



## Netherlands Colonial Government Policy on Islamic Education

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This scientific study aims to analyze in more depth the Dutch colonial government's policies towards Islamic education. This scientific study uses qualitative research methods with the type of library research. The data used in this study is secondary data, including accredited journals and books that are appropriate to the topic studied. The results of the analysis state that the Dutch colonial government's policy towards Islamic education in Indonesia was very unsupportive. The researchers based this conclusion on deviations in the application of ethical politics, the emergence of teacher ordinances, and even illegal school ordinances that are specific to educational institutions or Islamic schools. Therefore, this proves how concerned the Dutch colonial government was regarding the existence and development of Islamic education in Indonesia.*

**Keywords:** Policy, Dutch Colonial, Islamic Education

## **INTRODUCTION**

Education is a necessity that everyone must obtain. Referring to (Rahman et al., 2022), education is understood as a conscious, planned effort to realize active learning in developing all the potential of students, so that they have religious spiritual abilities, good character, personality, are able to control themselves, and the skills needed by students themselves and in society. Therefore, education is fundamental not only for individuals, but also for the development of a nation.

In its implementation, a regulation is needed for managing education in a country or what could be called an education policy. Referring to the KBBI in (Gultom, 2019), education policy is the policy of a government in regulating education in its country. So it can be understood that education policy is part of public policy, where this policy can have a direct influence on the lives of individuals, groups and society.

With regard to education policy, in Indonesia itself, especially Islamic education policy, has experienced extraordinary dynamics and challenges. We can trace the dynamics and changes in Islamic education policy from Indonesian history. Starting from the colonial period or colonialism, to post-independence.

Historically, in Dutch colonial education policy there was a dualistic tendency, namely general education and Islamic education (Harun, 2023). This clearly shows discrimination in the rights of the Indonesian people to obtain education, especially based on race and religion. Where Islamic educational institutions at that time did not receive serious attention in efforts to improve the quality of education, compared to other public schools. One of the reasons for this situation was the Dutch's concern about the stability of their government, as a result of the educational outcomes for the natives, who were dominated by Muslims (Sumanti, 2018).

From the explanation above, it can be seen that the Dutch colonial government implemented education policies which essentially did not pay attention to the interests of the indigenous community. This policy was used to maintain its power over the land of the archipelago, by creating a slave mentality by providing minimal education to the natives (Bahri, 2020). Even in the socio-political realm, the Dutch colonial government made quite complicated policies towards Islamic education, namely by issuing a teacher ordinance policy (Gultom, 2019). This policy clearly shows the efforts of the Dutch colonial government to undermine Islamic education in Indonesia.

Based on this background, researchers are interested in analyzing in more depth the Dutch colonial government's policies towards Islamic education. In this study, researchers will analyze how ethical politics was used in education policies, teacher ordinance policies, and schools that were founded during the Dutch colonial era. So that the results of this study can be utilized by various parties and can become an additional reference regarding Islamic education policies in Indonesia.

## **METHOD**

This scientific study uses qualitative research methods. Creswell in (Sugiyono, 2019) states that qualitative research is a type of research capable of producing various discoveries that cannot be obtained using statistical procedures. Basically, this type of research is used to discover and understand various things that are hidden in a phenomenon, which is sometimes something that is difficult to understand properly. The researcher used this qualitative research method, because it is in line with the topic to be researched, namely related to the Dutch colonial government's policy towards Islamic education in Indonesia.

The type of research used is library research. Library research can be understood

as solving problems by critically and in-depth studying various relevant library materials (Sari & Asmendri, 2020). The data used in this study is secondary data, namely data obtained from the writings of other people or figures. The data is reliable data, where researchers use accredited journals and books that are appropriate to the topic to be studied (Fatha Pringgar & Sujatmiko, 2020).

## DISCUSSION

Education in Indonesia, especially Islamic education, has gone through various obstacles in its history. For example, during the Dutch colonial era, education provided for the indigenous population, which was dominated by Muslims, had educational objectives that were directed at colonial interests (Wahid, 2022). Apart from that, it is also known that the condition of Islamic education during the Dutch colonial period was very worrying, where there were various pressures and discrimination related to ethnicity and religion.

Therefore, the following are the results of an in-depth analysis regarding Dutch colonial government policies, especially those related to Islamic education, among others.

