the audience how the *Zakat* money was being used in Malaysia. Every year, much money is collected, but not much is known about how it is being utilized for the betterment of the *Ummah* in Malaysia. Instead of informing the audience about *Zakat*, the *khateeb* may offer suggestions on which medium could be used to pay *Zakat*.

Another examples was that on the issue of social problems among teenagers in Malaysia in topics such as “Beware the Trap of Valentine”, “Controlling the *Nafs*”, “One *Ummah* fight against crime”, etc. Instead of informing the seriousness of these problems to the congregation, the *Khutbah* should highlight the significance of the role of parents in taking care of their children since the congregation mostly consisted of fathers. The *khateeb* can clarify their duties as fathers to guide their family members, especially the children. The *Khutbah* should have included Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) as the role model for all parents in the world, present to them Prophet Muhammad's manners in dealing with his family and guiding them with the true Islamic teachings and moral values as Muslims. Besides, the role of the government and other related NGOs (Non-government organizations) is highly recommended to be highlighted in the *Khutbah*, preventing and solving these problem are also part of their responsibility.

Instead of addressing the current issues related to certain society, JAKIM should also frequently highlight the issues which happened outside Malaysia, especially what is happening in other Muslim countries. This is because we as Muslims, share the spirit of brotherhood and it becomes our responsibility to know about them and feel what they feel.

Another weaknesses identified in the *Khutbah* prepared by JAKIM is the lack of emphasis on the topics of spirituality. As we know, the *Khutbah* is primarily a call to *Taqwa*. That is the essence. Thus, the topic on spirituality should be addressed, for example, topics on love, fear and hope of *Allah*, Paradise and hellfire, patience, *Tawakkal* (God-consciousness), repentance and seeking forgiveness, modesty and humility. As *Ibn al-Qayyim* mentioned about the content of the Prophet's *Khutbah*, he said: “The *Khutbah* of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reinforced the fundamental articles of faith, like belief in *Allah*, the Exalted, His angels, His Book, His Messenger and meeting with him. He would mention Paradise, hell-

fire, and what Allah, the Exalted has promised to His devoted servant and the people who obey him and what Allah has promised His enemies and be sinner”.¹ These are among the crucial topics that are rarely talked about these days.

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In addition, the researcher also discovered another weakness which should not happen in *Khutbah* practice. It is using similar texts of *Khutbah* with a different title. In the 2012's *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM, the researcher found that there were two *Khutbahs* with the same text but with different titles. The topic of the *Khutbah* is about seeking knowledge in relation to the new school session. This topic of *Khutbah* was delivered on 13th January and 12th December in the same year. This situation shows that JAKIM wanted to deliver the same message as a reminder to the congregations in response to the same event. There is no doubt that JAKIM is allowed to re-broadcast the previous *Khutbah* text when necessary. It is not a problem for JAKIM to use the same content but it should be with new style of writing and dynamic in presenting the ideas.

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Among the shortcomings identified in the *Khutbah* is the use of some terms that are not well known by the majority of the audience. The researcher identified one *Khutbah* text prepared by JAKIM of which the issue was not familiar to congregation and not well-defined in the text. For instance the *khutbah* on "Aqidah threat for Muslim" discussed the emergence of *She'ites* and the danger of *She'ites* as and warned and reminded the congregation to hold steadfast to the correct faith of Islam. The writer however, did not define and explain what *She'ites* really means. JAKIM needs to be aware that not all people know what *She'ites* really is. Therefore, it is needed and important to define who *She'ites* really is at first, then proceed to their practices and their threats to the Islamic faith. The congregation may be confused between *She'ites* and *Sunnies* since they are also Muslims. Also, it is

important to briefly include in the *Khutbah* text the differences between *Sunnies* and *She'ites*.

In conclusion, on the basis of the analysis the Friday *Khutbahs* prepared by JAKIM in 2012, the researcher found that there is no substantial change either in the subjects of the *Khutbah* or the contents introduced like *Khutbah* texts of previous years since the Friday *Khutbah* prepared were calendar-based in nature. The topics and their contents were limited in accordance to the events taking place in society. This situation clearly indicates that JAKIM remains very committed to the needs and interests of the society and does not neglected them. However, the researcher opines that *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM need more in terms of creativity and upgrading since the scope of *Khutbah* is limited due to its nature of being calendar-based.

