

# Islamic Education Policy in Indonesia in the Age of Reformation

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**Abstract.** This paper examines a bit of education policy in the reform era by highlighting the periodization of the reigns of 5 presidents, starting from the transition period in the era of Prof. Dr. ing. H.B.J. Habibie [1998-1999] to President Joko Widodo, and their implications for Islamic education in Indonesia. The conclusion of this paper is that in the reform era, Islamic education in Indonesia has progressed step by step, starting with the policy of issuing regional government laws, the implication of this law is educational autonomy. Although for madrasah it has not been maximized because some of the authority is still the authority of the center. The existence of madrasahs is recognized as significant and considered equal in position to other public schools with the enactment of the National Education System Law No 20 of 2003 madrasahs are one unit in the national education system. The passing of the Teacher and Lecturer Law Number 14 of 2003 became a momentum to improve the quality of education, through increasing the qualifications, competence and professionalization of teachers.

**Keywords:** Islamic education; Policy reform; Politics; law on the national education system no 20 of 2003.

## 1 Introduction

Indonesian Islamic education as part of national education is the richest and largest Indonesian Islamic heritage in the Muslim world and even in the international world. Indonesian Islamic education is very rich in terms of diversity, starting from Islamic boarding schools, surau, dayah, Islamic schools, madrasahs, from the level of Early Childhood Education, Kindergarten/Raudhatul Athfal, elementary and secondary to Islamic tertiary institutions. Indonesian Islamic educational institutions are the most progressive institutions in the entire Muslim world. This progressivity is made possible by the strong aspirations of parents who want their children to become excellent students in science, science and technology while being solid in understanding and practicing Islam[1]. 90 percent of Indonesian Islamic education institutions belong to the Muslims themselves; the rest, which is relatively small, belongs to the government/state[2].

Since the Dutch era, Muslims have been independent to build various kinds of Islamic educational institutions with Islamic philanthropy. However, Islamic education remains an integral part of national education. Related to the government's policies and provisions, national

education has not experienced much progress. Changes in the minister of education are usually followed by policy changes, for example changes in curriculum, teachers, lecturers, and impacts on Islamic education[2].

In line with Azra, that government policies on education often experience changes along with changing governments, especially the minister of education, Magfuri said, the determination of policies in the world of education can never be separated from the developing political constellation. This can be known through historical tracing related to the process and dynamics of determining a policy. For example, the issuance of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 2 of 1989 concerning the National Education System was the result of the developing political dynamics, especially after the issuance of the Three Ministerial Joint Decree (SKB) which regulated the policy of improving the quality of madrasah education which was previously preceded by a Presidential Decree. and the Presidential Instruction on the unification of the umbrella management of education in the ministry of education and culture[3].

A policy arises because of a problem that requires proper handling, so that the policy can be used as a guideline. The formulation of educational policy is a process of formulating reforms for actions that are relevant and acceptable to common sense to solve various problems related to education[4]. The development of Islamic education and the policies that followed were inseparable from the historical developments of the Indonesian nation from time to time to the present. In its long history, the dynamics of Islamic education have experienced ups and downs in accordance with the historical events of the Indonesian nation[5].

The dynamics of Islamic education have different periods, namely starting from the origins of its establishment, Islamic education during the Dutch and Japanese colonial periods, the post-independence period or the Old Order, the New Order and the post-reform period. This study looks at the government's policy towards Islamic education in the reform era and its impact.

The reform era began in 1998, namely after the fall of President Soeharto. Suharto's leadership was continued by the vice president at the time, namely B.J. Habibie. The Reform Era in the Indonesian state administration provided fresh air for the development of Islamic education in Indonesia, after previously during the New Order era targeted educational programs had failed. The economic crisis that has been going on since mid-July 1997 has changed the political and economic constellation of the nation. Politically, the New Order ended and was replaced by a regime that called itself "Development Reform". Even so, most of the spirit of the Reform Order still came from the New Order regime, but there were a few changes, in the form of freedom of the press and multi-party. We need a paradigm shift from education to face the globalization process and reorganize the lives of Indonesian people. The goal of the Reformation era is to build an Indonesian civil society[6].

The era of reform is a momentum of change and massive improvements in various aspects of state life, starting from changes in economic aspects, political order and education. From the problem of many levels of collusion, corruption and nepotism towards a clean, transparent and accountable direction, from a destroyed economy, the monetary crisis towards a better direction, a prosperous society, and from failed education, especially the condition of Islamic education which is neglected, to class education two towards a proud education. But what kind of government policy during the reform order? And the implications for Islamic education? this boils down to the existence of policies from the government to realize the ideals and goals of the nation and state that are equal to other nations, one of the most urgent things is through accelerating the improvement of the quality of education.