### a. Ethical Politics

At the beginning of the 20th century, namely in 1901, Van Deventer expressed an idea which was also approved by Queen Wilhelmina as leader of the Netherlands, namely regarding ethical political policies for indigenous people (Syarif, 2019). Ethical politics itself can be understood as a politics of retribution, where this system was implemented by the Dutch colonial government to develop its colony as a form of remuneration (Nasrowi, 2023). Where this ethical political concept can be declared good because of the government's partiality towards indigenous people.

In implementing ethical politics, the Dutch colonial government implemented a trilogy program policy for the Indonesian people, namely education, irrigation and immigration (population transfer) (Qomari et al., 2023). Referring to (Syarif, 2019), it is known that the irrigation policy was apparently distorted by the colonial government, which was not for irrigating native rice fields, but for Dutch plantations. He continued, the immigration policy was also misused by moving native people to plantation areas outside Java, to become forced laborers through the forced cultivation system.

As for the provision of education, the colonial government only built and subsidized Western-style schools, which still emphasized differences in social strata. Where Class 1 Elementary School is intended for children of leaders, nobles and prominent figures. Meanwhile, Class 2 Elementary School is intended for native children, but the fees are expensive. So in the end, the majority of indigenous children depend on Islamic educational institutions in the form of Islamic boarding schools to fulfill their educational needs (Nasrowi, 2023).

In fact, based on a book written by (Bahri, 2020), it is known that the Dutch colonial government's policies in the education sector were essentially aimed at these 4 things, including.

1. Increasing progress and quality capabilities for the Dutch people
2. Produce cheap labor or workers, to monitor Dutch interests
3. To instill a Christianization mission, by Christianizing the native people
4. To maintain and maintain social differences

From the results of this analysis, it can be seen how discrimination was carried out by the Dutch colonial government behind its ethical political

policies. This can be seen from the way the colonial government applied a Western-style teaching system and created school classifications for European, native and Eastern children (Rasmana, 2021). Even further, this ethical political policy has given rise to a tendency towards educational dualism, which originates from discrimination in people's rights to obtain education.

#### **b. Teacher Ordinance**

In practice, the Dutch colonial government issued various policies to hinder the progress and spread of education in Indonesia, especially Islamic education. Referring to Marwan Saridjo in a book written by (Gultom, 2019), it is known that the reason the colonial government did not pay attention or even adopted Islamic boarding schools or madrasas as a more affordable form or model of education for the native people was for political and religious reasons. Therefore, in 1905 the Dutch government decided on a new policy in education, namely the teacher ordinance.

The Teacher Ordinance was a policy of the Dutch colonial government which required that every person providing Islamic teaching or recitation must first request and obtain permission from the Dutch colonial government (Ismael & Sesmiarni, 2022). If a religious teacher violates these rules, he will be punished with a maximum of 8 had or a maximum fine of 25 guilders. In addition, in the same year, the colonial government issued Staatsblad policy no. 550, where the religious teacher ordinance requires them to obtain a diploma from the government through the Regent (for those living in Java and Madura), or through other government officials before they carry out their study program (Bahri, 2020).

In its implementation, there is legal legality of the ordinance in the form of

Staatsblad No. 550, which provides various requirements for becoming an ordinance teacher. The following are various requirements that must be fulfilled by the ordinance teacher that the researcher refers to (Miftahuddin, 2023), including.

1. Every Islamic teacher is required to request permission in writing from the regent or patih in the area where he/she teaches.
2. The applicant must have a good name, good morals, and his teachings must not conflict with existing policies.
3. Teachers must have a list of their students and fill in various data, in line with the model regulations set by the government, where the data is then sent by the religious teacher to be checked by the relevant government.
4. Teachers who have provided Islamic teachings can immediately implement and complete the various requirements within 3 months after the decree is issued,
5. Islamic religious teachers must always submit and comply with ordinance policies, otherwise they will receive punishment in the form of monetary fines, imprisonment, even revocation of teaching permits.

The various policies above will of course be easily implemented by schools and teachers who have good organizations, but this is very inversely different for Islamic schools and teachers. For example, Islamic boarding school educational institutions do not have good administrative regulations, plus many Islamic boarding school teachers cannot read or write Latin letters. Therefore, the teacher ordinance is considered to be very pressing for various parties, especially having a

major impact on the sustainability of traditional Islamic educational institutions.

The teacher ordinance policy is considered by Muslims in Indonesia to not only limit the development of Islamic education, but also eliminate the important role of Muslims in Indonesia. This is known to have changed and even become very strict when the 1925 teacher ordinance policy was implemented, where not everyone (Kyai) was allowed to give Koran lessons. In addition, the enactment of the illegal schools ordinance in 1932, which was able to eradicate and close madrassas or schools that did not have permits or provided lessons that were not liked by the Dutch colonial government (Gultom, 2019).

