



Historical Phase of the Development of Indonesia Islamic Education

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Received: 3 Juli 2023 | Accepted: 11 Agustus 2023 | Published: 30 December 2023

Abstract

This article aims to describe the history of the development of Islamic education in Indonesia, both during the colonial period, Dutch colonialism, and up to the Japanese colonial period. The method used in this paper uses literature study, by collecting material from various references, including journal articles, books, and other historical records that are closely related to Islamic education in Indonesia. The results of the discussion in this article are that the historical development of Islamic education in Indonesia has faced quite a long dynamic with various problems and challenges faced by national figures, to create sovereign Indonesian education in the midst of changes over time, both during the kingdom, Dutch colonialism, and Japanese colonialism.

Keywords: *Historical Phase, Islamic Education, Indonesia.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Information regarding Islam in Indonesia has been documented since the visit of Venetian explorer Marco Polo to the city of Perlak, where he noted the prevalence of Muslim inhabitants (Mansur, 2014). While the exact time of Islam's introduction to Indonesia remains undocumented, various theories speculate about its arrival. These theories often revolve around trade and maritime routes connecting the Arab World with East Asia. Sumatra, owing to its strategic geographical position, has historically served as a pivotal trading hub dating back to the first century AD (T. I. Alfian, 2005).

Various accounts suggest that Indonesia's encounter with Islam likely commenced in the 7th century AD. Some contend that Java served as the initial point of entry for Islam into Indonesia, while others argue for Barus or the coastal regions of Sumatra. During this period, Muslim traders hailing from Arabia, Persia, and India navigated through the Malacca Strait en route to East Asia, often making stops along the North Sumatran coast for replenishments. Consequently, North Sumatra evolved into a Muslim community, disseminating Islam through trade and intermarriage with the local populace (Mahfud, 2005).

Since the inception of Islam's development in Indonesia, education has held paramount importance within the Muslim community. Despite the simplicity of the system, educational endeavors have been deeply intertwined with Islamization efforts, notably through the halaqah method conducted in various venues like mosques, prayer rooms, and the residences of religious scholars. The imperative for education has spurred Indonesian Islamic communities to adopt and adapt pre-existing religious and social institutions into Islamic educational frameworks. In Java, for instance, Muslim communities repurposed Hindu-Buddhist religious institutions into Islamic boarding schools, while in Minangkabau, surau structures inherited from local traditions were transformed into Islamic educational centers. Similarly, Acehnese communities repurposed Meunasah community institutions into Islamic educational establishments. (Asrahah, 1999) (Zuhairini, 2004).



The importance of Islamic education in Indonesia is reflected in its role as a unifier of society and the main pillar in maintaining and spreading Islamic religious values (Djollong & Akbar, 2019). As a country with a majority Muslim population, Islamic education is not only part of cultural identity, but also an important means of shaping the character and morals of the younger generation. Through Islamic education, the next generation can understand religious teachings in depth, internalize good values, and practice Islamic teachings in everyday life. Apart from that, Islamic education also plays a role in maintaining cultural diversity and tolerance between religious communities in Indonesia, so that it can become the foundation for social harmony and peace (Ulya, 2016).

Apart from that, Islamic education in Indonesia is also important in facing the challenges of rapidly growing globalization and modernization (R. N. Alfian & Ilma, 2023). In this context, Islamic education must be able to provide a balanced perspective between traditional values and advances in technology and science. Quality Islamic education will equip the younger generation with relevant skills and knowledge to face the challenges of the times, while still maintaining strong Islamic values. Apart from that, quality Islamic education can also be the foundation for sustainable social, economic and political development in Indonesia, by encouraging awareness of the importance of balance between material and spiritual progress in social life (Fadil et al., 2023).