## 2 Findings and Discussion

Islamic education during the New Order era was still discriminated against by the government, moreover the oldest educational institution in Indonesia, namely pesantren, had not received recognition in the law on the national education system. And the implication is that people are still half-hearted about sending their children to Islamic educational institutions because. According to Rahim, it was only when Law No. 2 of 1989 was considered that madrasas were public schools with Islamic characteristics and their curriculum was exactly the same as the school's curriculum plus religion[7]. Islamic education has only received significant attention after the birth of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 2 of 1989 concerning the National Education System and further confirmed by the birth of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System[8]. For more details, the policies issued during the reform era will be discussed below:

### 2.1 Islamic Education Policy during the President Prof. Dr. ing. H.B.J. Habibie [1998-1999]

President Habibie's reign, from 21 May 1998 – 20 October 1999, was a transitional period for reform. Habibie's policy passed the Law on Regional Government, with the core of regional autonomy. Regional Autonomy is the authority of an Autonomous Region to regulate and manage the interests of the local community according to their own initiative based on the aspirations of the community in accordance with statutory regulations. An Autonomous Region, hereinafter referred to as a Region, is a legal community unit that has certain regional boundaries, has the authority to regulate and manage the interests of the local community according to its own initiative based on the aspirations of the people within the bonds of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Regional Authority includes authority in all fields of government, except for authority in the fields of foreign policy, defense and security, justice, monetary and fiscal, religion, and authority in other fields, as stated in the Law on Regional Government. Thus it is clear that with the birth of this law, Habibie is trying to overcome the gap between the center and the regions, and efforts to get out of the monetary crisis. And also to accelerate the rate of improvement of human resources through education. There needs to be educational autonomy, because the regions and each educational institution know best about the situation, the needs they want.

Along with the stipulation of regional autonomy, this includes educational autonomy. With this policy, the role of the regions is raised and they are no longer dependent on the center. Education is no longer centralized but decentralized. This means that many things are entrusted to be managed, handled by regions or even schools. Starting from teacher arrangements, increasing teacher competence, curriculum (local curriculum content). The government will only regulate what is considered essential[9]. But this is not the case with the existence of madrasas, madrasas are not included in these regulations. This was said by Rosyada that madrasas under the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia remained centralized. Madrasahs are not part of the education sector decentralization package, although the autonomy policy at the school level remains the same. Constitutionally, local governments have no obligation to facilitate madrasah. The development and facilitation of madrasah remains under the authority of the Ministry of Religion and its regional offices. It's just that madrasahs, which have a population of approximately 17 percent of the total primary and secondary educational institutions, remain the expectation of the community, as well as being an asset for local

governments to produce their human resources. If madrasah management is weak, then the Human Resources produced will also be weak and uncompetitive[10].

Rosyada said that the position of madrasahs with Law no. 22 of 1999 concerning Regional Government is less profitable and becomes a very dilemma, because educational institutions should be able to be autonomous according to the Law, but unlike madrasahs, these educational institutions are not autonomized, and are not warmly welcomed by local governments. On this basis, the Minister of Religion issued Letter Number MA/402/2000 dated November 21, 2000, which confirmed that the authority to administer religious education in public schools and administer Madrasahs was handed over to the District/City governments which included operational aspects of implementation, elaboration of the curriculum, provision of educational staff, provision of facilities and infrastructure, and provision of the budget. Whereas other authorities in the field of education as referred to in Government Regulations and Provincial and/or Regency/City Authorities as autonomous regions, as long as those concerning religious and religious education remain the authority of the central government. 10 Derivatives of the Regional Government Law include, Free Campus from NKK intervention and review, the campus or college is freed from outside intervention and influence. Reviewing the Normalization of Campus Life [NKK] and BKK that have occurred since the New Order era by repealing regulations that hinder student creativity and freedom. Change of status from PTN to BHMN as stated in PP 61/1999/AND pp 153/2000. Since then, universities have been required to seek funds independently to finance their education. This was the beginning of the commercialization of education which made education even more expensive for people with a weak economy to access. RI Presidential Decree No. 136 of 1999 concerning the position, duties and work procedures of the department. PP No. 60 of 1999 concerning Higher Education. PP No. 61 of 1999 concerning the determination of universities as legal entities[10].

## **2.2 Islamic Education Policy during President Abdurrahman Wahid's period [1999-2001]**

The administration of President Abdurrahman Wahid from 20 October 1999 to 23 July 2001. The policies issued by Gusdur [a nickname for president Abdurrahman Wahid] regarding Islamic education namely; Decree of the Minister of National Education Np. 042/U/2000 regarding requirements and procedures for closing universities as legal entities. Decree of the Minister of National Education No. 23/U/2000 concerning guidelines for curriculum development and assessment of student learning outcomes. Decree of the Minister of National Education No. 234/U/2000 regarding guidelines for higher education. It can be seen that during the administration of President Abdurrahman Wahid, only a few policies were issued related to education, including the decision of the Director General of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding Guidelines for Implementation of the Final Stage of Learning Evaluation. The policies that came out in the field of education during Abdurrahman Wahid's time were practically just that. In addition, although many decisions were made during his reign, none were directly related to education. Efforts to carry out reforms in the field of education as a means of building a more advanced nation's civilization until the leadership period of Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) could not be carried out optimally[3].