Referring to Nurhayati Djamas' statement quoted in the book (Gultom, 2019), she stated that the issuance of the teacher ordinance policy made it clear how the Dutch colonial government was worried about the implementation of Islamic education in Indonesia, as well as the actions of religious teachers who would later expand the development of the Islamic religion through education. This expansion certainly had implications for the spread of anti-colonial sentiment and anti-Dutch colonial rule. Where these concerns will emerge and develop with religious sentiment in education.

Apart from that, according to Iskandar in a book written by (Rasmana, 2021), he stated that the ordinance policy was a form of suspicion by the Dutch colonial government towards the development of Islamic education. Where they don't care whether education was developed by traditional kyai (Islamic boarding schools) or reformers in school institutions. So they develop an anti-Islam or Islam-phobic attitude, the basis of which is based on feelings of

fear, the holy call of Christianity that they carry, and the understanding of colonialism.

### c. Schools Belanda

The effects of colonialism and Dutch political intervention led to the emergence of the construction of various schools in Indonesia. Starting from elementary school, namely European Legere School (ELS) for children of European and noble descent, Hollandsch Inlandsche School (HIS) for natives, Hollandsch - Chineesch School (HCS) for children of East Asian or Chinese descent, and Meer Uitgebreid Leger Onderwijs (MULO) which is a secondary school (Novriyanto et al., 2023). Meanwhile, one of the aims of the Dutch colonial government in establishing these educational institutions was as a way of ignoring local values and customs, by replacing them with Scholastic European customs (Bahri, 2020). So it can be said that the pattern of Dutch colonial government policy was the existence of dichotomous educational institutions, which separated general education from religious education.

The impact of the implementation of various educational policies by the Dutch colonial government has given rise to various reform ideas in the field of education. One of them is the emergence of Islamic educational institutions that are no longer oriented towards separating religious knowledge and general knowledge (Daulay, 2007). Even though the application is not balanced, it has given rise to ideas that consider the importance of both sciences.

The following is a classification of the forms of Islamic educational institutions during Dutch colonial rule, in the early to mid 20th century which the researcher refers to from a book written by (Daulay, 2007), including.

1. Islamic boarding school educational institution, namely an educational institution that is firmly and completely guided by the culture and traditions of Islamic boarding schools, which teaches only classical books.
2. Islamic school educational institutions, namely these institutions not only teach various general sciences as the main material, but also teach religious sciences.
3. Madrasah educational institutions, namely these institutions basically try to adopt the Islamic boarding school and school systems, by presenting the latest education system. Where there are elements taken from Islamic boarding schools and schools.

From the various explanations above, it can be concluded that the existence of various Dutch colonial government policies towards education was able to have a positive impact on the Indonesian nation. This can be seen from the number of schools that were built as a result of implementing ethical political policies. However, on the other hand, this policy was also an attempt by the colonial government to remain in power in its colonies. So it is no surprise that in its implementation the Dutch colonial government discriminated against Islamic education, because it was concerned about the existence and development of the spread of Islamic education in Indonesia. Where in its development, many Muslim scholars in Indonesia developed forms of educational institutions that were more in line with the characteristics and needs of natives for general knowledge and religion.

## CONCLUSION

From the scientific studies that the author has described in the discussion section, it can be concluded that the Dutch

colonial government's policy towards Islamic education in Indonesia was very unsupportive. The researchers based this conclusion on deviations in the application of ethical politics, the emergence of teacher ordinances, and even illegal school ordinances which are basically specific to educational institutions or Islamic schools. Therefore, this proves how concerned the Dutch colonial government was regarding the existence and development of Islamic education in Indonesia. So the Dutch colonial government made various policies whose main aim was to maintain control over its colonies, destroying Islamic education, even including Islamic religious education brought by kyai and Islamic boarding schools.

Hopefully this scientific study can be a reference regarding the Dutch colonial government's policy towards Islamic education in Indonesia. The results of the analysis of this scientific study also serve as a reminder of how many obstacles must be faced in developing Islamic education in Indonesia, and it even became a worry for the colonial authorities about the progress of the thinking of Muslim scholars. Therefore, we as the nation's successors, especially in the realm of Islamic education, must strive to uphold and develop Islamic education as the basis of life for Muslims, especially in Indonesia.

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