2. METHOD

Based on the data origin, the research methodology employed appears to be library-based or documentation-based research. Its aim is to address the research problem, gathering data from sources such as books, journals, and scholarly publications. This methodology aligns with (Warsah, 2018) defining library research as an inquiry method conducted by scrutinizing and referencing diverse literature, books, or academic materials. The analysis is conducted utilizing reflective thinking, which combines both inductive and deductive approaches by collecting material from various references, including journal articles, books, and other historical records that are closely related to Islamic education in Indonesia.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Development of Islamic Education in Indonesia

The advent of Islam in the archipelago has sparked extensive debate among scholars, focusing primarily on three key aspects: the origin of Islam, its agents of dissemination, and the timing of its introduction. Despite various theories attempting to address these issues, conclusive evidence remains elusive, primarily due to insufficient data supporting specific perspectives while neglecting other facets. Consequently, many existing theories fail to comprehensively elucidate the inception and spread of Islam.

The evolution of Islamic education in Indonesia is closely intertwined with the establishment of Islamic kingdoms during the initial phases of Islam's arrival. Notably, the Islamic Kingdom of Aceh, founded in the 10th century AD by Samudera Pasai, stands as Indonesia's first Islamic realm. Accounts from the Moroccan traveler Ibn Battuta during his visit to the Pasai Kingdom commend its monarchs for their profound religious knowledge, adherence to the Shafi'i school, Arabic fluency, and modest lifestyles.

Drawing from Ibn Battuta's observations, the educational system in the Pasai Kingdom encompassed Sharia teachings rooted in the Shafi'i school, delivered through informal methods like majlis ta'lim



and halaqah. Furthermore, government figures assumed dual roles as religious leaders, with state funds supporting religious education (Islam, 1984)

Similarly, the Islamic Kingdom of Java, particularly the Demak Kingdom, emerged as a significant center for Islamic propagation. Demak, founded by Raden Fatah, the son of Majapahit's Sri Kertabumi and Princess Cempa, marked the transition to Islam in Java. While historians dispute its exact founding date, Demak's establishment ushered in widespread Islamic dissemination and educational advancements mirroring those in Aceh (Yunus, 1979)

In Maluku, Islam gained traction through Java-based Muballighs, with Sultan Marhum of Ternate becoming the first Malukan monarch to embrace Islam under the influence of Java's Maulana Husein. Sultan Zainul Abidin notably promoted Islamic education during his reign. Likewise, Islam's entry into Kalimantan occurred peacefully in the 15th century, with preachers such as Sunan Bonang and Sunan Giri from Java leading the charge. The contributions of figures like Sunan Giri and Khatib Daiyan facilitated the region's gradual Islamization (Islam, 1984).

Lastly, in Sulawesi, the twin kingdom of Gowa Tallo witnessed rapid Islamic adoption under the leadership of Sultan Abdullah Awwalul Islam and Sultan Aludin. The efforts of Islamic preachers like Abdul Qadir Khatib Tunggal, a disciple of Sunan Giri, played a pivotal role in Sulawesi's conversion to Islam, as evidenced by encounters with traders from Malacca and Patani in the 16th century.

Development of Education in the Dutch Colonial Period

Initially, the Dutch arrived in the archipelago primarily for trade purposes. However, given the region's abundant natural resources, their focus shifted towards controlling the archipelago, exerting influence, and propagating their ideology, famously encapsulated in the 3G motto: Glory (symbolizing victory and power), Gold (representing the wealth of the Indonesian nation), and Gospel (referring to efforts to convert Muslims in Indonesia) (Mahfud, 2005)

To further their missions, the Dutch established Christian schools. For instance, in Ambon alone, the number of schools reached 16, with an additional 18 schools around the Ambon islands. Similarly, in Batavia, approximately 20 schools were established, compared to the previous count of around 30. These schools were made accessible to the general public at low costs, serving as a means through which the Dutch could extend their influence in their colonies (Nizar, 2005)

During the Dutch colonial era, Islamic education, also referred to as bumiputera, was predominantly attended by native Indonesians, with Pesantren emerging as the oldest educational institution in Indonesia. Islamic boarding schools transitioned into Muslim-owned institutions following a process of Islamization during their developmental history. Various teaching methods were employed within Islamic boarding schools, including the Sorogan Method, Wetonan and Bandongan Method, and Deliberation Method, each designed to facilitate different levels of learning (Subandi et al., 2023).