## **2.3 Islamic Education Policy during the President Megawati era [2001-2004]**

During the leadership of President Megawati, a Law was issued which regulated the National Education System as a mandate for independence as contained in the 1945

Constitution, perfecting and replacing the 1989 Law concerning the National Education System which was felt to still not reflect what was mandated in the Law. -The 1945 Constitution. The birth of the National Education System Law is considered the first milestone in education reform in Indonesia[11].

The existence of madrasas was revived in 2003 with the enactment of the National Education System Law. This law stipulates that madrasas are given the same opportunities as public schools. Madrasas are seen as an integral part of the national education system even though in terms of management they are delegated to the Ministry of Religion, although in general madrasas are given flexibility in policy making. Meanwhile, madrasas in the era of regional autonomy were given attention by the local government in accordance with the mandate of the 2003 National Education System Law[12].

Islamic education in this phase began to find a bright spot with government policies through the National Education System Law no. 20 of 2003 which was passed on July 8, 2003. It is because of this law that Islamic education is recognized significantly in the national education system. Finally madrasas are recognized as equal to other schools. The government's acknowledgment is seen as significant, including in Chapter VI concerning Paths, Levels, and Types of Education Part Two of Basic Education subsection 17 verse 2 reads; Basic education takes the form of elementary schools (SD) and *madrasah ibtidaiyah* (MI) or other equivalent forms as well as junior high schools (SMP) and *madrasah tsanawiyah* (MTs), or other equivalent forms. Furthermore, paragraph 3 reads; Secondary education takes the form of senior high school (SMA), madrasa aliyah (MA), vocational high school (SMK), and vocational aliyah madrasa (MAK), or other equivalent forms.

Subsection 30 verse Religious education takes the form of *diniyah*, *pesantren*, *pasraman*, *pabhaja samanera*, and other similar forms. Islamic boarding schools are said to be religious education whose function is to prepare students to become members of society who understand and practice the values of religious teachings and or become experts in religious knowledge.

Subsection 38 (1) The basic framework and curriculum structure for primary and secondary education shall be stipulated by the Government. (2) The curriculum for primary and secondary education is developed in accordance with its relevance by each education group or unit and school/madrasah committee under the coordination and supervision of the district/city education office or the office of the district/city ministry of religion for primary and provincial education for secondary education. Article 38 is a strengthening of the regional autonomy law and those who clearly know the conditions and needs of education are the regions themselves, for example through the formulation of local curriculum content. is one of the factors in meeting the needs and conditions of the region. Similar to the national curriculum, the local content curriculum functions as a tool to achieve national education goals.

#### **2.4 Islamic Education Policy during the President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono era [2004-2014]**

Education policy in the era of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, namely the issuance of a teacher and lecturer law, namely Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers. This law is an acknowledgment for teachers, that teaching is a profession that is recognized by law.

Islamic education regulations then appear related to the profession of teachers and lecturers who deserve welfare and appreciation both from protection and guarantees of rights in their welfare. This regulation is contained in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005. Then following the issuance of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 19

concerning National Education Standards. Government Regulation Number 74 of 2005 concerning Teacher and Lecturer Certification, not only regulates teachers, lecturers, national education standards, and teacher and lecturer certification which is under the national Ministry of Education, but also regarding teachers, lecturers, national education standards, as well as teacher and lecturer certification under the Ministry of Religion[8].

The teacher is a profession, namely a job that must be done with certain qualifications needed for the teaching profession, has expertise, skills, and meets the minimum quality standards obtained through professional education (subsection 1, verse (4), Law Number 14 of 2005). Then explained in subsection 7 Chapter III, Law no. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, that the teaching profession is a special field of work carried out with the following principles, having talents, interests, calling, and idealism; have a commitment to improve the quality of education, faith, piety, and noble character; have academic qualifications and background in accordance with the field of work.[10] Furthermore, in chapter IV it is explained that teachers must have academic qualifications, competencies, and educator certificates as well as physically and mentally healthy, and have the ability to realize national goals. For this reason, it is mandated in the Law on teacher professionalization through teacher certification. Certificates given to teachers who meet the requirements are formal evidence as recognition given to teachers as professionals. The Teacher and Lecturer Law is the momentum for changes in teacher status to become professional teachers which are expected to be able to bring Indonesian education even better in terms of quality. From here the Ministry of Religion is trying to improve the qualifications of Islamic Religious Education teachers by collaborating with universities, by providing scholarships. And teachers who do not yet have Strata-1 qualifications are motivated to improve their education, so they pass Strata-1.