4. Conclusions

There are some weaknesses identified in the *Khutbah* texts prepared by JAKIM in 2012. Much of contents of the *Khutbah* were knowledge-based and descriptive in nature. The description without relevant examples made the *khutbahs* unattractive. For example, in the *Khutbah* on the issue of *Zakat*, the *khateeb* repeatedly informed and reminded the audience regarding the obligation of paying *Zakat* and also the effects of not paying *Zakat* in this earth and the hereafter. Without a doubt, the majority of the audience already knew about this obligation. It was hoped that the *Khutbah* could also inform the audience how the *Zakat* money was being used in Malaysia. Every year, much money is collected, but not much is known about how it is being utilized for the betterment of the *Ummah* in Malaysia. Instead of informing the audience about *Zakat*, the *khateeb* may offer suggestions on which medium could be used to pay *Zakat*.

Another examples was that on the issue of social problems among teenagers in Malaysia in topics such as "Beware the Trap of Valentine", "Controlling the *Nafs*", "One *Ummah* fight against crime", etc. Instead of informing the seriousness of these problems to the congregation, the *Khutbah* should highlight the significance of the role of parents in taking care of their children since the congregation mostly consisted of fathers. The *khateeb* can clarify their duties as fathers to guide their family members, especially the children. The *Khutbah* should have included Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) as the role model for all parents in the world, present to them Prophet Muhammad's manners in dealing with his family and guiding them with the true Islamic teachings and moral values as Muslims. Besides, the role of the government and other related NGOs (Non-government organizations) is highly recommended to be highlighted in the *Khutbah*,

preventing and solving these problem are also part of their responsibility.

Instead of addressing the current issues related to certain society, JAKIM should also frequently highlight the issues which happened outside Malaysia, especially what is happening in other Muslim countries. This is because we as Muslims, share the spirit of brotherhood and it becomes our responsibility to know about them and feel what they feel.

Another weaknesses identified in the *Khutbah* prepared by JAKIM is the lack of emphasis on the topics of spirituality. As we know, the *Khutbah* is primarily a call to *Taqwa*. That is the essence. Thus, the topic on spirituality should be addressed, for example, topics on love, fear and hope of *Allah*, Paradise and hellfire, patience, *Tawakkal* (God-consciousness), repentance and seeking forgiveness, modesty and humility. As Ibn al-Qayyim mentioned about the content of the Prophet's *Khutbah*, he said: "The *Khutbah* of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reinforced the fundamental articles of faith, like belief in *Allah*, the Exalted, His angels, His Book, His Messenger and meeting with him. He would mention Paradise, hellfire, and what *Allah*, the Exalted has promised to His devoted servant and the people who obey him and what *Allah* has promised His enemies and be sinner".¹

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First Author

Siti Munirah Binti Ibrahim graduated from International Islamic University Malaysia, (IIUM) with Master Degree in Usul al-Din in 2016. She received her Bachelor of Islamic Revealed Knowledge in usul al-Din at the same university, IIUM in 2011. She was interested in theology issues especially the contemporary issues related to usul al-Din such as 'Aqidah, Dakwah, modern ideologies and many others. She also has many teaching experiences in different level includes became a part time teacher at primary and secondary school as well as part time lecturer at IIUM Matriculation. She was a Research Assistant at Research and Innovative Division, Deputy Rector Office, IIUM.

Second Author

Fouad Bounama's primary area of specialization is Quran and Sunnah Studies. He got a Certificate of Specialization in Shari'a Studies from Al-Fath Islamic Institute, Damascus, 2001. Bachelor's Degree from Department of Islamic Law, Faculty of Shari'a and Law, University of Al-Azhar, 2003. Higher Diploma and Master's Degree from Institute of Arab Research and Studies, Cairo, Egypt, 2009. PhD Degree from Department of Qur'an and Sunnah Studies, International Islamic university Malaysia (IIUM), 2014. He is working as Asst. Prof. Prof Dr, Department of Al-Hadith and its Sciences, Faculty of Islamic Sciences, (MEDIU), since Sept 2014.

Third Author

Abdul Salam Muhamad Shukri's area of expertise is usuluddin which are include Islamic Thought and Culture, Tasawwuf and Islam in the Malay World. He received his Bachelor Degree in Usuluddin, from University of Malaya in 1990, meanwhile both for his Master, LITT (1994) and PHD (1998) was from University of St. Andrews in which the specialization was in Islamic Thought. He is Assoc. Prof. Dr at department of usuluddin and comparative religion in IIUM.