Throughout the three and a half centuries of Dutch colonization, various policies and approaches were implemented, many of which were detrimental to society at large. Notably, two Dutch policies stand out: ethical politics and the Teacher/Illegal School Ordinance (Hasnida, 2017). Ethical Politics, introduced in 1901, aimed at reforming Dutch colonial policies towards Indonesia. It was based on a speech by Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, emphasizing a new direction in colonial politics.

In addition to the trilogy of programs, the Dutch colonialists pursued principles of association, assimilation, and unification. However, political interests often took precedence, leading to considerations such as selecting an education system aligning with ethical political guidelines while



supporting colonial political interests. Moreover, efforts were made to educate the predominantly Muslim population while mitigating the potential influence of religious fanaticism.

Development of Islamic Education During Japanese Colonialism

The Japanese replaced the Dutch education system in Indonesia with one geared towards wartime interests, evident in all facets of its educational framework. The characteristics of the Japanese system included the elimination of educational dualism prevalent during the Dutch era, where colonial and native teachings coexisted. Instead, the Japanese introduced a unified educational system consisting of a 6-year folk school known as "Kokumin Gakko," aimed at instilling ideological and martial spirit through mandatory educator training sessions centered in Jakarta, lasting three months. Japanese language and military anthems were integral components of student instruction (Hasnida, 2017).

Upon Japan's entry into Indonesia, there was an apparent shift towards respecting and valuing Islam. Lieutenant General Imamura, the highest-ranking Japanese military official in Java, assured religious leaders of Japan's commitment to safeguarding and honoring Islam (Hasnida, 2017). To cultivate ties with Muslims, Japan enacted several policies, including transforming the Dutch-era Office of Islamic Affairs into a bureau led by KH. Hasyim Asy'ari. Islamic scholars were permitted to collaborate with orientalist leaders to establish the Homeland Defenders Front (PETA). The Japanese endorsed the formation of community-based organizations like the Indonesian Muslim Assembly (MIAI), later replaced by the Indonesian Muslim Sura Council (MASYUMI) in October 1943. Islamic boarding schools received considerable support and visits from the Japanese government (Lubis & Asry, 2021). The Japanese also facilitated moral instruction in public schools aligned with religious teachings and allowed the formation of the Hezbollah group to train Islamic youth militarily, led by K.H. Zainal Arifin. Additionally, an Islamic high school was established in Jakarta under the leadership of K.H. Wahid Hasyim, Kahar Muzakir, and Bung Hatta (Zuhairini, 2004).

Ramayulis said that the attitude of the Japanese colonialists towards Islamic education was apparently softer, so that the space for educational movement was freer than during the era of Dutch colonial rule. This provides an opportunity for Islamic education to develop, namely First, Madrasah. At the beginning of the Japanese occupation, madrasahs developed rapidly, especially in terms of quantity. This can be seen especially in the Sumatra area which is famous for its early madrasahs, which were inspired by the high council of ulama. Second, Religious Education in Schools. State schools are filled with moral lessons. This gives an opportunity for Islamic religious teachers to fill it with religious teachings, and in religious education, teachings about jihad against the colonialists are also included (Subandi et al., 2023). Also concluded that, even though the world of education in general was neglected, because students at school every day were only asked to exercise, march, do community service (romusha), sing and so on. What was somewhat fortunate were the madrasahs within the Islamic boarding school environment which were free from direct supervision by the Japanese occupation government. Education in Islamic boarding schools can still run normally (Amin, 2019).

4. CONCLUSION

Throughout the extensive journey of Islamic history, Islamic education has encountered diverse and shifting dynamics mirroring the fluctuations within the broader context of Islamic history. Similarly, the trajectory of education in Indonesia intertwines intricately with the arrival and evolution of Islam within the region, Islamic education policies from the Islamic Kingdom in Indonesia, Dutch colonial era to Japanese colonialism. Until finally the development of Indonesian Islamic education continues to transform from simple to modern until now.



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