The next policy is optimizing 20 percent of the State Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBN) for education, National Education Standards (SNP), Teacher and Lecturer Certification, KBK Curriculum and KTSP, student-centered learning approaches not only teachers, service-oriented management, professionalization of the profession teachers, improving the welfare of teachers and lecturers, and others[5].

In 2013 a curriculum concept emerged, known as the 2013 curriculum which was a development of the previous curriculum namely, Competency-Based Curriculum (2004) and Education Unit Level Curriculum (2006). Where, in the same year, the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 64 of 2013 concerning Content Standards for Elementary and Secondary Education was issued which outlined the Core Competencies, especially Core Competency 1 (Spritual Attitudes) and Core Competence 2 (Social Attitudes) related with the values of Islamic education, namely *habl min Allah and habl mi al-nas*.[4] Curriculum development is something that should be based on evaluation results, to respond quickly to changing times and improve the quality of education produced.

## **2.5 Islamic Education Policy under President Joko Widodo [since 2014-2024]**

President Joko Widodo's policy on Islamic education is to issue, ratify the Law on Islamic Boarding Schools Number 18 of 2019, on 15 October 2019. One of the objectives of the existence of the Islamic Boarding School Law is to guarantee the implementation of Islamic boarding schools in the educational function, da'wah function, and Islamic education function. community empowerment, arrangements are needed to provide recognition, affirmation, and facilitation based on tradition and its peculiarities.

In Chapter I concerning General Provisions, subsection 1 verse 1, it is explained what is meant by pesantren is a community-based institution. Islamic boarding schools are community-

based institutions established by individuals, foundations, Islamic community organizations, and/or communities that instill faith and piety in Allah. Swt., cultivating noble character and upholding Islamic teachings *rahmatan lil'alam* which is reflected in the attitude of humility, tolerance, balance, moderation, and other noble values of the Indonesian nation through education, Islamic da'wah, exemplary, and community empowerment within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic Indonesia. In verse 2 it is stated that Islamic boarding school education is education organized by Islamic boarding schools and is within the Islamic boarding school environment by developing a curriculum in accordance with the peculiarities of Islamic boarding schools based on yellow books or Islamic *dirasah* with a muallimin education pattern. Subsection 16 states that the function of pesantren education as referred to in subsection 1 is aimed at forming students who are superior in fulfilling Indonesian independence and are able to face the times. The government also pays attention to the quality of Islamic boarding schools by including a quality assurance system from Islamic boarding schools in subsection 26 which reads "to guarantee the quality of Islamic boarding schools education, a quality assurance system is prepared". In the context of internal quality assurance, Islamic boarding schools form a Masyayikh council, the Masyayikh council has the task; Develop curriculum, carry out learning activities, improve the competence and professionalism of educators and education staff, carry out exams to determine student graduation based on predetermined quality criteria, and submit data on students who pass to the Masyayikh assembly. Meanwhile, the Majelis Masyayikh is tasked with subsection 29 namely, establishing the basic framework and structure of the pesantren curriculum.

If we look closely, the Islamic Boarding School Law wants changes to the pesantren body to modernize pesantren management so that pesantren give birth to superior students, including the establishment of a pesantren quality assurance system, the establishment of the Masyayikh Council and the Masyayikh Majelis which have the task of increasing the competence and professionalism of educators, compiling curriculum, and others. So the presence of Kyai in the pesantren will be assisted by the Council and Majelis to achieve the expected goals of the pesantren.

The next policy related to Islamic boarding schools is the stipulation of October 22 as the National Santri Day, which was established in 2015. As a tribute to the students, there will be a great historical event where the students fought against 6,000 allied soldiers who piggybacked the Dutch one month after Indonesia's independence, which is known as " Jihad Nahdlatul Ulama Resolution. Which finally won the battle. This is what we must guard, the history of pesantren, kyai and their students have made an extraordinary contribution to the Indonesian people in the struggle for independence. It is appropriate for the government to pay significant attention to pesantren[11].

Another policy in the Joko Widodo era was that the State Examination was no longer the sole determinant of student graduation, there was a Computer-Based National Examination and others, which were regulated through a Ministerial Regulation.

### **3 Conclusion**

In the reformation era, Islamic education in Indonesia has progressed step by step, beginning with the policy of issuing the Law on Regional Government, the implication of this law is the existence of educational autonomy. Although for madrasah it has not been maximized because some of the authority is still the authority of the center.

The existence of madrasas is recognized as significant and considered equal in position to other public schools with the enactment of the National Education System Law Number 20 of 2003 madrasas are one unit in the national education system. The passing of the Teacher and Lecturer Law Number 14 of 2003 became a momentum to improve the quality of education, through increasing the qualifications, competence and professionalization of teachers.

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